

# Orchard School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | 134185             |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Bexley             |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 381629             |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 27–28 June 2012    |
| <b>Lead inspector</b>          | Angela Konarzewski |

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

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|--|---|
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary                                   |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Community                                 |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 3–11                                      |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                                     |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 229                                       |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                        |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | John Kerry                                |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Amanda Lavelle                            |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 8–9 September 2008                        |
| <b>School address</b>                      | Oxford Road<br>Sidcup<br>Kent<br>DA14 6LW |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 020 8300 4878                             |
| <b>Fax number</b>                          | 020 8309 9343                             |
| <b>Email address</b>                       | head@orchard.bexley.sch.uk                |

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|---------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Age group</b>          | 3–11            |
| <b>Inspection date(s)</b> | 27–28 June 2012 |
| <b>Inspection number</b>  | 381629          |



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Angela Konarzewski

Additional Inspector

David Hogg

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 18 lessons or parts of lessons taught by 10 teachers. Inspectors heard pupils read, scrutinised their workbooks, and saw them being taught in whole classes, small groups and individually. Meetings were held with parents and carers, pupils, governors and staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at information about pupils' achievement, evaluations of teaching and learning, notes of governing body visits and reports from external auditors and consultants. Inspectors took into account the questionnaires completed by 55 parents and carers, together with those from pupils and staff.

## Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school where the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. The majority of pupils are White British, but a larger proportion than average come from a wide range of other minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils for whom English is not their first language is also higher than average, as is the proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs. The majority of these have speech, language and communication needs. Mobility of pupils is high. The on-site breakfast club and after-school provision are not managed by the governing body. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

**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

|                                       |          |
|---------------------------------------|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>          | <b>3</b> |
| <b>Achievement of pupils</b>          | <b>3</b> |
| <b>Quality of teaching</b>            | <b>3</b> |
| <b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b> | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Leadership and management</b>      | <b>2</b> |

## Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It is rapidly improving but is not yet a good school because there is still too much satisfactory teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2. Attainment has risen over the past two years and is now broadly in line with national averages. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Children start in the Nursery or in Reception with skills that are often well below those expected for their age. They make good progress across the Early Years Foundation Stage so that their attainment is average by the start of Year 1. Pupils make at least satisfactory progress across Key Stage 1 but progress over time has slowed in some classes in Key Stage 2. Attainment is broadly average by the time pupils leave Year 6.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is not their first language make good progress from their starting points because teaching is closely tailored to their needs.
- The quality of teaching, which is satisfactory overall, has improved over the past two years. Staff are usually making better use of assessment information to plan lessons and check progress, but practice across the school remains inconsistent. In some lessons, the pace of learning slows and tasks are not always well-matched to pupils' levels of ability.
- Pupils enjoy learning and their behaviour is good. Pupils say they feel safe at school, and inspectors found that behaviour is well managed. Attendance is improving and is now in line with the national average.
- Improvements in the school are the result of concerted efforts by senior leaders to address the legacy of underachievement. As a result of more robust systems for monitoring performance, the management of teachers' performance is effective and there is a strong focus on securing further improvement.

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

- By July 2013, ensure that all teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2 is at least good to accelerate pupils' progress and raise attainment by the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics to above the national averages, by making sure that:
  - all lessons proceed at a brisk pace
  - tasks are always well-matched to pupils' levels of ability, particularly for the more able
  - all activities are set within contexts that are interesting and motivating
  - all work is consistently well-marked with advice on pupils' next steps to ensure progress
  - the use of mini-whiteboards is modified so opportunities to correct errors and misconceptions are not missed.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

All parents and carers who returned the questionnaire consider that their children are making good progress. Inspectors agree that pupils make good progress from low starting points in the Nursery and Reception classes, particularly in their personal and social development and in their communication skills, but their progress in other year groups is satisfactory.

The regular and skilled teaching of phonics (letters and sounds) across the Early Years Foundation Stage has a positive impact on children's early literacy skills. When they join Year 1, pupils' attainment in reading is in line with the levels expected for their age. They continue to make at least satisfactory progress into Year 2, where fluent readers use their phonic knowledge well to sound out unfamiliar words. Although less fluent readers show good knowledge of the sounds in words, they have more difficulty in reading for meaning. Attainment in reading is average by the end of Key Stage 1. The teaching of reading comprehension is now embedded well into the school's Key Stage 2 curriculum. As a result, attainment in reading by the end of Year 6 has improved this year so that it is now at least average, with a larger proportion attaining the higher levels.

The school's data and pupils' workbooks also show a significant improvement in writing over time. Pupils are usually encouraged to talk through their ideas with a partner before writing, which helps them to clarify their thinking and develop their vocabulary. One Year 6 pupil wrote vividly: 'Above me, I could see emerald green metal glittering in the dying sunlight.' Many opportunities exist for pupils to apply writing skills across the curriculum, where pupils are given purposeful tasks within topic work. Opportunities to use mathematical skills in other subjects are less well developed. Although pupils make accelerated progress in mathematics in Year 6, the picture of attainment across the school is similar to that in English, but with a smaller proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels.

**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

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make better progress than their peers nationally, significantly so in mathematics, because they are well supported in their learning, including through links with external agencies. Interventions are effective and so gaps in achievement between different groups of pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language, and pupils nationally, are narrowing.

## Quality of teaching

All parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire believe their children are taught well, but this is not always the case in a minority of lessons. Teaching is satisfactory overall, although much is good and occasionally outstanding, and it promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, routines are clearly established and activities are designed to promote children's independence, both indoors and outside, with a good range of child-initiated and adult-led activities. In an outdoor Reception session, children excitedly recalled facts about a python that had visited the school the day before. Their language skills were well promoted within this highly motivating context that also developed their knowledge and understanding of the world.

Teaching in Key Stage 1 is at least satisfactory. Most lessons proceed at a steady pace and teachers develop pupils' knowledge of phonics soundly so their literacy skills, especially for reading, progress securely. Pupils also make at least satisfactory progress in mathematics. In a successful Year 1 lesson on doubling, pupils made good progress because the teacher and teaching assistant targeted extra challenge or support to individual pupils. In some lessons, where mini-whiteboards were used by pupils to record their responses, errors and misconceptions were erased too quickly, so opportunities for further learning were missed. In such lessons, the pace was sometimes too slow, as pupils had to wait for one another to complete tasks.

In lower Key Stage 2, where teachers plan lessons that are well-matched to pupils' different levels of ability, they make good progress. Pupils collaborate well through 'talk-partner' work and adults use good questioning skills to challenge and extend pupils' thinking. In a good guided reading lesson, the teacher worked with a focus group to develop comprehension of a war story called 'The Enemy Airman', while the teaching assistant supported the independent groups. Progress slows in lessons where, for example, literacy skills are taught out of context and without a real purpose.

Pupils currently in Year 6 have made good progress from their starting points, especially in mathematics. In an outstanding Year 6 lesson on ratio, the teacher set higher-ability pupils a task to complete while he taught the rest of the class. He used a fruit 'smoothie' recipe to illustrate the concept, mixing real strawberries, bananas and milk. Once these pupils were working independently, he called the higher ability group to the front and taught ratio to them within the more complex context of an Indian curry. In this way, no learning time was wasted for any pupil.

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Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are given tasks that are suitably challenging for them, and are usually well supported by teaching assistants. High expectations of handwriting and presentation were seen in the majority of literacy workbooks and on display. Although marking, target setting and feedback have improved, inconsistencies in practice remain. Where teachers conscientiously mark pupils' work and give feedback that is acted upon, there is a positive impact on pupils' progress.

**Behaviour and safety of pupils**

The school's values, 'Aspire to Achieve'; 'Believe in Yourself'; 'Care for Others' underpin all aspects of the school's work and are exemplified in the way in which pupils conduct themselves. Behaviour and safety during the inspection were good and discussions show this to be typical. The atmosphere in the school is calm and purposeful and all pupils have positive attitudes to learning as a result of the consistent application of the behaviour policy. Good manners are fostered, for example in a Year 1 lesson when the teacher praised a pupil who added 'please' to the sentence, 'May I have some more cake?' The overwhelming majority of parents and carers say that their children feel safe in school and that they behave well. However, a few pupils expressed concern that behaviour is not consistently good and inspectors noted that this was the case in the minority of satisfactory lessons, when the pace of learning slowed.

Pupils in Year 6 asserted that there is no bullying in school and the school's records support this. Rare examples of name calling are dealt with in such a way that the perpetrator does not repeat the behaviour. Pupils have been taught about cyber bullying and e-safety and they know about the inappropriate use of social networking sites. Racist incidents are rare, and pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes racist behaviour. 'We are like one big family; we care for one another,' explained a Year 6 boy. There is an improved trend in attendance so that it is now average.

**Leadership and management**

Senior leaders and governors have provided a concerted approach to address the legacy of underachievement. In line with the recommendation from the last inspection report, teaching in Key Stage 1 has improved so that attainment by the end of Year 2 has risen year on year to reach national averages last year. Similarly, improved procedures for addressing underperformance have had a positive impact in Key Stage 2. There is a strong commitment to the drive and ambition demonstrated by senior leaders, and teachers are now accountable for the progress their pupils make. Capacity to improve further is demonstrated by the trend of sustained improvement in achievement, behaviour and safety and attendance over the past two years. Essential systems for tracking pupils' progress, and intervening when required, are now fully embedded so that the school is well placed to continue on its trajectory of improvement.

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The good curriculum provides imaginative opportunities for learning for pupils, including a range of visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities. Improved cross-curricular links through topics put learning into meaningful contexts and provide opportunities to practise literacy and, to a lesser extent, numeracy skills. The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well through the broad range of learning experiences provided.

The school promotes equality and tackles discrimination effectively. Arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements and pupils are exceptionally well cared for. Staff successfully engage with parents and carers, including those who might find working with the school difficult, such as those who do not speak fluent English. One parent, echoing the views of many, wrote, 'I have been very impressed by the reading, writing and maths workshops that have been held throughout the year to support teaching at home... It is really nice to be able to be so involved.' Parental support with homework is now having a more positive impact on pupils' achievement.



## 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      | 54  | 42   | 2            | 2          |
| Primary schools      | 14  | 49   | 32           | 6          |
| Secondary schools    | 20  | 39   | 34           | 7          |
| Special schools      | 33  | 45   | 20           | 3          |
| Pupil referral units | 9   | 55   | 28           | 8          |
| All schools          | 16  | 47   | 31           | 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 to 31 December 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](http://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.                    |
| Floor standards            | the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.  |
| 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.**

29 June 2012

Dear Pupils



### **Inspection of Orchard School, Sidcup, DA14 6LW**

Thank you for the warm and polite welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you and seeing you at work, as well as looking at your displays and workbooks. We have judged that Orchard is a satisfactory but rapidly improving school. These are the main things we discovered.

- Children get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception and continue to make at least satisfactory progress across Key Stages 1 and 2.
- There is some good teaching, and some that is outstanding where you make excellent progress. However, there is still too much satisfactory teaching where you make less progress.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make better progress than similar pupils nationally because of good support.
- You agree with your parents and carers that you feel safe at school, although a few of you said you did not consider that behaviour is good. Inspectors found that behaviour is good overall.
- Your attendance has improved and this is helping you to make better progress because you are not missing as many lessons.

Senior leaders and governors in your school are working hard to ensure that the school continues to improve. We have asked them to make sure that:

- all teaching is at least good across the school so that you all are able to make consistently good progress and attain higher levels by the time you leave Year 6.

You can help your teachers by continuing to try your best and by attending regularly. Please also continue to uphold your values: 'Aspire to Achieve'; 'Believe in Yourself'; 'Care for Others'.

Yours sincerely

Angela Konarzewski  
Lead inspector

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