

Ark Bentworth Primary Academy

Bentworth Road, Westway, London, W12 7AJ

Inspection dates

5–6 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management	Good		2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Good		2
Quality of teaching	Good		2
Achievement of pupils	Good		2
Early years provision	Good		2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Leaders have created a culture of high aspiration for staff and pupils. Teachers benefit from high quality training. As a result, teaching and learning are good and improving rapidly.
- All groups of pupils make good progress from their starting points, which are lower than typically found. Standards reached in reading, writing and mathematics are average.
- Disadvantaged pupils, those for whom English is an additional language, those who are disabled and those who have special educational needs are well supported and make good progress.
- Teaching is good. Planned activities engage and motivate pupils to try their best and enable them to make good progress.
- Children get off to a good start in the early years. They develop a range of skills quickly and leave Reception well prepared for Year 1.
- The local governing body and the academy sponsor have recruited and trained high calibre leaders. They check the work of the academy thoroughly and ensure that all aspects of its work are improving at a good rate.
- Pupils are safe and have a good understanding of how to stay safe outside of the academy. They behave well in lessons and around the academy.
- The good curriculum supports pupils to learn and behave well. It offers many enrichment opportunities that broaden pupils' experiences and ensure their good health and well-being.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and contributes well to their understanding of life in modern Britain.
- Pupils leave the academy well prepared for secondary education.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet outstanding and not enough pupils make rapid progress.
- Sometimes, pupils, especially the most able, spend too much time on skills they have already mastered before tackling more challenging work.
- Occasionally, teaching assistants in the class do not support pupils' learning well enough for the duration of the lesson.
- Pupils do not always respond to their teachers' helpful comments in their books.
- There are not enough planned opportunities for pupils to develop their writing and mathematical skills in other subjects.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 13 lessons. They also observed groups of pupils being taught early reading skills. Most of these were seen jointly with the headteacher or associate headteacher. Inspectors also spoke to pupils during lessons, looked closely at their books and listened to younger pupils reading.
- Inspectors met two groups of pupils and also spoke informally to other pupils in lessons and during breaks and lunchtimes.
- Meetings were held with school leaders, a member of the local governing Body and the Chair of Governors. Inspectors also met the Primary Director of Ark Schools, which is the academy’s sponsor.
- Inspectors observed the work of the academy. They examined several documents concerning pupils’ achievement and progress, development plans and information about teachers’ performance. They also looked at records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding arrangements. Minutes of governing body meetings were also considered.
- Inspectors spoke to parents when they brought their children to school. They also considered the 37 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 37 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

David Radomsky, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jennie Bird

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The academy is an average-sized primary school.
- Ark Bentworth Primary Academy converted to become an Ark Schools sponsor-led academy in September 2012. When its predecessor school, Bentworth Primary, was last inspected by Ofsted in March 2010, it was judged to be good.
- The pupil premium (additional government funding which in this academy supports pupils known to be eligible for free school meals) provides support for about six out of 10 pupils. This is well above the national average.
- Children in the early years provision attend full-time.
- The proportion of pupils who are identified as having a disability or a special educational need is close to the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from a range of ethnic minority backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language is much larger than usually found.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- There was a large staff turnover during the first year of the academy's operation.
- The headteacher is also the headteacher of another local Ark School. He is currently supported in this academy by an associate headteacher. Four teachers were promoted to middle leadership positions in September 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching so that more pupils make rapid progress by ensuring that:
 - pupils, especially the most able, always have work that stretches and challenges them
 - teaching assistants in the classroom support learning well throughout the lesson
 - pupils respond routinely to their teachers' helpful feedback.
- Plan more opportunities for pupils to practise their writing and mathematical skills in other subjects.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, ably supported by all other senior leaders, has driven improvements in all aspects of the academy's work. The team has created a culture where everyone shares the ambition for excellence. As a result, the quality of teaching is rapidly improving. Pupils behave well and are keen to succeed. Attendance has risen markedly since the academy opened.
- Processes of academy self-evaluation are thorough and help leaders to identify priorities for improvement. The resulting improvement plans pinpoint the intended outcomes of planned actions on pupils' achievement and behaviour. Leaders, including governors and the academy sponsor, regularly check progress against ambitious targets. As a result, all aspects of the academy's work have improved.
- An assistant headteacher (instructional leader) is at the forefront of improving the quality of teaching. She observes each teacher frequently and targets for improvement are set and reviewed. Teachers are supported through a comprehensive training programme to meet their individual needs. They work in pairs to reflect on their own teaching and to share ideas of how to improve. As a result, teachers, including those new to the profession, are helped to develop their skills at a fast rate.
- Assessments are used termly to determine how well each pupil is progressing. Teachers and leaders use the information to plan additional support and to reflect on how teaching can be adapted to meet the needs of individual pupils. This way, the academy endeavours to ensure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to succeed.
- The academy has devised a detailed strategy, based on national research, to ensure that the pupil premium funding is spent wisely. It is used to fund additional support to help eligible pupils to achieve well and to support work with families to improve their children's attendance. As a result, achievement gaps are closing rapidly.
- The primary school sport funding is being used very well. The academy has developed a programme with external experts. They provide weekly sessions for every pupil on sports, fitness and health education. They train teachers and provide extra sports related clubs after school and during school holidays. As a result, there is much more participation in a broader range of physical activities, pupils improve their fitness levels and learn how to lead a healthy lifestyle.
- Changes made to the curriculum have helped pupils succeed in their learning and improve their behaviour and attitudes. The curriculum offers pupils many enrichment opportunities; for instance, all pupils learn to play a musical instrument and they visit many places of interest. There are not enough opportunities, however, for pupils to extend their writing skills and to apply their mathematical skills in other subjects.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Through the 'value of the week', pupils reflect on what is right and wrong. Weekly class discussions on the news support pupils in developing a good understanding of life in modern Britain. For example, pupils told the inspectors about the recent Scottish independence referendum. They learn about different faiths and arrange events such as 'the international fair'. They learn the importance of valuing and respecting all people. Pupils know that the academy does not tolerate any form of discrimination.
- The academy sponsor provides effective support to the academy and makes a strong contribution to the academy's ongoing improvements. It monitors closely all aspects of the work of the academy and holds leaders to account. It provides good quality training for leaders and teachers and has contributed to the introduction of new curriculum elements, which have helped to raise standards.
- Early years and subject leadership was, until recently, provided by the academy's senior leaders. Four successful teachers were appointed to lead early years, literacy, numeracy and science respectively at the start of this year. These new leaders have made a good start and are receiving good quality training. It is too soon, however, to judge the impact of their work.
- Procedures for safeguarding, including vetting of prospective staff, are fully in place. Academy leaders are working with other schools and local agencies in implementing the government's 'Prevent' strategy to tackle any potential extremism and radicalisation in the local community. As a result, parents and pupils agree that they are safe and feel safe and staff know what to do if they have any concerns.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Local governors bring a range of expertise, including in education, finance and medicine, to the board. The governors work closely with the academy sponsor, from whom they receive regular reports about the quality of teaching and the accuracy of pupil progress information. Combined with information they receive from the headteacher and their own visits to the academy, the governors have a deep understanding of the quality of teaching and pupils' progress and how they are improving. Governors

are fully involved in the academy's processes of self-evaluation and improvement planning. They both challenge and support the headteacher in balanced measure. Robust appraisal systems are in place and aspirational performance targets are set for the headteacher and staff to improve pupils' achievement, their behaviour and the quality of teaching. The governors are involved in deciding, based on performance, whether teachers and leaders should receive salary increments or not.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite and welcoming. Whenever a visitor enters a classroom, for instance, a class ambassador welcomes the visitor and explains what the class is learning. The academy is a harmonious community where pupils and adults alike treat each other with respect.
- Behaviour in lessons and around the academy is good. Pupils readily follow their teachers' instructions. They come to class ready to learn and they work well together in groups. These positive attitudes make a strong contribution to their successful learning.
- Pupils enjoy coming to the academy and take pride in their uniform. They welcome the opportunities to take on responsibilities. Older pupils help younger ones at lunchtime when they sit at mixed age 'family' tables. As a result, pupils eat sensibly together and all litter is cleared away, leaving the hall neat and tidy.

Safety

- The academy's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils are well aware of various forms of bullying, such as cyber bullying, homophobic bullying and racism. Incidents of these types are rare and, when they do occur, pupils are confident that they are dealt with efficiently by academy staff.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe, including when using the internet. They are aware of hazards that they might come across and how to deal with them, such as with fire and electricity.
- The academy's good work with pupils and their families has resulted in rates of attendance and punctuality improving considerably over the past two years.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is good and is improving at a rapid rate. This was confirmed by observations and checking of books during the inspection, evidence of information about pupils' progress and the assessments of teaching carried out by the academy leadership and the sponsor.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are highly positive. Teachers have high expectations for behaviour and work. As a result, pupils get on quickly with their work and want to be successful.
- Teachers frequently check on pupils' learning during lessons and through regular testing. They therefore know how well each pupil is doing and use this information well for planning activities that meet the needs of most pupils.
- Teachers and other adults usually work well together so that those needing additional help, such as pupils with disabilities or special educational needs as well as those for whom English is an additional language, receive well-tailored support that helps them to make good progress. Occasionally, however, teaching assistants are not always deployed effectively for the duration of the lesson and this slows progress.
- Recent changes in the curriculum have meant that teachers prepare exciting activities in a systematic way that help most pupils master new knowledge and understanding quickly. The changes meant that, in 2014, rates of progress in reading, writing and mathematics across the academy increased.
- The most able pupils are not always given work that is challenging enough and so they do not attain the higher levels of which they are capable.
- The quality of marking and feedback is good. Pupils therefore know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Most pupils respond to the useful comments made by their teachers and these help them to learn from their mistakes and improve their work. Some pupils, though, fail to respond and this slows their progress.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Last year, all groups of pupils achieved well when compared to their individual starting points. Inspection evidence show that rates of progress are continuing to increase at a good rate.

- In 2014, Year 2 pupils had made good progress from their low starting points. All pupils reached the expected standards in reading and mathematics. In writing, the proportion was similar to the national average. Year 6 pupils made good progress from low starting points during the second half of the key stage. The proportion reaching the expected Level 4 in reading, writing and mathematics was average.
- The most able pupils do not make the rapid progress of which they are capable. This is because they are not always given work that is hard enough. As a result, the proportions reaching the higher levels at the end of Year 2 in reading and writing, and in all subjects at the end of Year 6, are below average.
- Pupils make good progress in reading. This is because all staff are well trained in the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds that they make). In the 2014 Year 1 phonic screening, a well-above average proportion of pupils reached the expected standard. Links with the local library that regularly brings books to the school and the 'big summer read' initiative, as well as regular home reading, ensure that pupils read widely and make good gains in their reading and comprehension skills.
- Writing is taught well and so pupils make good progress. A computer-based writing programme, designed by the academy, gives pupils the opportunity to practise individually targeted aspects of writing. This is helping pupils to improve their skills at a good rate. The academy made it a priority this year to improve the quality of handwriting. As a result, work in books is neatly presented. There are, however, insufficient opportunities for pupils to write to a high standard in other subjects and this is a barrier to pupils making rapid progress.
- Changes introduced by the academy to the way mathematics is taught in Key Stage 1 mean that many pupils now make rapid progress. In the Year 2 tests in 2014, an above average proportion attained the higher levels. Across Key Stage 2, progress is good. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise, develop and apply their mathematical skills in other subjects. This hinders pupils in making rapid progress across Key Stage 2.
- Outcomes in 2014 show that gaps between disadvantaged pupils supported by pupil premium funding and others in the academy are narrowing. At Key Stage 1, disadvantaged pupils attained higher levels than their peers in all subjects. In the national tests at the end of Year 6, disadvantaged pupils were two months behind their classmates and six months behind other pupils nationally in reading. In writing, they were seven months ahead of their peers and two months behind other pupils nationally. In mathematics, they were two months behind their classmates and 13 months behind all pupils nationally.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, those for whom English is an additional language and those from ethnic minority backgrounds make good progress. This is because the academy checks their progress carefully and provides good support in class and in small group work.

The early years provision

is good

- Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Leaders have a clear view of how well children are doing and what needs to be improved. Good development plans have resulted in rising standards.
- Overall, children join the early years with weak skills, especially in language and social development. They settle quickly and make good gains in all areas of learning. As a result of good teaching, the proportion of children leaving Reception with a good level of development and well prepared for the start of Year 1 is average.
- From the start, adults help children to learn to play well together, to be polite and considerate. As a result, children behave well, readily share with each other and are developing self-confidence. They feel safe and are well cared for. A wide variety of planned activities ensure children's well-being and their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The quality of teaching is good. Early reading and writing are effectively taught and, through high quality dialogue with adults, children learn to communicate well orally. Assessments of children's skills are regular and thorough. Teachers plan well-targeted activities to meet the needs of most children, including vulnerable pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs and those for whom the academy receives additional funding.
- The most able children are not always sufficiently challenged to make outstanding progress and, therefore, the proportions exceeding expected skills typical for their age are low.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	138680
Local authority	Hammersmith and Fulham
Inspection number	444029

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	219
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gary Griffin
Headteacher	Damian McBeath
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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