

Overstone Primary School

Sywell Road, Overstone, Northampton, NN6 0AG

Inspection dates 20–21 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.

- There has been a great deal of improvement since the last inspection. The majority of parents would recommend the school to others.
- The headteacher, staff and governors focus strongly on improving teaching by making sure that staff are well trained and supported in improving their practice.
- Because the teaching is good, pupils now make good progress and achieve well.
- By making sure that assessments are accurate, and using them to plan work at the right level, teachers help pupils to make good progress.
- A well-established system of regular checking to see how well pupils are progressing enables staff to provide extra help for any who are not making good progress.
- The range of help given to pupils is effective in increasing the progress that pupils make so that all groups achieve equally well.
- Although a small number of parents expressed concerns, the majority of parents say their children feel safe and most agree that behaviour is good.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning. Their enjoyment of school is evident in their high attendance.
- Previously, much of the responsibility for school improvement rested with the headteacher. Now, other staff help drive improvement too.
- Governance has improved considerably. Governors contribute strongly to making decisions, checking the school's work and measuring success. They effectively hold the school to account.
- The school evaluates itself accurately and knows its strengths and weaknesses well. Resources, including training for staff, are allocated wisely and well to support improvements.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not outstanding, and there are some inconsistencies in practice. Staff do not have a clear picture of what outstanding teaching looks like.
- The difference made through the use of pupil premium funding is not measured.

Information about this inspection

- A single inspector carried out seven lesson observations with the headteacher and saw four different classroom teachers. Altogether, three and three quarter hours were spent observing teaching and learning.
- The inspector held meetings with two parents, the headteacher, staff, a group of pupils, and representatives of the governing body. A meeting was held with a representative of the local authority and a telephone discussion was held with an officer of the local authority.
- Pupils' work, school documents, training records, data showing pupils' progress, and records of the school's observations of teaching and staff checks were scrutinised. Pupils in Year 2 read to the inspector.
- The inspector took account of 15 questionnaires completed by staff and responses made by 38 parents on the online questionnaire (Parent View). The inspector compared 25 parental responses submitted in 2012-13 with 13 responses in the last academic year on Parent View. The inspector also considered two letters from parents.

Inspection team

Susan Aldridge, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Overstone is smaller than the average primary school. It admits pupils from the village as well as a large proportion from further afield.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage but there is an increasing proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for additional government funding, called the pupil premium, because of their known entitlement to free school meals, is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported at school action is below average. The proportion at school action plus or with statements of special educational needs is above average. These include pupils with challenging behaviour, learning difficulties and visual or hearing impairment.
- No pupils on the school's roll attend any other establishment, or alternative provision.
- Shortly after this school year started, the Reception class had to be relocated to a temporary classroom on the school site while work was carried out on drainage.
- The school met the government floor standard in 2012; this is the minimum expectation of pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the teaching so that it is outstanding by ensuring that:
 - pupils have the time to respond to the comments made by teachers who mark their work
 - time is used to best effect in all lessons.
- Strengthen leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - all staff know what to do to make teaching outstanding
 - there are more frequent opportunities for children in Reception to engage in challenging physical activities
 - children's learning journals include a summary record of their progress
 - the school is able to measure the difference made by the use of pupil premium funding.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils enter the school with knowledge and skills below those expected at their age. As a result of good teaching, they make good progress to reach average standards by Year 6.
- Children in Reception have made increasingly good progress in past years. In the summer of 2012, a higher proportion reached or exceeded the expected level of development than ever before in literacy, mathematics and personal and social development. Despite a difficult start to this school year, almost all children have settled well and are making good progress.
- Pupils' literacy skills are developed well. By Year 2 pupils have strong skills in using letter sounds (phonics) to read unfamiliar words. Last year, pupils did very well in the national phonics screening check. They have good attitudes to reading and read often at home.
- Pupils in Year 6 read fluently and use their skills effectively to find information as well as for enjoyment. Through a recent initiative, staff have successfully encouraged wider and more frequent reading amongst older pupils.
- Since looking carefully at how well pupils' mathematical skills are encouraged, the school has placed a stronger emphasis on mathematical investigations. This has helped pupils tackle these with more confidence. Most older pupils have secure skills in mental calculations but a few are slow to complete these because they do not yet know all their multiplication tables.
- There are no marked differences in the progress made by boys and girls, pupils of different backgrounds or those with disabilities and special educational needs.
- Pupil premium funds are used appropriately and they improve outcomes for pupils. However, the school does not have systems to evaluate precisely what difference this funding makes to the rates of progress of these pupils. In 2012, Year 6 pupils who were eligible for free school meals reached higher standards on average than those who were not eligible.
- Pupils with disabilities and those who have special educational needs make equally good progress. Staff are quick to act on any concerns about progress, by securing access to specialist assessment or a service such as speech therapy, for example. There are good links with support services in the local authority and so pupils get the right sort of help to overcome their difficulties.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to use and apply their literacy and numeracy skills in topics that combine several subjects. Pupils are also confident in using the internet to find out information themselves. These skills prepare pupils well for secondary education.

The quality of teaching is good

- Since the last inspection, staff have worked hard under the headteacher's leadership to develop good teaching across the school. The drive for improvement has been well supported by training and the purchase of additional resources.
- The use of assessment is good. The school has developed robust ways of checking that teachers' assessments are accurate, including internal comparison of pupils' work and external checking.
- Good use is made of assessments to plan work that offers a suitable challenge to pupils of all abilities. The teaching of literacy in mixed-age groups of similar ability is particularly successful and provides good opportunities for social development. Planning identifies which pupils need support to boost their progress, and teachers vary tasks and resources to suit pupils' learning needs.
- Staff have high expectations of pupils. This was evident in a Year 5 and 6 mathematics lesson on ratio and proportion. Some pupils had found some aspects of this difficult the previous day. The teacher had adjusted the planning, targeted adult support where this was needed and provided opportunities for clarification, practice and further challenge so that pupils of all abilities made good progress and gained confidence in the topic.

- Occasionally, the time available in lessons is not used to best effect, such as when pupils cut and paste when they are carrying out a literacy activity. This slows their progress.
- Staff forge good, respectful working relationships with pupils. They use encouragement and praise effectively to motivate pupils. Pupils respect staff and are keen to do well. Good attitudes to learning are also evident in pupils' perseverance and generally good presentation of written work.
- Questioning to test pupils' knowledge and understanding is good. During lessons, staff circulate and check how well pupils are getting on so that individuals get the help they need. For those who need extra help to learn, the support is usually well-judged so that pupils do not become reliant on this.
- Since the last inspection, pupils have become more involved in assessing their own work. They use 'traffic lights' to judge how well they have met the learning objectives in each lesson. Older pupils also take part in progress meetings and know exactly what they need to do to improve in English and mathematics.
- Pupils' work is marked thoroughly, identifying successes and aspects in need of improvement. In the best examples, pupils respond to teachers' comments with statements such as 'I will try to do this next time'. However, this practice is not yet consistent across the school, and pupils are not routinely given the time to do this.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Since the last inspection, and with some external support and advice, the school has introduced a better system of rewards and sanctions. Pupils like the system. Younger ones are delighted to collect stickers, for reading for instance, and are keen to work towards certificates. Older pupils describe how the system has helped them to improve their behaviour.
- The 'traffic light system' is well understood by pupils and used consistently by staff. Parental satisfaction with pupils' behaviour has increased this year; the majority agree that behaviour is good, as do all staff.
- The school's records show that the majority of pupils behave well all the time. A small number with challenging behaviour are well supported so that they make good improvements. This is shown in a reduction of incidents over time and in the reduced number of exclusions of individuals.
- Pupils behave well in lessons, in assembly and at playtimes. Older ones willingly take on responsibilities such as looking after younger children, representing their peers as school councillors or helping to raise funds for charities.
- There is a low incidence of bullying and no racist incidents have been recorded in the school's log since the last inspection. Pupils say that they feel safe in school. Where there are individuals with challenging behaviour, the school has well-thought-out plans for helping such pupils behave better, and for keeping both pupils and staff safe during incidents.
- Attendance has been high for the last three years. The school takes prompt and robust action to make sure that absences are explained satisfactorily. Pupils enjoy all aspects of school life, talk about their favourite subjects and are enthusiastic about after-school clubs.
- Pupils know well how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations. They know about different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying, and what precautions to take when using social networking sites. They are well aware of how to stay safe in the community, such as when cycling on the roads and playing in public spaces.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher leads the school well and is ably supported by other staff who have taken on increased responsibilities since the last inspection. Together, they regularly check on aspects of the school's work and its performance.

- A shared understanding amongst staff of what good teaching looks like, together with training, support and sharing of good practice, has helped to secure teaching that is good and occasionally outstanding. Although the school improvement plan shows the intention to develop more outstanding teaching, there is not yet a shared view of what constitutes outstanding teaching.
- Evaluation of the school's performance has been strengthened by work done to ensure that teachers' assessments are accurate. Good use is made of this information to regularly check on pupils' progress. There is a good range of ways in which the school supports pupils who either need help to learn or simply a boost to get them up to levels expected at their age.
- Self-evaluation is used well to identify strengths and areas in need of improvement. The latter are built into a well-constructed school improvement plan, which contains a manageable number of priorities and is strongly focused on encouraging faster progress for all groups of pupils.
- Although the school uses its pupil premium funds appropriately, and can see that it improves outcomes for pupils, it cannot judge which strategies are most effective as it does not measure the difference that each makes.
- The local authority provides light-touch support for the school, which it has recently evaluated as good. The school has accessed a range of its support services, especially to help pupils with challenging behaviour. This has had a good impact.
- There is a wide range of learning experiences that encourage achievement, personal development and enjoyment. The school's staff and resources are used flexibly to meet changing needs. However, the outdoor learning area for Reception children does not offer challenging opportunities for physical development, particularly in terms of space in which to use wheeled toys.
- Teachers are set challenging targets and held to account for the progress made by the pupils they teach.
- Parental confidence in the school is high. Parents are involved effectively in supporting learning and kept informed about their children's progress through reports and meetings. However, for those who have children in Reception, there is no summary of progress included in their journals (annotated photographic learning records) and a few parents are not aware of the progress their children have made.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is strong. Through their strategy committee, governors contribute strongly to decision-making. Since the last inspection they have increased their skills in understanding and using data to hold the school to account. They ask challenging questions about teaching and its impact on pupils' performance and ensure that staff salaries are increased only when targets are met. Governors check first-hand on the school's work, such as examining data showing the number of accidents each term. They ensure that requirements for safeguarding are met. Staff are well trained in aspects of keeping pupils safe, including managing physical outbursts in such a way that staff and pupils are kept safe.

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	121849
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	406056

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	100
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sue Collins
Headteacher	Pauline Hulse
Date of previous school inspection	31 January 2011
Telephone number	01604 493861
Fax number	01604 492464
Email address	head@overstone.northants-ecl.gov.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

