

# Walsh Memorial Church of England Controlled Infants School

Ash Street, Aldershot, GU12 6LT

**Inspection dates** 11–12 December 2013

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- The vast majority of pupils make strong progress throughout their time in school. As a result, by the end of Year 2 their attainment is well above average for reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good, sometimes outstanding, progress, from their starting points.
- Teaching is consistently good and often outstanding. Teachers are caring, know their pupils well, and plan lessons to make sure all make at least good progress.
- Great emphasis is given to ensuring pupils' safety and good behaviour. Pupils love coming to school and say they feel safe and happy. Their behaviour when learning and around the school is, with very few exceptions, outstanding.
- The headteacher and assistant headteacher provide exceptionally good leadership to the staff and pupils. They are strongly supported in this by the highly competent and vigilant governing body. As a result, the school provides an excellent quality of education that has been sustained over time.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons and part lessons, of which two were joint observations with the headteacher.
- The inspectors talked with pupils, looked at samples of their work, and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were also held with teachers, the Chair of the Governing Body, the former Chair of the Governing body, present Vice Chair and other governors, the headteacher and assistant headteacher, and some of the school's subject leaders. A telephone conversation was held with a representative of the local authority to discuss the extent and impact of support provided to the school.
- In planning the inspection, the inspectors took account of the 51 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), the views of 12 parents who spoke with them during the inspection, and 19 questionnaires returned by school staff.
- The inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at many documents including minutes of governing body meetings, the school's checks on how well it is doing, the school's development plan, performance management documentation, planning documents, monitoring and assessment information, school policies, and records relating to attendance, behaviour and safety.

## Inspection team

John Collins, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Clementina Aina

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is a much smaller than average-sized infant school.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British and speak English as their home language.
- Fewer than one in eight pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which is well below average. This provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those from service families.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above average.
- There have been significant changes to the governing body in the past two years. There is a new Chair of the Governing Body and four new governors.
- The school has been awarded The University of London Institute of Education Every Child a Reader Accreditation, Healthy School status and the Eco-School Award.
- The inspection took place on the two days on which the school held its Christmas Nativity performance, involving all children for part of each day.

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

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by making sure that:
  - pupils' work is regularly marked and that the written feedback makes clear to pupils what they must do to improve.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### is outstanding

- Almost all pupils make excellent progress throughout the school. By the time they leave at the end of Year 2, they achieve well above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. The attainment of the current Year 2 is particularly strong in reading and, for a high proportion of pupils, in mathematics.
- A high proportion of children enter Reception with well below typical attainment, especially in numbers and reading. They make rapid progress and, as a result of consistently good or better teaching and strong home–school links, they enter Year 1 at levels above those expected for their age in these and most other areas.
- Reading is given special emphasis in all years and some pupils' reading is exceptionally good; they are fluent and read with engaging expression. The high quality of pupils' reading is reflected in the school's 'Every Child a Reader' accreditation from the University of London Institute of Education.
- Pupils in Year 2 use joined-up writing well to write simple sentences; their writing is often exceptionally good. One pupil, writing about the Nativity story, wrote amusingly, 'they looked long and hard but there were no hotels to stay.'
- The great majority of pupils also make good progress in mathematics because it is well taught. Pupils are able to solve problems mentally and practically. For example, by Year 2 they can correctly identify simple fractions and fold paper to find halves and quarters. The more-able pupils correctly identify shapes in which it is not possible to show one third by folding.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium make very good progress, often as a direct result of skilful support by teaching assistants who have been trained well. Most achieve as well as or better than other pupils in the school and reach well above average standards, especially in mathematics.
- Inspection evidence and school records show that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This is as a result of close checks on their progress, good teaching, and additional support.
- Almost all parents who responded to Parent View and in conversations with inspectors agreed that their child makes good progress. Several parents commented their child 'makes progress in reading and writing and mathematics in leaps and bounds'.

### The quality of teaching

### is outstanding

- Teaching throughout the school is consistently good and often outstanding. Lessons are well planned and lively. Teachers know pupils well and are very caring. They make clear to them what they are expected to learn, motivate them to do well, and encourage them to ask and answer questions.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, teachers use the inside and outside areas well to develop all areas of learning. They have a strong focus on developing language skills and provide many opportunities to encourage children to develop their vocabulary.
- Phonics (learning about the sounds that letters make) and most aspects of literacy are typically well taught and consequently pupils' speaking, listening and reading skills are outstanding throughout the school.
- Almost all lessons provide good levels of challenge requiring the pupils to think hard; this is especially true in mathematics lessons. For example, in a Year 1 mathematics lesson, the pupils were asked to talk with a partner and suggest words that mean 'add'. Many pupils offered suggestions such as plus, altogether, and one child suggested 'do the opposite of subtract'. They then worked in pairs to make up sentences that used these words, and numbers, correctly.

- In a Year 1 art class, pupils linked dance with art by acting out the swaying of a tree in the wind followed by using their knowledge of the seasons to paint different views of a tree in each of the four seasons. They shared their views about each other's work in a tactful, thoughtful and descriptive manner using words such as 'light green, and golden coloured, leaves'. They described how they felt sad when looking at a picture of the artist Mondrian's picture, 'Grey Tree' because it had no leaves.
- A few teachers do not provide regular and sufficiently helpful written advice when marking pupils' written work, or correct spellings. This limits the opportunities for pupils to make the most progress they can.
- Almost all parents who responded to Parent View and in conversations with inspectors were very positive about the quality of teaching.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are outstanding

- Pupils say they love coming to school, feel safe and are very happy to learn. This was clearly evident to inspectors, teachers and parents in the Christmas Nativity performance that involved all the children from Reception to Year 2. They sang tunefully and enthusiastically together from memory, danced beautifully, and acted their parts with confidence.
- The overwhelming majority of pupils have exceptionally positive attitudes to learning; they take part in learning activities with real enthusiasm because they are keen to do well. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school is almost always exemplary.
- The school promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils extremely well which is underpinned by the strong Christian values the school upholds. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong. For example, they know that it is wrong to say hurtful things to others. Pupils are extremely tolerant of the differences in others and know that if they are worried they can talk with an adult in the school. The school does not tolerate discrimination of any kind.
- Pupils say, and behaviour records show, that bullying is rare but if it happens teachers deal with it swiftly. Pupils say if they see unkindness, they tell the person it is wrong and tell an adult in the school knowing that it will be stopped.
- Pupils show much interest in their health and the environment and this has led to awards such as Eco-school and Healthy School status from national bodies.
- Pupils have a very strong awareness of various kinds of unsafe situations and understand about internet and road safety through the school's assemblies and its rich, vibrant curriculum. For example, they described to inspectors the use of Hector, a dolphin on the screen, who enables them to stop anything that worries them from appearing.
- Attendance and punctuality are above average. The school is very inclusive.
- Parents and staff have strongly positive views about behaviour and safety.

### **The leadership and management** are outstanding

- The headteacher and assistant headteacher provide strong and effective leadership, which is outstanding in many ways. They are well supported by knowledgeable and highly competent subject leaders. All have a relentless drive for continuous improvement in all aspects of the life and work of the school.
- The school makes sure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to succeed. All teachers are held to account and pupils' progress is checked at regular meetings. If any pupil is seen to underperform, extra help is arranged.
- Together with governors leaders give strong support to the professional development of teachers and teaching assistants and have created a true 'learning community' that extends to workshops for parents. The checks and improvements made on the quality of teaching are conducted rigorously and to good effect. As a result the school has sustained pupils' well above

average attainment, which is continuing to improve.

- The school's own evaluation of how well it is doing is accurate and makes clear where its strengths and weaknesses lie; in particular school staff undertake rigorous checks, in cooperation with other schools and the local authority, on the standards of pupils' work to ensure the accuracy of their judgements. Planning for further improvements is correctly focused on continuing to improve the achievement of all pupils. These measures have the full support of governors.
- The wide range of subjects and rich variety of activities are relevant to pupils' lives and motivate them to learn. They provide good opportunities for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils in accordance with the Christian ethos of the school.
- Home Learning in all years is strongly encouraged. It mostly focuses on reading and spelling. In Year Two some mathematics activities are also included and home learning includes self-learning projects that meet pupils' individual needs. The school works closely with parents to make sure pupils learn and develop well. They hold regular open mornings and afternoons and make effective use of surveys of parents' views. Their communication with parents, through 'parentmail' and text messages keeps parents well informed about their child's progress and activities.
- For example, the headteacher wrote to all parents asking their views on how the extra money received for sporting and physical activity could make the school's provision even better.
- As a result of this, and discussion with governors, funding for sports has been used very effectively. For example, to introduce new ways of introducing writing through using music, movement and exercise, new equipment for physical education and games and providing supply cover for the physical education coordinator to attend further training. It has also been spent on engaging an occupational therapist to provide training for Early Years' staff on children's physical development. This has raised the awareness of both staff and pupils about the importance of physical activity.
- The local authority regards the school as only in need of 'light-touch' support, based on its performance and the high quality leadership.
- Almost all staff, and parents responding to Parent View, say the school is well led and managed.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The well-trained and mostly experienced governors have very good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses and use this, alongside national information, to hold the school to account. For example, they closely monitor the progress of those eligible for the pupil premium and pupils' attendance. This has resulted in strong improvements in each of these areas. More recently they have shown interest in the use of the new sports funding and released funds for the further training of staff to enhance pupils' physical development. They are pleased with pupils' progress in writing through this new exercise-based approach.
- Governors are active in the life and work of the school, for example through regular visits and sometimes observing lessons, attending school events and parents' meetings. Their knowledge of the school enables them to take part in policy making and improvement planning.
- Governors are knowledgeable about the quality of teaching, and are very much involved in decisions about teachers' status and pay. Governors do not permit unjustified promotion or salary increases though they are concerned they have insufficient funds to reward excellence. Safeguarding is much discussed and is given high priority that includes safer recruitment procedures. They ensure that all statutory requirements are met, and have the capacity to assist the school with further improvements.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	125135
<b>Local authority</b>	Surrey
<b>Inspection number</b>	433178

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	172
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sue Whitehead
<b>Headteacher</b>	Suzie Cawson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	September 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01252 321426
<b>Email address</b>	head@walsh-memorial.surrey.sch.uk

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