

Star Primary School

Star Lane, London, E16 4NH

Inspection dates 16–17 July 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The achievement of pupils from all backgrounds is good because the quality of teaching is good. Attainment by the end of Year 6 is broadly average.
- Teachers plan interesting work for pupils to do in class, as well as whole school projects that motivate them to work hard and capture their interest.
- Pupils' attitudes to school are extremely positive. They behave outstandingly well in lessons and around the school. Pupils feel extremely safe in school and have an excellent knowledge of how to keep themselves safe from harm.
- Teachers and additional staff are highly encouraging to pupils and act as strong role models. They promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development consistently well.
- Leaders, managers and governors, working with all the staff as a strong team, have successfully maintained the school's good overall effectiveness since the previous inspection.
- Leaders have made sure that teaching staff and additional adults receive high-quality training. For example, a strong focus on teaching letters and the sounds they make (phonics) has secured recent improvements in pupils' reading standards.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet outstanding. Sometimes, higher attaining pupils are not set suitably challenging work early enough in lessons.
- Checks made on the quality of teaching are not all focused sharply on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all year groups and undertook some joint observations with senior leaders. They observed 30 teaching sessions.
- Inspectors held discussions with groups of pupils, staff, members of the governing body and representatives of the local authority.
- Inspectors listened to groups of pupils reading. They looked at work in pupils' books and the school's information showing pupils' progress.
- The school website, development plans and records relating to safeguarding were also checked.
- The inspection took account of 10 responses to the Ofsted online survey (Parent View), the school's own analysis of a recent survey of parents' and carers' views, and 61 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Madeleine Gerard, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Samuel Ofori-Kyereh	Additional Inspector
Gill Walley	Additional Inspector
Abigail Misselbrook-Lovejoy	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Star Primary is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average. More pupils than the national average speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above the national average. An above average proportion is supported at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional government funding for looked after children, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and the children of service families) is above the national average. There are currently no children of service families at the school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school organises breakfast and after-school clubs.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching so that more pupils make rapid and sustained progress by ensuring that:
 - teachers set suitably challenging tasks for the most able pupils as soon as possible in lessons
 - leaders' and managers' evaluations of teaching quality focus on the extent to which it is bringing about rapid progress for pupils, in order to secure further improvements.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils from all backgrounds learn well as they progress through the school. Attainment at the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics is broadly average. Pupils make good progress over time from starting points that are generally low.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because they benefit from support and guidance in lessons from teachers and well-trained additional staff.
- Although higher attaining pupils achieve well, they are not always given difficult work early on in lessons to help them make swifter progress in their learning and reach higher standards.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium also achieve well. Their scores were behind the others in reading, writing and mathematics by two terms in last summer's national assessments. This was a similar gap to that found nationally. Current pupils who are eligible for the funding make good progress in their learning.
- Leaders and managers together with staff make sure all pupils, including those from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language, make similar good progress. This shows that the school successfully promotes equality and tackles discrimination.
- Regular sessions on phonics for younger pupils help them to develop their reading skills well. The results of the phonics screening check for six year olds shows pupils' growing fluency in reading both familiar and new words.
- Children in Nursery and Reception classes are happy. Strong relationships with parents and carers help them to support their children's learning effectively because they are encouraged to spend time reading books with their children each morning in the classrooms. Close attention to speaking and language in the Early Years Foundation Stage helps children to overcome low starting points for their age and make strong gains, although their attainment is still below average at the end of the Reception Year.

The quality of teaching is good

- Good teaching over time has enabled pupils to make good progress and achieve well. Teachers plan interesting activities that engage and motivate their pupils. Positive relationships contribute to an inspiring atmosphere for learning through the school.
- Additional adults support pupils' learning well in lessons. They make sure lower attaining pupils and those who have special educational needs keep up in lessons by explaining new learning clearly and showing them how to complete tasks.
- Teachers plan activities that are fun and challenging. Whole-school project themes, such as the recent river project, involve the whole school community. Homework includes tasks for pupils to complete with their parents and carers to help involve them in supporting their children's learning at home. One recent example is a model boat making competition that included the opportunity to explore, in school, which boat designs floated successfully in water.
- Marking across the school has been developed and is often helpful in making clear how pupils can improve their work in order to move up to the next level. In a few classes, teachers do not give detailed enough feedback to help pupils reach the highest levels in their work, or make sure that pupils respond fully to their comments.
- Children begin to develop their reading and writing skills when they enter the Nursery and Reception classes. Adult-led sessions prioritise key skills. Children in a Reception class working with an adult were challenged to write five sentences about what they might see at the seaside. Activities for children to choose for themselves are not all as consistently well planned to help children make rapid progress.
- Higher attaining pupils are sometimes expected to complete the same work as the others before they commence more difficult tasks. They often find these tasks easy and, as a result, they are

not always as challenged in their work as they should be and do not make the progress of which they are capable.

- In most lessons, pupils quickly become involved in tasks and learning proceeds well. However, occasionally pupils spend too long listening to teachers' explanations at the beginning of lessons. As a result, in these lessons their progress is not as brisk because they do not become involved soon enough in finding things out for themselves.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is outstanding. They are very polite, friendly and considerate. Pupils from many different backgrounds get on immensely well together because they have extremely good relationships with other pupils and the staff.
- Attitudes to learning are exemplary. Pupils take part in lessons very willingly as their eager responsiveness shows. They work very sensibly together in groups in class.
- Strong listening and teamwork skills are shown in the enthusiasm of older pupils to take a leading role as prefects, members of the school council and house captains. They are also very confident to organise projects on their own initiative, promoting their independence very well. One example of this is a Year 6 end-of-year book that a group of pupils have created to record happy memories of their time at the school, and raise money for charity.
- Pupils feel very safe at school. Advice and guidance on keeping safe, including anti-bullying and personal safety events, visitors to the school and steps to follow to keep safe when using public transport or computers all help pupils develop an excellent knowledge of how to keep themselves safe from harm. Pupils are exceedingly confident that any problems are sorted out thoroughly, as the school's records clearly show.
- The breakfast and after-school clubs ensure that all those pupils who attend them enjoy a happy and positive start and end to the day. They make friends readily with pupils in other classes and appreciate the range of activities that are available.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and other senior leaders provide strong direction for the school and are determined that the school will continue to improve. School leaders and members of the governing body have developed a dedicated staff team who are committed to the aims of the school, as the overwhelming positive questionnaires from staff show.
- The school's development planning is focused and linked to raising outcomes for pupils. The success of improvements is measured against pupils' achievement.
- Regular professional development is provided for teachers and additional adults, for example on the teaching of phonics, and on marking and feedback on pupils' work. This is helping to secure improvements.
- Leaders have maintained the good quality of teaching and pupils' achievement since the previous inspection. The quality of teaching is checked regularly. However, some assessments of teaching quality focus more on what teachers are doing in lessons than on how well teaching helps pupils to learn and make progress.
- The curriculum is enriched by the regular teaching of French, music, art and physical education, taught by specialist teachers, which enhances pupils' cultural development. Pupils enjoy the clubs that the school runs, as well as outings and visits including a residential stay in France for pupils in Year 4, and another to the Lake District for pupils in Year 6. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very effectively.
- Equality is championed at all levels. Senior leaders ensure there is no discrimination. Together with governors and staff, they make sure all pupils have an equal chance to benefit from all the school has to offer.
- The local authority provides light touch support for this good school.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Members of the governing body know the school well and how well pupils achieve. They attend training for their roles in order to keep up to date with current developments in education. They know the school's strengths and where improvements are needed. They check how well pupils, from all backgrounds, currently at the school make progress and are aware of how well the school is performing compared to others. Governors are aware of the quality of teaching, and are fully aware of how the school manages staff performance, although they do not always rigorously check that evaluations of teaching by senior leaders focus enough on the impact teaching has on pupils' learning and progress over time. Governors are knowledgeable about the use of pupil premium funding and the impact it is having. The governing body makes sure that safeguarding duties are met.

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	102746
Local authority	Newham
Inspection number	413195

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	696
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Helen Lavelle
Headteacher	Cathy Wilson
Date of previous school inspection	4–5 November 2009
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