

# Robertswood School

Denham Lane, Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire, SL9 0EW

**Inspection dates** 19–20 September 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- Pupils really enjoy school and are keen to learn. Attendance is above average for all groups of pupils.
- Progress is good throughout the school and pupils achieve above average standards overall. Attainment in mathematics has improved over the past two years and is now above average.
- Effective support for pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs ensures they make good, and sometimes better, progress. Pupils and families who may otherwise find accessing school difficult are very well supported and included.
- Teaching and learning are good and at times outstanding. Good relationships with pupils and the interesting activities teachers plan ensure achievement is good and rising.
- Pupils behave well and feel safe. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers agree.
- Strong, skilled leadership and regular monitoring by the headteacher and other members of the senior leadership team have ensured that the quality of teaching has improved. Consequently, they have successfully tackled previous weaknesses and had a positive impact on raising pupil outcomes.
- Leaders at all levels, including a very effective governing body, have developed a clear strategic direction for the school. This has been successfully shared with all stakeholders who acknowledge the improvements to the school's overall effectiveness.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In a small minority of lessons pupils are not engaged quickly enough in activities that are closely matched to their abilities. Similarly, they do not always have the opportunity to show how much they have understood. Consequently, in some lessons, pupils' learning is restricted.
- Attainment in mathematics is not yet consistently at the levels seen in English and, although progress in reading is good, it does not match the rapid progress recently seen in writing.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 33 lessons, taught by 15 teachers and were accompanied by senior staff for approximately three quarters of these.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, staff, school leaders, three members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 64 responses to the on-line Parent View survey as well as analysing previous parental surveys and talking to parents and carers informally during the inspection. Questionnaires from staff and leaders were also considered.
- They observed the school’s work and looked at the school’s documentation: policies, including those relating to safeguarding; data on pupils’ progress; attendance figures; and, the school’s development planning.

## Inspection team

Jacqueline Marshall, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Brigid de Rivaz	Additional inspector
Philip Scull	Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a larger than average primary school.
- A large majority of the pupils come from a White British background. Others are from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. A larger than national proportion of pupils are of Gypsy, Romany and Traveller heritage.
- The proportion of pupils receiving the pupil premium is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs and receiving support at school action is below average. The proportions at school action plus and with a statement of special educational needs are average.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage approximately half those children taught in the two Reception classes have also attended the school's nursery.
- The school meets the current government floor target which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
  - ensuring pupils are actively engaged and involved in work appropriate to their ability at all times
  - providing more opportunities for independent learning where pupils can demonstrate their understanding.
- Raise achievement, especially in mathematics and reading, by:
  - making sure pupils use and apply their mathematical skills to solve problems regularly
  - developing pupils' reading skills through experiencing a wider range of reading matter, literature and authors.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils **is good**

- Across the school pupils are clear about their learning, talk with confidence and share their ideas willingly with one another. Pupils of all ages talk eagerly about what they have been learning and whether they have met the success criteria for the lesson.
- They pay careful attention to comments teachers make when marking work during lessons and in their books and this engages them very effectively in the next steps in their learning. Parents and carers expressed a high level of satisfaction in the progress their children make.
- From broadly expected skills and understanding when they start, children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage in all areas of learning. As a result, an increasing proportion of pupils are leaving the Reception classes having achieved levels above those expected for their age.
- Attainment by the time pupils leave in Year 6 is above average. While standards in mathematics have been weaker than in English they have risen steadily over the last two years and were above average in national tests in 2012. Similarly, attainment in Year 2 rose last year after a period of decline.
- Throughout the school, pupils from all backgrounds, including those supported by the pupil premium initiative, achieve well. Effective systems for tracking pupil progress introduced since 2010 ensure all pupils, including those with disabilities and those with special educational needs, achieve as well as their peers, making and exceeding expected progress.
- Achievement in writing has risen as a result of a concerted whole-school focus. Pupils make good progress in learning to read. However, broadening pupils' knowledge of the wide range of literature available to engage them in reading is less well developed. Ensuring progress in reading matches that in writing has already been identified as the next priority for the school.

### The quality of teaching **is good**

- Interesting activities, the use of information and communication technology (ICT) and positive relationships between staff and pupils keep the pupils really focused and support learning well. Teachers use questioning effectively to explore the knowledge and understanding of pupils, while talk partners are well used to involve pupils in discussing the questions raised by teachers.
- Regular checking of pupils' progress in lessons and effective marking ensure pupils receive good advice on how to improve. Pupils are becoming increasingly skilled at checking their own and each other's work. They regularly refer to their writing targets, and are keen to achieve them.
- As a result of the elimination of weak teaching, greater consistency in classroom practice and higher expectations of what pupils can achieve, progress in the last two years has improved significantly and is no longer inconsistent. School leaders have been effective in setting clear targets for improvements in the practice of individual teachers.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs benefit from the quality support provided by teachers and classroom assistants. Work for these pupils matches their needs well. In lessons and in group work they are very quickly engaged in their learning. As a result of this particularly tailored approach they make good, and sometimes outstanding, progress.
- Teachers regularly plan work that matches the needs of groups of pupils in their class. However, at times pupils have to wait too long, particularly at the start of lessons, to get on with this work. Similarly, whole-class discussions are not always tailored to the needs of all

groups sufficiently and this hinders progress.

- Recent training has introduced a programme enabling teachers to pay careful attention to developing pupils' understanding of linking letters to the sounds they make. From an early age pupils use these skills when reading and writing.
- In the best lessons pupils are given the chance to show by themselves how to use and apply the skills they have learnt. This is not the norm in all lessons or subjects. For example, in a small minority of lessons opportunities are missed for pupils to use what they have learnt regularly to devise their own way of solving a problem in mathematics.

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

- The school's positive promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a key factor in pupils' good, and sometimes exemplary, behaviour.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Pupils get on together well and show considerable support for one another regardless of age, gender or ethnicity. Pupils say this is typically the case and think behaviour is good.
- Incidences of bullying, such as name calling and cyber bullying, are not an everyday occurrence. The very large majority of parents and carers who responded to Parent View commented positively on how the school deals with behaviour and bullying. Pupils agree. They know who they could turn to for help and feel there are less inconsistencies between how instances are dealt with.
- As a result of the school's actions, attendance is above average. The school is extremely effective in its support for those families who may otherwise find attending school regularly difficult. Consequently, progress for these pupils is at least in line with their peers.
- Pupils have a good understanding of risk and how to keep safe, supported well by the school's input on personal and internet safety. All parents and carers who expressed an opinion agreed the school kept pupils safe.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- The high aspirations of the headteacher are shared fully by the senior leadership team and members of the governing body. Together they have been responsible for tackling underachievement, halting the downward trend in attainment at Key Stage 1 and raising standards at Key Stage 2.
- A systematic programme of monitoring and evaluation to improve staff performance has enabled prompt actions to be taken to ensure weaker teaching is tackled. This process has highlighted the need to focus next on raising achievement in reading and mathematics.
- School leaders are consistently focused on improving the quality of teaching. Performance management is rigorous and provision for the training of all staff is good.
- The skills of middle managers are being developed effectively. As a result they are highly committed and increasingly know what needs to be done to build on current improvements. Leaders at all levels are now focused on removing any inconsistencies in teaching and learning that remain. They are committed to sharing best practice in order to increase the proportion of outstanding teaching observed.
- Staff at all levels are highly appreciative of the support these senior leaders provide. They relish the challenges that are asked of them, acknowledging they 'have been put in place to benefit the children' and welcoming the chance 'to be the best teacher I can be and given the opportunity to stretch myself'.
- Pupil progress meetings are increasingly holding teachers to account and are effective in ensuring inclusion and equal opportunities for pupils. They enable interventions and additional support to be effectively tailored to the needs of individuals and groups, such as those eligible for the pupil premium, and subsequently evaluate their impact.
- The school recognises the effective level of support it has received from its local authority,

particularly in developing the school's work with Gypsy, Romany and Traveller families. By continuing to build on this itself, the school has ensured that these pupils achieve as well as their peers.

- The school's engagement with parents and carers is effective. Staff regularly ensure that parents and carers are fully informed on how their children are doing and ways to help at home, such as the Meet the Teacher sessions held during the inspection. Parents and carers are very appreciative and supportive of the school.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development because they regularly visit, receive reports from subject leaders and analyse pupil progress data
- they use this knowledge very effectively to challenge the school over issues such as the quality of teaching and the progress and provision for pupils, including those eligible for the pupil premium
- statutory duties are met, particularly regarding health and safety and safeguarding issues.

## 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>	110360
<b>Local authority</b>	Buckinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	401118

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

<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>	420
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sally Parkin
<b>Headteacher</b>	Eddie Richings
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29–30 June 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01753 888327
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