

Horspath Church of England Primary School

Blenheim Road, Horspath, Oxford OX33 1RY

Inspection dates

9–10 October 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		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders and managers, including governors, are ambitious for the amount of progress all pupils are capable of making. They make rigorous checks on how well pupils are doing, continually and successfully striving to improve teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Staff work effectively together to ensure that pupils do well and that the school continues to get better.
- Pupils make good progress and achieve well by the end of Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs make progress similar to that of their classmates.
- Most teaching is good and some is outstanding. In most lessons, teachers and teaching assistants are effective in meeting the learning needs of different ability groups.
- Behaviour is almost always good in lessons and it is often outstanding. Children settle well in the Reception class. Pupils in Year 1 show particularly impressive levels of independence and responsibility during lessons.
- Effective steps are taken to keep pupils safe in school. Pupils are helped to gain good awareness of how to stay safe outside of school.
- A wide range of activities additional to lessons, including lunchtime and after-school clubs, broaden pupils' experiences and are enjoyed greatly.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A small amount of teaching does not ensure that all the pupils, and especially the most able, in the class improve at a good pace. The comments teachers make when marking pupils' books do not do enough to increase pupils' rate of progress.
- Not enough is done to ensure that pupils below the expected level in reading at the end of Year 1 catch up rapidly during Year 2.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed six lessons taught by four different teachers and another lesson for a group of pupils taught by a teaching assistant. Three lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher. In addition, the inspector made short visits, together with the headteacher, to other lessons to look at the teaching of reading skills.
- The headteacher was observed providing feedback on teaching to two teachers.
- Meetings were held with teachers, pupils and governors. Telephone discussions took place with a representative of the local authority and an external consultant who has carried out checks on the school. Informal conversations with pupils and parents also took place.
- Pupils' books were scrutinised during visits to classrooms and during a meeting with pupils. The inspector listened to some pupils reading.
- Other aspects of the school's work seen included an assembly, lunchtime and the start and end of the school day in classrooms and outside.
- School documents were examined, including records on the progress of pupils in each year group and the school's evaluation of how well it is meeting pupils' learning needs.
- Account was taken of the 61 responses to the online Parent View survey.

Inspection team

Alison Grainger, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. Pupils are taught in five classes, three of which include pupils from more than one year group. During the inspection, pupils in Year 6 were out of school on a residential visit.
- The proportions of pupils supported through school action, at school action plus or with a statement of special educational need are below average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support under the pupil premium funding is also below average.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and few speak English as an additional language.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teaching makes a good contribution to pupils' progress in all lessons and that more has an outstanding impact by:
 - always paying sharp attention to the next steps in learning of all ability groups, but especially the most able, during whole-class sessions and in activities provided for pupils to work on individually or in groups
 - making sure that marking tells pupils clearly what they need to do to improve their work, and giving pupils the necessary support and opportunities to act on the advice given.
- Speed up the progress of pupils whose attainment in reading was low at the end of Year 1 by using every opportunity in class lessons to develop their skills in this area.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children get off to a strong start in the Reception Year. From starting points that are generally as expected for their age, children attain standards that are usually a little above average by the time they transfer to Year 1. Last year, children did particularly well in developing their early reading skills. Current Reception children have a good understanding of the sounds that letters make and how these are applied in reading and spelling simple words.
- Over recent years, progress has been relatively slower in Year 1 and Year 2 than in other year groups. However, there is currently some excellent progress in Year 1, especially in reading, writing, speaking and listening. Pupils in Year 1 greatly enjoy the many activities provided for them to develop skills through practical activities.
- Last year, there were signs of progress speeding up in Year 2, when some pupils made great strides from their starting points to attain standards above the average level for their age. However, there is presently insufficient attention given in class lessons in Year 2 to speeding up progress for pupils whose skills in reading are weak.
- In most recent years, pupils' attainment has been well above average by the end of Year 6. Especially good progress from the start of Year 3 has been evident in English. In this subject, the proportions of pupils making expected and more than expected progress have not only compared well to the national proportions, but they have sometimes been particularly good in writing.
- Progress across the school slowed in mathematics after the last inspection, but pupils are now back on track in this subject. Pupils have benefitted well, for example, from well-planned and increased opportunities to carry out investigations, solve problems, and think for themselves in mathematics.
- The extra support provided for pupils in danger of underachievement, or who have special educational needs, results in most of these pupils making good progress. Disabled pupils are included fully and have their learning needs met well.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding make progress at much the same rate as their classmates and reach similar standards in their work. Pupils who speak English as an additional language also achieve as well as other pupils.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching that is nearly always good and occasionally outstanding ensures that most pupils achieve well. Improved mathematics teaching is currently compensating for past shortcomings in how well pupils' learning needs were met in this subject.
- The main strengths found in teaching at the last inspection have been maintained and built on further. In most lessons, teachers are effective in focusing on what different ability groups of pupils need to learn next. The use of teaching assistants to support learning is usually good and sometimes exceptional.
- Often, teachers deepen knowledge and understanding through probing questioning. In an English lesson in Year 3 and Year 4, for example, pupils were challenged to think carefully about the power of language in creating atmosphere. This set the scene well for writing activities in which pupils then applied their deepened knowledge and understanding, and so developed their skills well.
- Strong attention is given to the development of basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics. This means, for example, that when pupils engage in measuring length in mathematics, they understand how to measure carefully and accurately and also do well in selecting the best unit of measurement.
- When teaching was outstanding, such as in an English lesson in Year 1, activities in adult-led group sessions were precisely matched to pupils' needs. As a result, all pupils were challenged at

the right level in relation to their different starting points and capabilities. They moved forward rapidly in their knowledge and understanding of the structure of a story and the significance of the characters within it.

- All in all, expectations of pupils are high and this is communicated clearly so that pupils know what is expected of them. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are able to select to work on a task at a bronze, silver, gold or platinum level. They know, however, that they must not take the easy option and that their teacher will pick it up if they try to do so. Equally good is the way in which these older pupils are encouraged to tell their teacher if a task is too hard.
- In the small amount of teaching that requires improvement, assessment is not used to the full. Occasionally, this means that the most able pupils are not challenged sufficiently. Sometimes, the lesson is planned with too much attention to what pupils will do and not enough consideration for what they need to learn next. As a result, in such lessons, pupils do not always make as much progress as they are capable of.
- Oral feedback to pupils in lessons is usually good and, often, pupils are required to reflect productively on their new learning at the end of a lesson. Teachers are working to improve marking. Books are marked regularly and pupils are told clearly what they have done well, but there is too little use of marking to move learning forward. When pupils are set follow-up tasks, they do not always complete them. Sometimes, errors in basics such as punctuation are not dealt with adequately and so the pupil is not helped to avoid making the same mistake again.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils spoken with during the inspection said that they feel safe at school. The vast majority of parents and carers who had completed the Parent View survey also said that their children feel safe. Pupils say that they can approach a teacher if they are concerned about matters that might affect their safety and that they are taught how to stay safe, for example when using the internet.
- Behaviour in lessons is nearly always good and, when teaching is most effective, it is outstanding. Pupils' positive behaviour enables lessons to proceed smoothly and allows them to get on with their learning without interference. When pupils share their work with the class, others show that they respect and value their contributions and listen attentively.
- Pupils also show a good level of respect during prayers in assembly. They participated eagerly in an assembly taken by the vicar, contributing well to the telling of a story and responding thoughtfully to questions.
- Almost all pupils move sensibly around the school and are polite and courteous. However, not all pupils sustain the high standards of behaviour seen in lessons, for instance when queuing to enter the hall at lunchtime.
- Although there has been some bullying in the period since the last inspection, pupils say that bullying is now rare. They are sure that individual pupils or groups of pupils are not picked on because they are in any way different from others. The school is racially harmonious. Pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs are well integrated.
- Pupils are keen to take on responsibilities, such as those of 'hungry helpers', who assist with lunchtime arrangements, and 'playground pals', who help on the playground. They are proud of their school and say that they would recommend it to others.
- Pupils attend regularly and almost all are punctual to school. Lessons start on time.

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders and managers are effectively focused on improving the school and doing all that they can to ensure that pupils achieve well. As a result, the school has made good progress since its last inspection and it has been necessary for the local authority to provide only light touch

support.

- A dip in pupils' progress in mathematics was identified through good use of a new and more rigorous system for tracking pupils' progress implemented two years ago. Effective action was taken, including the provision of staff training, to improve mathematics teaching. Consequently, pupils report that their enjoyment of mathematics lessons has increased and that they are learning more.
 - Thorough analysis of data showing pupils' attainment and progress also leads to well-targeted and effective extra support for groups of pupils. As a result, those groups of pupils with previously low attainment have moved on rapidly in their learning.
 - Senior leaders are accurate in their evaluations of teaching and its contribution to learning when observing lessons, scrutinising pupils' work or checking data. Weaknesses in teaching are tackled robustly. The implementation of termly meetings to discuss pupils' progress has increased the accountability of both teachers and teaching assistants for pupils' learning. Even so, there remains a little teaching that requires improvement and aspects of marking are not consistently applied.
 - The school has maintained a good curriculum that contributes much to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are provided with many opportunities to work and play together and to reflect on their learning and experiences. They value opportunities to participate in the arts and sports and speak enthusiastically about the wide range of extra-curricular clubs.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - is good because governors are well informed and have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses
 - ensures that there is no discrimination and that the resources available to the school, including the pupil premium funding, are used well for the benefit of the pupils
 - ensures that safeguarding requirements are met and that policies, such as for health and safety, are well implemented
 - is effective in strengthening links with parents, for instance through the introduction of a governors' stand at parents' evenings.
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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	123121
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	403511

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	132
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Munaza Dogar
Headteacher	Emma Coleman
Date of previous school inspection	27 March 2008
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