

Princess May Primary School

Princess May Road, London, N16 8DF

Inspection dates

27–28 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Pupils make good progress and achieve well. By the end of Year 6, they reach average standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now typically good. In the majority of lessons, teachers set suitably demanding activities and most pupils receive good written and verbal advice on how to improve further.
- Pupils from different groups, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, make good progress. Their needs are very well understood and support for them is skilfully targeted.
- Provision in the Nursery and Reception classes is good. From starting points that are often well below those expected for their age, children make good progress.
- Behaviour is good, in lessons and around the school. Staff consistently use the 'stay on green' system so that learning is not disrupted. Pupils feel safe, have positive attitudes towards school and genuinely enjoy their studies.
- The school is led and managed well and the senior leaders act as positive role models for both staff and pupils. Leaders have successfully improved the quality of teaching and this has led to improved achievement.
- Governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses. They provide good support and also ask demanding questions to make sure it keeps on improving.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The proportion of outstanding teaching is not high enough to result in all pupils making rapid progress. Pupils are not always given enough opportunities to take responsibility and challenge themselves.
- A small number of pupils are not absolutely clear about how to improve their work and reach their learning targets.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 22 lessons, four of which were jointly observed with the headteacher. In addition, the inspection team made a number of other short visits to observe support and small-group booster sessions.
- Inspectors also attended three school assemblies, one in each key stage.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and met with two different groups of pupils. They spoke with three school governors and two local authority representatives. They also spoke to school staff, including senior and subject leaders.
- Inspectors took account of the 35 responses to the online Parent View survey when carrying out the inspection. They noted the contents of a letter received from a parent or carer and also spoke to parents and carers who were bringing their children to school. Parents' and carers' views were also sought during an open session in the Early Years Foundation Stage, while they were visiting to read with their children.
- Inspectors also considered the responses to the school's own recent surveys completed by parents and carers, pupils and staff.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's data on pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring documents, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- An inspector also spoke with pupils attending the breakfast club.

Inspection team

Aune Turkson-Jones, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Jill Thewlis	Additional inspector
Paula Craigie	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is bigger than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are from minority ethnic groups and the proportion who speak English as an additional language is well above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional government funding provided for looked-after children, those known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils with a parent or carer in the armed forces, is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school throughout the year is above average.
- The breakfast club on site is managed by the governing body.
- There is also a play centre on the school site, which is used outside school hours by pupils from Princess May and other local schools and did not form part of the inspection.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
 - making sure that all teachers consistently create more opportunities in lessons for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning, so that they challenge themselves
 - making sure that all pupils are given high-quality written and verbal feedback so that they have a clear understanding of how to improve their work and reach their targets.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children joining the school in the Nursery class have skills that are generally well below the levels expected for their age. They make good progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage because teachers and adults place a strong emphasis on developing early reading and writing skills and encourage their interest and enjoyment in learning.
- Pupils make good progress through the school and by the end of Year 6 are reaching standards which are average overall. In previous years, standards at the end of Year 6 have been below average because teaching required improvement. School information shows that all pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2 have made good progress since the quality of teaching improved. Pupils are now on track to achieve their best ever results in both key stages.
- Parents, carers and pupils say that progress is now good. Gaps in attainment between girls and boys are closing. Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals also achieve well. Their average points score is ahead of others' nationally for English and mathematics and their achievement in writing is particularly good.
- In school, the difference in points scores between those known to be eligible for the pupil premium and other pupils is reducing in both English and mathematics. Currently these students are achieving lower points scores than the rest of the pupils in both. The extra funding is used very effectively to provide targeted support in school. The school also runs several after-school clubs, including five homework clubs (two in different languages), four mathematics clubs and six literacy clubs.
- Standards of reading have risen over recent years and are now average. The more-able pupils in Years 2 and 6 read fluently and with good expression, demonstrating skill levels in line with those expected for their age. Less able pupils in these year groups show a secure grasp of the principles of reading and how they have been taught to cope with unfamiliar words. Pupils speak with enthusiasm about their enjoyment of reading.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive good quality support and achieve well as a result. Additional funding to provide specialised adult support for smaller groups daily has been highly effective in promoting pupils' success in learning.
- The achievement of pupils from minority ethnic groups is similar to that of other pupils and is now good. Those who speak English as an additional language also make good progress because the school identifies their language needs early on and provides good support. The school is also highly active in working with parents and carers and organising workshops to encourage them into school. An example is the Saturday school for the Turkish speaking families.
- Pupils achieve well because of good quality teaching, and occasionally outstanding teaching leads to rapid progress. However, not all pupils achieve at the highest levels, because not all teaching really stretches pupils' thinking, independence and their ability to direct themselves to achieve.

The quality of teaching is good

- Lesson observations, work seen in pupils' books and the school's own records show that typically good teaching over time enables pupils to make good progress and achieve well. This evidence also shows that teaching has improved over time and is occasionally of very high quality.
- Teachers in the same year groups work closely and plan together well, carefully taking account of what pupils already know, understand and can do. This ensures that activities are suitably demanding for most pupils and engage the interest of both boys and girls, motivating them well.
- The school provides good support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. All pupils receive high-quality support from teachers and specialist teaching assistants at the right level for them within lessons and in one-to-one or small-group activities. Their progress is carefully checked so that they achieve well.

- Activities are varied and teachers use different methods and resources to bring subjects to life. They use information and communication technology (ICT) and a range of activities to involve pupils more actively in their learning. Pupils have access to small handheld computers and show high levels of interest, motivation and enjoyment of learning. This contributes to their good progress.
- Pupils are keen learners and willingly rise to the challenges set for them by their teachers. For example, in a mathematics lesson, some of the younger pupils worked happily through a series of two and three digit number comparisons. They shared ideas with others and checked their work, without the need for the teacher to direct them. Using the 'maths working wall', pupils were able to steer their own learning and deepen their understanding of 'greater than' and 'less than'.
- Teachers are sometimes very effective in creating opportunities for pupils to apply ideas so that pupils can understand how they learn and how to achieve greater success in their work. However, this good practice is not yet widespread across the school and sometimes teachers are not always clear enough in setting out their expectations to pupils, or in helping them to direct their own learning.
- Marking across the school has improved and is good in most lessons and subjects. Pupils say that they value this as it helps them to know how to improve. Nevertheless, occasionally teachers do not give detailed enough feedback to help pupils reach the highest levels in their work. Pupils are beginning to check their own understanding more frequently and also respond to teachers' comments, showing that they are more aware of how to improve their work and reach their targets.
- Homework is set regularly each week and the school's homework clubs help all pupils receive effective help and support in order to be able to complete the work successfully.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are polite and well behaved around the school. They hold doors open for each other and for adults, and frequently help others without being asked to. They respond well in class, especially when teaching is good, and show positive attitudes to learning.
- Some of the school's most challenging pupils meet with the headteacher on a daily basis to feed back on their own performance. They frequently comment that they have been 'highly focused' and receive his praise with a sense of pride. This has contributed to their improved attitudes to learning and behaviour in school.
- The parents and carers who responded to the school's own questionnaires, staff and pupils agree that behaviour in lessons and around school has improved since the last inspection.
- Pupils are proud of their school and all speak positively about how the atmosphere has changed for the better. There is a strong sense of community which pupils greatly value. They treat each other with mutual respect and are tolerant of others' differences.
- Taking on the roles of school councillors and monitors around the school, pupils are able to be actively involved in having a say about their school and show their pride in being a part of it.
- Older pupils act as positive role models for the younger ones and, seated on benches, keep a watchful eye on behaviour during school assemblies.
- Staff manage pupils' behaviour consistently well and the school's 'stay on green' system has contributed directly to the calm and positive atmosphere in the school. Behaviour is not yet outstanding because pupils do not always manage their own behaviour to a high enough standard without the need for adult intervention.
- Bullying is rare and dealt with effectively when it occurs. Pupils spoke with confidence about having an adult to speak to if they had any concerns about any form of bullying. Pupils understand risk and know about different types of bullying and how to keep themselves safe, especially on the internet. There are few racist incidents and discrimination is not tolerated.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school and know how to keep themselves safe outside.
- Attendance has improved and is now in line with the national average. The school continues to

work with the learning mentor and attendance officer to ensure that parents and carers understand the importance of pupils being good attenders.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and school leaders have shown themselves to be positive role models and have successfully changed the climate in school to one where pupils are keen to learn and determined to succeed. Pupils strive to improve their writing so that they can earn and keep their 'pen licence'. The headteacher carries his own licence and leads by example.
- The school reviews all aspects of its work regularly and has developed its own system to track and monitor pupils' progress. Leaders act quickly to address any gaps and make sure that the pace of progress is not hampered. Plans to raise standards are linked directly to the checking of teaching and learning and in turn to pupils' progress. School leaders have been successful in raising standards of reading, writing and mathematics across the school.
- Leaders make sure that the way they check on teachers' performance links directly to whole-school priorities, the impact on pupils' progress and, in turn, staff salaries. This has raised the quality of teaching and pupils' learning.
- Pupils are taught a broad and interesting range of subjects and topics. This is supported by a vast number of extra-curricular clubs and activities. Special events and trips, such as the Year 5 residential week in rural Kent, provide inspiring and memorable experiences, which help to boost pupils' environmental awareness and develop their own views and personal qualities.
- Pupils enjoy the different subjects they study and high proportions involve themselves in after-school clubs. Pupil premium funding enables those who are eligible to participate in a wide range of activities and also provides free access for them. This has helped pupils to feel more settled and be more fully included in the life of the school and has secured their good progress in line with their peers.
- Equal opportunities are rigorously promoted. No pupil, regardless of background or need, is denied access to anything the school has to offer. The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. A strong pastoral programme ensures the all-round development of each pupil. The school has strong links with the local community, and boosts cultural knowledge with a series of visits and trips.
- The local authority has provided limited support for the school. It is in the early stages of a partnership to help the school to improve further.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors work in close partnership with school leaders. They show a clear determination to raise pupils' achievement further, while retaining a strong commitment to support the emotional and pastoral needs of each pupil. Members of the governing body have developed their skills and are beginning to work more proactively within the school. Governors have a good awareness of the key areas of the school's work and how well the school is performing in relation to other schools. They are aware of the strengths and areas for development in teaching. They use available data to make comparisons with national expectations and are committed to enhancing and refreshing their own skills with additional, relevant training. Governors ensure that financial resources are efficiently managed, for example in the way that pupil premium money is spent on providing free places in a range of clubs and on a booster teacher for Year 6 pupils. They see that targets to improve the performance of staff are checked carefully and that teachers' pay is linked to how well pupils are doing. The headteacher's performance is managed robustly. Governors' monitoring is thorough and visits are recorded. This helps them to have an insightful working knowledge of the school's strengths and what can be improved further. They have a secure overview of the budget.

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	100329
Local authority	Hackney
Inspection number	404717

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	450
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kristofer McGhee
Headteacher	Stephen Spooner
Date of previous school inspection	2 March 2011
Telephone number	020 72541589
Fax number	020 72543024
Email address	sspooner@princessmay.hackney.sch.uk

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