

# Robert Browning Primary School

King and Queen Street, Walworth, London SE17 1DQ

## Inspection dates

15–16 November 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	<b>Good</b>

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Since the last inspection, there has been a decline in pupils' achievements. In key stages 1 and 2, pupils do not make good progress from their starting points.
- Standards of attainment in reading and mathematics by the end of Years 2 and 6 are too low, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and the most able. While standards are now improving, gaps remain in pupils' knowledge and skills. Pupils do not achieve their full potential.
- The quality of teaching is improving but remains variable. Teachers' planning and the activities provided do not take pupils' starting points into account consistently effectively.
- Expectations of how pupils should present their work and of how teachers should give feedback to pupils have been raised. However, not all staff adhere to these. Good teaching practices that exist are not widely shared among staff.
- The quality of support from additional adults is variable. The strategies used to support some pupils' learning are not effective. As a result, some pupils do not progress quickly enough.
- New middle leaders have recently been established. Their roles are still developing and there has been insufficient time to measure the impact of their actions.

### The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher's strong leadership and determination, together with the effective support from senior leaders and from governors, are paying off. The school is now improving at a good rate.
- Across the school, teaching is improving and standards are rising.
- The teaching of phonics is good. An above-average proportion of pupils in 2017 met the required standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check.
- Early years provision is good. Children are taught well and make good progress.
- Pupils' behaviour around school and in classes is good. Pupils learn and socialise very well together. Pupils are proud of their school.
- Arrangements to keep pupils safe are effective. Pupils feel safe. They enjoy school and this reflects in their regular attendance.
- Parents are unanimous in their praise of how well their children are cared for.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' standards of attainment in reading and mathematics in key stages 1 and 2, particularly disadvantaged pupils and the most able, so that all pupils reach their full potential.
- Ensure that teaching, learning and assessment lead to good progress over time for all groups of pupils by:
  - identifying precisely the gaps in pupils' knowledge in order to create planned learning opportunities that take account of pupils' starting points
  - improving the strategies that additional adults use to support pupils' learning
  - making sure that the school's policies for the presentation of work and the feedback given to pupils by teachers are consistently applied across the school.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management further by:
  - sharing good teaching, learning and assessment practice more widely across the school
  - developing the skills of middle leaders so that they can be more effective.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Since his appointment in September 2017, the headteacher has worked quickly to determine what is required to ensure that the historic underachievement of pupils is tackled. He is very ably supported by senior leaders who wholeheartedly support the raised expectations of the headteacher. All senior leaders now believe that 'every learning minute counts'. Governors fully support the changes made. They have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
- Parents welcome the visible presence of the headteacher and staff every day. As a result, communication has improved. The already strong relationships with parents are enhanced because parents say that any information they share is acted upon quickly.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate. A thorough analysis of information on pupils' achievement was carried out and is used as a basis for school improvement planning. This, together with a more rigorous approach to improving teaching practice, is beginning to impact successfully upon pupils' progress across the school.
- New middle leaders are quickly learning how to carry out their roles. They now use the information from meetings about pupils' achievement to ensure that their actions reflect what needs to be done. However, their skills are still developing.
- Senior staff check the quality of teaching thoroughly and follow up any weaknesses that exist. There remains scope to share strong teaching practice more widely, however, as the quality of teaching is still too variable in key stages 1 and 2.
- Pupils enjoy their planned learning opportunities. The curriculum has interesting topics for pupils to learn. The topics are being supplemented by good-quality reading texts and educational visits. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well and is a key component in all year groups. One parent commented, 'The school does a great job of taking advantage of everything London has to offer to make a more engaging learning experience.'
- The pupil premium funding over the last two years has not been used effectively to raise the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. However, from September 2017, leaders have reviewed how the funding is spent. Due to a more strategic approach, disadvantaged pupils' learning and social needs are met more effectively.
- Leaders use the primary school physical education (PE) and sport funding successfully. It provides rich opportunities for pupils to experience high-quality sports provision in PE lessons and in extra-curricular opportunities.

### Governance of the school

- Governors know what the school needs to do in order to improve. They know the priority is to improve teaching, learning and assessment in order to improve pupils' progress and attainment.

- Changes to how the governing body gathers information about curriculum subjects mean that governors have more detailed information about how pupils' achievement is improving.
- Governors are aware that the funding for disadvantaged pupils has not had the desired impact over the past few years. They have started to challenge leaders further to ensure that the funding is spent effectively to ensure improved outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.
- Governors are clear about their safeguarding responsibilities. They check that the statutory requirements required for employing staff are completed and have annual safeguarding training to maintain their knowledge.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have ensured that clear and well-understood policies and procedures to record any concerns that adults may have about pupils' well-being are in place. There are excellent relationships with families and, therefore, any concerns are raised immediately with parents.
- Staff and governors receive the relevant training to fulfil their statutory requirements. The recording of pre-employment checks for staff and agencies on the school's single central register is meticulous. Numerous cross-referenced checks are carried out to ensure that accurate information is maintained.
- Pupils feel safe in school. They are well informed about how to keep themselves safe, including on the internet. The school provides information sessions for parents to support e-safety at home.
- All of the parents who gave their views are confident that their children are safe in school.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- Until very recently, expectations of what pupils could achieve have been too low. There have been particular weaknesses in the teaching of reading and mathematics that have led to very low achievement by the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2. In the past, teachers did not have secure knowledge of what pupils were expected to learn. There are now gaps in some pupils' current knowledge and understanding.
- Leaders are making sure that teaching is improving. This is leading to better progress of pupils. The new headteacher and his senior team have raised the expectations of what pupils can achieve. A new method to assess pupils and plan lessons is helping teachers to improve their teaching. This means that pupils' progress in reading and mathematics is improving. However, the quality of teaching still remains variable. There is more work to do to ensure that the gaps in pupils' learning are pinpointed and that planned learning takes account of pupils' starting points. This is particularly the case for the most able and those who are disadvantaged.

- Pupils listen very well to teachers' instructions. They cooperate successfully with each other when working together. They are respectful of others' views and enjoy the planned learning as it is usually interesting.
- Pupils are enthusiastic when the teaching is strong. This was particularly evident for older pupils in science and history. Younger pupils thoroughly enjoyed learning to play hockey during their PE lesson and learning about the seasons in science.
- In key stages 1 and 2, teaching is too variable in quality. Not all teachers adhere to the school's teaching policies, such as for the high expectations of how the pupils present their work and the feedback that is given to pupils. Pupils' progress is not consistently good as a result.
- The quality of support from other adults, such as teaching assistants, in supporting pupils' learning is also variable. Some pupils benefit from effective support, reflected in adults' clear explanations, specific questioning and the good use of practical resources. However, some adults are unclear about what is being taught or expected. As a result, progress is inconsistent.
- Phonics is taught well. The majority of younger pupils use their phonics skills to break down unfamiliar words into sounds and then put them back together with confidence. Older pupils read with confidence but some struggle to describe what the author is implying in the book.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. One parent commented, 'I have complete peace of mind when my children go to school. I know that the adults will look after them.'
- The school is a friendly and welcoming place. Pupils are confident, polite and clearly proud of their school.
- Pupils are positive and enthusiastic about all that the school offers. There are good opportunities for pupils to share their good work with the rest of the school and their parents.
- Pupils feel safe in school. They know how to keep themselves safe when using the internet. They say that they can talk to any adult if they are worried.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are attentive in class and respond quickly to instructions. This means that they can start their learning tasks quickly.
- Pupils walk calmly and quietly around the school building and line up quickly in the playground so that they can enter the school building swiftly. Lunchtime is well led and managed and leads to another calm environment for pupils to enjoy their lunch and play.

- In all classes, pupils were able to negotiate very successfully with each other, confidently stating their opinion and reaching an effective conclusion to their task.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. Their attendance is in line with national expectations for primary pupils. If a pupil's attendance drops, the attendance officer challenges the poor attendance and will involve the educational welfare service if required.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Requires improvement

- Over the last two years, pupils in key stage 1 and key stage 2 have not attained highly enough. Standards have been below national figures, particularly in reading and mathematics. In key stages 1 and 2, pupils do not make good progress from their starting points.
- Across the school, too many pupils are not sufficiently challenged. As a result, many pupils do not reach the standards of which they are capable, particularly the most able and disadvantaged pupils.
- Since September 2017, there have been improvements in pupils' progress across the school, particularly in mathematics. Older pupils in key stage 2 have suffered a legacy of weak teaching, which has left gaps in their learning. This is being addressed by strong teaching in Year 6.
- Disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium make slower progress in reading and mathematics than others. Over the last few years, the funding has not been spent successfully, resulting in less progress than expected for disadvantaged pupils.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are usually well supported from their starting points to catch up with their peers. However, over time, they did not make good progress from their starting points. The quality of support from additional adults was variable.
- The teaching of phonics has improved significantly over the previous year. The vast majority of pupils are able to use their phonics knowledge confidently and accurately with unfamiliar words. The successful teaching of phonics starts in the early years and results in pupils being confident writers throughout the school.

### Early years provision

### Good

- Leadership of the early years is good. There is a secure understanding of the strengths and areas to develop in the early years. Teaching and outcomes for children have improved significantly since the last inspection.
- Children enter Reception with starting points that are below typical for their age, particularly in speaking, listening and reading. In 2017, the proportion of children, including disadvantaged children, who achieved a good level of development was above the national average.
- Teaching in the early years is effective because teachers use their assessments well to plan imaginative learning opportunities that the children enjoy. On occasions, some

learning opportunities are missed in the Nursery due to a lack of adult interaction with children.

- Parents say that staff encourage them to be involved in their child's learning and that they work in partnership. Parents value the information that they are given about their child's progress and how to support their child at home. All parents spoken to were complimentary about the education their child receives in the early years.
- Children use their phonics knowledge well to read and write words related to the good-quality whole-class reading book. There is a range of planned learning activities to ensure that the children's writing skills are a priority.
- Behaviour is good in the early years. Children play and learn together well. They can share resources and play with equipment successfully. This is the result of clear structures and routines being taught effectively.
- Safeguarding is effective in the early years and welfare requirements are met.

## School details

Unique reference number	100809
Local authority	Southwark
Inspection number	10041977

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	347
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Marianne Breedon
Headteacher	Craig Lilleyman
Telephone number	020 7708 3456
Website	<a href="http://www.robertbrowning.southwark.sch.uk">www.robertbrowning.southwark.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:headteacher@robertbrowning.southwark.sch.uk">headteacher@robertbrowning.southwark.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	27–28 November 2013

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school. There are two classes in each year group between Years 1 and 6 but there is one Reception class and small numbers of children in the Nursery class.
- Most pupils come from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is three times the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is much higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have support for SEN and/or disabilities is below average.
- The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is average.



- The current headteacher was appointed in September 2017.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for achievement in Year 6.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in every class, on several occasions accompanied by senior leaders. Inspectors also made short visits to lessons.
- Inspectors reviewed a sample of pupils' current books.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and deputy headteachers, governors and middle leaders. Inspectors spoke to parents at the beginning of the first day.
- Inspectors observed pupils at playtime and at lunchtime. Inspectors listened to pupils read.
- A range of documentation was scrutinised, including information about pupils' attainment and progress, records of the work of governors, plans to improve the school and safeguarding records and the record of recruitment checks.
- Inspectors took account of 30 responses to the online survey, Parent View, together with 14 responses from staff and 48 responses from pupils to inspection questionnaires.

## Inspection team

Neil Harvey, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Rani Karim	Ofsted Inspector
Dawn Titus	Ofsted Inspector
Julie Davey	Ofsted Inspector

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