

Wolvercote Primary School

First Turn, Wolvercote, Oxford, OX2 8AQ

Inspection dates 11-12 December 2012

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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Children make excellent progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because of consistently outstanding teaching. They are very well prepared for Year 1.
- Pupils' results in reading, writing and mathematics are above that found in most schools. Pupils demonstrate very good speaking and listening skills throughout the school.
- Most teaching is good and much is outstanding, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 6. Teaching is matched well to the needs of individual pupils. The best teaching is highly creative and effective.
- Pupils feel safe and happy at school and appreciate the school's caring approach towards them. Attendance is in line with most schools.
- Pupils' behaviour towards each other and adults is courteous and supportive.
- The school caters for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well.
- Leadership is outstanding because the swift action of governors and senior leaders has rapidly enhanced the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not all teaching is as good as it could be because a few lessons proceed at a slower pace and pupils lose concentration and become restless.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics is too slow.

Information about this inspection

- The school received half a day's notice of the inspection.
- The inspectors saw teaching in every class. They observed two assemblies, 19 lessons and part of a school performance for parents. Some lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Discussions were held with pupils, three members of the governing body including the Chair of Governors, the headteacher, staff and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors observed many aspects of the school's work, including supervision and support for pupils who need extra help. They examined pupils' work in their exercise books and on classroom and corridor wall displays.
- The inspectors looked at a number of documents including plans for what pupils will learn in each subject, plans for the school's future development, the school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe, pupils' attendance records, minutes of governing body meetings, records of how pupils' learning is checked and tracked and records of how the quality of teaching is checked.
- The views of parents were taken into account through reading the 76 responses to the on-line Parent View survey.
- Staff views were taken into consideration by looking at questionnaires completed by 22 staff members and discussions with several members of staff.

Inspection team

Steven Popper, Lead inspector

Seconded Inspector

Christopher Nye

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is of average size. It serves Wolvercote and the surrounding area of North Oxford.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations of pupils' attainment and the progress they make.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for additional government funding, known as the 'pupil premium', is much lower than the national average.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and who need extra help are slightly lower than in other schools nationally. Some of these pupils have physical disabilities while others have moderate learning difficulties or behaviour, emotional & social difficulties. Approximately two per cent of pupils have statements of special educational needs.
- A large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The school has Nursery and Reception classes as part of its Early Years Foundation Stage provision.
- The headteacher was appointed in April 2012 and the deputy headteacher was appointed in September 2012. There are two newly qualified teachers on the staff.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all teaching is consistently as good as the best by –
 - eliminating any low-level disruption of lessons caused by pupils' restlessness
 - managing some lessons better to ensure a brisk pace of learning
 - ensuring that pupils' progress in mathematics accelerates to match the good progress in reading and writing.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children do very well in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They start school with skills that are often above expected levels for their age but make higher than expected progress as they move through the Nursery and Reception Years. By the time they move to Year 1 they are doing much better than expected in all areas of their learning.
- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics throughout Key Stage 1. The result of the most recent national test in phonics (linking letters with the sounds they make) was well above most schools. A previous dip in pupils' attainment in writing has been successfully reversed through better and more extensive use of teaching strategies that have helped make writing more exciting and meaningful for pupils.
- Pupils make good progress in reading and writing throughout Key Stage 2. Progress in mathematics is slower, but recent changes to the way mathematics is taught have begun to speed up pupils' mathematical learning. However, this is not yet fully embedded across the key stage.
- Results of national tests in Year 6 are better than last year and consistently above most schools. In the most recent tests over a quarter of pupils achieved the higher levels in English and mathematics and more pupils made expected progress than in most other schools.
- Disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and others receiving additional support make good progress from their starting points. This is because they are supported very well by good quality teaching, well-tailored resources and effective support from teachers and teaching assistants, who have high expectations as to what individual pupils can achieve.
- Standards in speaking and listening are very high throughout the school.
- Pupils of all reading abilities are successfully encouraged to enjoy reading. They read widely and talk about books with enthusiasm. For example, one Year 2 boy talked with great relish about a series of novels he had read.
- While the content of pupils' work is of a high quality, the presentation of this work is not consistently of a high enough standard.
- Parents and pupils express very positive views about learning and progress.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently outstanding in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 6 and frequently outstanding in other classes, particularly Year 1 and Year 4, and is typically good or better across the school. This is the main reason for pupils' high levels of achievement and strong progress in most subjects.
- The creative nature of many lessons ensures that the learning is of high quality. For example, during one Reception class lesson children were excited by being given the role of detectives who had to track down 'ch' letters with their magnifying glasses, while one Year 3 lesson used extracts from Toy Story and Dr. Who very effectively to advance pupils' learning about the structure of stories. The teaching of mathematics has begun to fall in line with this creative approach more consistently, but still needs to develop further to ensure that pupils' progress in mathematics speeds up.
- Teachers consistently use questioning effectively to make pupils think clearly and check their understanding. They listen well to pupils and encourage them to offer ideas. The best lessons feature high quality dialogue between the pupils and teachers. This contributes to the high standards of speaking and listening throughout the school.
- Teaching assistants make very positive contributions to teaching and support pupils well.
- Teachers set targets for pupils' progress. Their marking of pupils' work is generally good because it ensures pupils understand what they need to do to progress further. Pupils also assess their

own work. This is especially strong in Year 6 where a written dialogue in pupils' books shows pupils taking responsibility for their own learning.

- Teachers have high expectations of all pupils, including the more-able, and offer them work that is set at the right level. This helps to ensure their good progress.
- Disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and others receiving additional support, for example through the use of pupil premium funding, make good progress because their needs are identified early on and teaching is well-matched to their individual needs.
- A consistent approach to the teaching of phonics and writing in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 has led to increased progress and higher standards of achievement in Key Stage 1.
- Homework is used effectively to extend pupils' learning.
- Pupils interviewed by the inspectors said that they enjoyed their lessons and felt they learned a lot in them. They thought the teachers supported their learning well and made it fun.
- All parents who left an opinion on Parent View thought that teaching in the school led to good progress by the pupils.
- In a small minority of lessons teaching is less effective because the pace of learning is not as brisk as it could be due to inconsistencies in classroom management. This leads to slower progress and some low-level disruption during those lessons.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils demonstrate very positive attitudes towards their learning and each other. Their behaviour in lessons is generally good and incidents of low-level disruption only occur in lessons that are less engaging or effective.
- Pupils are well-mannered and courteous in the playground and around the school. Their relationships with each other and with staff and other adults are supportive and respectful.
- Parents and staff are very positive about behaviour and raise no serious concerns. A very high percentage of parents who expressed an opinion on Parent View thought that behaviour in the school was good.
- Pupils understand what different types of bullying and cyber-bullying are and why they should be avoided. This understanding has been developed through the school's anti-bullying week, school assemblies and work on internet safety that has been put on display. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and treat others respectfully when using the internet.
- Pupils feel that bullying is very rare in the school. Their opinion is supported by the school's extensive records of behaviour.
- The school promotes pupils' moral understanding and empathy for others wherever possible. For example, in one Year 1 lesson about letter-writing pupils were encouraged to write to Santa in a way that demonstrated courtesy and considered how he might feel about letters that were rude or overly demanding in tone.
- The few pupils with behavioural needs in the school are very well supported and included throughout the school. When they are new to the school, such pupils make swift progress in adapting their behaviour to acceptable levels. No pupils are excluded.
- Pupils enjoy school and feel cared for and valued. Attendance is in line with that of most other schools.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Since their appointments the headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior leaders have rigorously pursued excellence and communicated very high ambitions for the maximum levels of achievement and learning for all pupils.
- Measures put in place by the headteacher since her appointment to improve the achievement of pupils and the quality of teaching are already having results. Staff are effectively deployed to

ensure that the best use is made of their individual strengths. The responsibilities of subject leaders and the newly-appointed deputy headteacher have been strengthened and have resulted in the success in pupils' progress in all subjects being accurately measured. This is consistently good.

- Recent developments in the way phonics and early writing are taught have led to improved progress for pupils across Key Stage 1. The rapid and deep-seated improvements to the Early Years Foundation Stage have resulted in this part of the school being outstanding in terms of the quality of its teaching and the achievements of its children.
- Senior leaders have a detailed and accurate knowledge of the quality of teaching across the school and its impact on pupils' progress and achievement. Performance management is explicitly linked to improvements in pupils' progress and all teachers are very clear about what is expected of them. The headteacher and assessment coordinator track individual pupils' achievements in substantial detail in order to ensure that provision for all groups of pupils is well-matched to their learning needs and results in improvements in their progress.
- The school's assessment of its own strengths and areas for development is accurate, detailed and precise. The school development plan makes explicit links to improving pupils' progress further and contains well-judged targets for school improvement and a clear timescale for meeting these.
- The subjects that pupils learn are broad, balanced and relevant to their needs. This is illustrated by the wide-ranging displays of pupils' learning and work in English, mathematics, art, internet safety, healthy eating, geography and other subjects.
- The school provides outstanding opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, in an outstanding assembly that Year 3 pupils presented to parents, they demonstrated their enthusiasm for the wide range of learning that they had undertaken since September.
- The local authority provides effective support to the school. Its analysis of data has supported and informed the judgements of the headteacher and assessment coordinator.
- Leaders effectively promote equality within the school community.
- The school ensures that all pupils are safe. It keeps very good records of its work in this area. Systems to keep pupils safe meet statutory requirements.
- Parents and staff have confidence in school leaders. They approve of the headteacher's ambitions for pupils' learning and achievement. Recent measures initiated by the headteacher, such as parent forums, have led to much improved communication between school and parents.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - A very strong working relationship exists between school leaders and governors. Governors are well-trained and active in effectively holding school leaders to account over the strategic direction of the school and the quality and impact of its provision for pupils. Governors' monitoring of the quality and impact of teaching is constant and rigorous. Governors visit the school regularly to scrutinise teaching and data about pupils' progress and results. As a result their impact on performance management of staff is very effective with links being made between the quality of teachers' performance and their pay. They ensure that resources are used effectively to support the school's drive for improvement. For example, they carefully scrutinise how pupil premium funds and other resources are used and ensure that they are utilised where they have the most impact on pupils' progress and learning and narrowing any gaps in attainment between groups.

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	123051
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	403505

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	250
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gwen Scott
Headteacher	Frances Bartlett
Date of previous school inspection	21–22 January 2008
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