

Whitley Park Primary and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	136512
Local authority	Reading
Inspection number	385885
Inspection dates	6–7 March 2012
Lead inspector	Wendy Forbes

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

Type of school	Primary and Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	619
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ruth Allen
Headteacher	Ann Tanner
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Brixham Road Reading Berkshire RG27RB
Telephone number	0118 937 5566
Fax number	0118 937 5198
Email address	admin@whitleypark.reading.sch.uk

Age group	3–11
Inspection date(s)	6–7 March 2012
Inspection number	385885



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.

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 2012



Introduction

Inspection team

Wendy Forbes	Additional inspector
Heidi Boreham	Additional inspector
Phillip Hibbs	Additional inspector
Una Stevens	Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspection team observed teaching and learning in 28 part-lessons, amounting to approximately 14 hours in total. Twenty four teachers were observed. For approximately one-third of the lessons, inspectors were accompanied by the headteacher or deputy headteachers. Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, members of the governing body, staff and pupils. The inspectors observed the school's work, listened to pupils reading and looked at self-evaluation documentation, monitoring and assessment information, lesson planning and policies. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They analysed questionnaires from 88 parents and carers and 97 pupils. The school's safeguarding procedures were also evaluated.

Information about the school

Whitley Park Primary and Nursery School is a new school which was recently formed from an amalgamation of an infant and a junior school following a hard federation for one year. It opened in April 2011. This is its first inspection. It is a larger than average primary school. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic heritages is below average. There are a few pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs is above average. The school meets current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. There is a daily Year 6 mathematics booster breakfast club which is managed by the governing body. There is also an on-site afterschool child care facility. This is managed by an external provider and is inspected separately. The new on-site nursery building opened in September 2011.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	3
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- Whitley Park is a satisfactory school. The quality of education that the school provides is satisfactory rather than good because in some lessons, teachers do not provide activities that fully extend, challenge or engage pupils particularly in Key Stage 2. Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is very effective; children make good progress.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. The senior leadership team and members of the governing body have an accurate picture of the school's effectiveness. They are ambitious for the school, moving swiftly to arrest the significant underachievement identified in the first term of amalgamation when 2011 national assessment results indicated that Year 6 pupils made inadequate progress.
- Well-focused actions secured speedy improvements in teaching particularly in reading and writing, helping to ensure that pupils' achievement overall is now satisfactory. However, there has been too little focus on improving the teaching of mathematics. As a result pupils' progress in mathematics is slower than in reading and writing.
- Most teaching is satisfactory and some is good, particularly in Year 6. Senior leaders regularly monitor the quality of teaching as part of teachers' performance management. Areas for improvement are identified and acted upon. As a result, teaching is improving. However, there is not yet enough consistently good or outstanding teaching, particularly at Key Stage 2, to ensure that more pupils make accelerated rather than satisfactory progress.
- Behaviour and attendance are improving. As a result of the strategies introduced to manage behaviour, previous incidents of poor behaviour have decreased. Most parents and carers are content with the school. However, some concerns were expressed about the school's effectiveness in dealing with behaviour-related issues. Pupils are aware of what is expected of them. Successful initiatives raise pupils' awareness of tolerance and individual rights.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress in mathematics and improve the achievement of pupils by January 2013 by:
 - providing more activities and tasks in lessons that challenge pupils and extend their numeracy competencies
 - strengthening the leadership of mathematics across the whole school
 - providing targeted staff development in order to strengthen the teaching of mathematics.

- Increase the proportion of good or better teaching in order to accelerate pupils' progress, particularly at Key Stage 2, by consistently:
 - planning well-thought-through tasks matched to the needs of all pupils to promote effective learning
 - maintaining a good pace of learning so that all pupils are actively engaged and involved in their learning at all times.

- Increase the involvement of parents and carers in their children's learning by ensuring that staff actively, and positively, engage parents and carers to help improve pupils' behaviour further and help the school to go on reducing the number of exclusions.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Most parents and carers feel their children make good progress. However, inspection evidence indicated that pupils' achievement, although broadly satisfactory, is inconsistent, particularly at Key Stage 2.

Children start school with skills well-below levels typical for their age, particularly in speech and language. They settle happily into school making good progress throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage. By the time they transfer to Year 1, they have narrowed the gap considerably and attainment is just below national expectations. Strengths in teaching and well-targeted support help Key Stage 1 pupils to consolidate literacy and numeracy skills effectively. Close tracking and careful planning contribute to rising rates of progress in Years 1 and 2. However, progress at Key Stage 2 is slower and more variable. This is because lessons do not typically always ensure pupils are sufficiently well challenged in their learning. The pace of teaching is not always sufficiently brisk enough and work not always well matched to pupils' differing needs. This means that some pupils do not make as much progress as they could. Where learning is best, pupils are engaged by stimulating activities, as seen in a Year 5 literacy lesson where pupils' literacy

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

competencies were developed well through skilful modelling of how to construct a story. Pupils offered high quality responses, which were well developed, building on exciting and well-written phrases.

In the first term of amalgamation, national test results in 2011 were significantly below the national average and suggested girls were doing better than boys. Inspection evidence confirmed this gap is closing, particularly for current Year 6 pupils. This is as a result of developments in the English curriculum, the well-tailored programme of teaching letters and sounds which helps pupils to make secure progress in developing early reading skills, the focus given to understanding pupils' learning styles, particularly those of boys, and strengths in Year 6 teaching which have accelerated the progress of the oldest pupils. All this means that overall, pupils' achievement in English and mathematics is broadly average. Standards in reading are broadly in line with national averages at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6.

Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals achieve standards similar to their peers. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make at least satisfactory and some better progress in learning. They benefit from lessons where specific strategies to support them are identified. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress in their learning, achieving well as the result of exceptional support and well-focused learning activities.

Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is satisfactory and improving; some is good. A focus on the teaching of writing is securing pupils' better progress. Teachers are generally well prepared and most plan interesting activities. Teaching is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children are actively engaged in their learning because activities match pupils' needs well. There is a good balance of teacher-led activities and those initiated by the children themselves. Children enjoy opportunities to develop and extend their language as seen in a Reception class as intrepid explorers discussed what vital equipment they should take on their bear hunt.

The vast majority of parents and carers who returned questionnaires felt their children were taught well. Although there are some good features, this is not completely borne out by inspection findings. Most pupils who completed questionnaires were positive about the quality of teaching. However, a few told inspectors that they did not always find learning challenging. There are examples across the school of skilful teaching where the pace of learning is maintained and well-thought-out activities promote pupils' interests and skills effectively. However, in some lessons too long is spent sitting and listening. This means that pupils are not always fully engaged in their learning and this slows their progress. Progress in reading and writing is increasingly secure, with well-focused sessions to promote pupils' knowledge of linking letters and sounds and to develop their reading and writing skills. Teaching and the curriculum support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils were actively involved in planning a discussion about whether animals should be kept in zoos. Skilful questioning and effective use of 'talk partners' and 'magpie techniques'

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

ensured pupils responded thoughtfully, presenting clear, well-thought-out arguments for and against.

Most teaching enables pupils to make satisfactory progress and some that is better, but there are missed opportunities to increase the challenge for pupils. In some lessons, particularly in mathematics and at Key Stage 2, tasks do not have the potential to allow pupils to move on quickly. Pupils are not always provided with opportunities to use, apply and develop their numeracy competencies in order to consolidate their learning. Consequently their understanding of such concepts as place value and how to problem-solve are not always clear. Teachers do not consistently use assessment effectively in lessons to make adaptations to tasks to provide more challenge. This means that pupils are sometimes involved in work that is neither stretching nor sufficiently engaging to promote good progress.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour is satisfactory, and often good in lessons and in the mathematics booster breakfast club. Pupils are usually polite and helpful, although some lose interest and are not fully involved with their learning when lessons are not sufficiently engaging. Views from parents and carers are mixed. Some say that their children receive appropriate support. Others are unhappy with the way in which incidents are handled by the school. The large majority feel that the school looks after their children well.

Most pupils feel that behaviour is at least satisfactory but a few do not think it is good enough. In discussion with inspectors, most pupils said staff dealt promptly with any incidents of bullying or racism, which are not tolerated. They say they have received support to overcome instances of bullying when occasional incidents occurred. The school is developing a higher awareness of types of bullying with pupils. At the start of the amalgamation, there were some pupils who exhibited challenging behaviour, particularly at Key Stage 2. As a result the school excluded a higher than average number of pupils. This strategy has had a positive impact, successfully bringing down the incidents of misbehaviour across the school. Pupils are now very aware of the expectations and sanctions if they transgress. 'Class charters' help make clear the expectations of behaviour, cooperation and respect. Most pupils say they feel safe within the school, confident that the staff do all they can to ensure their safety. However, a very few pupils felt that their views are not always listened to. The inspectors judge that pupils usually work and play sensibly in an environment which is generally safe for them. The school has implemented successful strategies to improve attendance which has recently moved from below average to average.

Leadership and management

Leaders and managers have already had an impact on school improvement. The headteacher's purposeful approach encourages others to have the highest aspirations for themselves and the pupils. There is a strong sense of purpose. Pupils'

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

attendance and behaviour are improving. Strengths in literacy leadership have helped to secure recent improvements in English, particularly in the teaching of writing, accelerating the progress of some pupils, particularly those in Year 6. Daily setting for the teaching of letters and sounds, reading and writing and a planned programme of professional development to strengthen the teaching of writing have improved pupils' achievement in English successfully halting previous underachievement. These swift improvements since amalgamation demonstrate the school's satisfactory capacity to improve further.

Senior leaders regularly monitor teaching, and information from assessment is scrutinised to check pupils' progress. Leaders and managers at all levels, including the governing body, ensure that equality is promoted, and discrimination tackled well. Senior leaders and governors have a good understanding of the school's performance and are working together to ensure self-evaluation is finely tuned. The recent involvement of 'phase' leaders in school improvement is adding value to the leadership of the school. However the lack of a dedicated leader to champion improvements in mathematics has meant that the quality of mathematics teaching and pupils' achievement has been slow to improve. The curriculum is satisfactorily organised to meet pupils' needs and prepare them for the next stage of their education. It supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through plenty of practical activities and opportunities for reflection. The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum is focused well on children's personal learning needs.

Senior leaders are alert to any bullying and behaviour issues. Pupils are aware that such behaviour is not tolerated. Incidents have reduced as a result of developing pupils' greater awareness of their personal responsibility and improving behaviour management. Initiatives, for example 'learning buddies' and developments in personal, social and health education, have helped develop pupils' understanding of respecting rights and taking responsibility for their actions. Safeguarding is a priority for the school; procedures are robust and effective. These meet government guidelines and include effective checks on adults and an organised approach to managing the safety of pupils.

Most parents and carers felt that communication with the school was good. However, a very small minority felt it could be more informative and sometimes timelier. The school is working to ensure information received is prompt and helpful.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



12 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Whitley Park Primary School, Reading RG2 7RB

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed talking to you in lessons, meeting with you, and when we listened to some of you reading.

The school is giving you a satisfactory education. It has only just started as a primary school and we could see that there are several ways in which the school is getting better. More of you are coming to school regularly. This is important because it means that you are not missing lessons. This will help you learn better. Behaviour has improved too. As we saw, this means most of your lessons are not interrupted anymore and you can get on with your work. Reading and writing are improving and many of you told us how much you enjoyed writing stories and reading.

We judged that most of you are making satisfactory progress and we have asked the headteacher to work with the teachers to ensure that you learn even better and make good progress. Your headteacher and all your other teachers know how to make sure that your school continues to get even better. To help them to do this, we have asked everyone to concentrate on three things.

- Make sure that what you have to do in mathematics challenges you to do your best with more opportunities to practise your number work and problem-solving skills. Appoint a member of staff to lead improvements in mathematics to help other teachers get even better at teaching mathematics.
- Ensure more of you benefit from consistently good or better teaching so that more of you make faster progress by ensuring that work is not too easy or too hard and you are actively learning in all lessons.
- Make sure that staff work together with pupils, parents and carers so behaviour continues to improve with fewer exclusions.

You can help your school improve by continuing to go to school as regularly as you can and get on well with and respect each other.

Keep up the hard work and we are sure that if you do this, you will continue to enjoy learning for a long time to come.

Yours sincerely

Wendy Forbes
Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', 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.**