

Wymondley Junior Mixed and Infant School

Siccut Road, Little Wymondley, Hitchin, SG4 7HN

Inspection dates 29–30 November 2012

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Satisfactory | 3 |
| | This inspection: | Good | 2 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| Quality of teaching | | Good | 2 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Outstanding | 1 |
| Leadership and management | | Good | 2 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Achievement for all groups of pupils is good. Pupils make good progress throughout the school. When they leave Year 6, their attainment is above average.
- Teaching and learning are good because teachers have high expectations, good relationships with pupils and usually match the work well to pupils' abilities.
- Teachers know how well pupils are doing and use this information to guide their planning.
- Additional adults provide a good level of support for pupils who find learning difficult.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school and is evident in all areas of school life. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary both in and out of lessons.
- Strong leadership by the headteacher and governing body has brought about significant improvement in teaching and pupils' achievement since the previous inspection.
- The school is highly valued by parents and carers who express positive views about the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet strong enough to promote outstanding progress in all key subjects and pupils are not being consistently stretched to reach the same high levels in reading that they do in writing and mathematics.
- Teachers do not always insist on the highest standards of presentation or give pupils the clear guidance and time needed to improve their work.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons or part-lessons taught by four different teachers, including a joint observation with the headteacher.
- The inspector spoke formally with one group of pupils and informally with others during work and play.
- Meetings were held with two members of the governing body, a local authority representative, the headteacher, and the subject and phase leaders.
- The inspector visited an assembly, listened to children read and discussed the work they had been doing in class.
- The inspector looked at a range of documents that related to school improvement planning, safeguarding, the recording of pupils' progress, pupils' work in books and the school's self-evaluation.
- The views of 23 parents were analysed through the Parent View website and a previous questionnaire issued by the school. Other parents' views were sought at the start of the school day and 20 staff responses were considered.

Inspection team

Raminder Arora, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. Pupils are taught in four mixed-age classes.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. Two pupils are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding to help particular pupils) is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage, full-time, in the Reception class at the start of the academic year.
- The number of children in each year group is very small.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which determine the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching to accelerate further improvement by:
 - ensuring that pupils are given clear advice on how to improve the presentation of their work and handwriting across the school
 - giving pupils time to respond to teachers' marking and do the things that are pointed out to them.
- Increase the proportion of pupils gaining the highest levels in reading at Key Stage 2, to bring it in line with writing and mathematics by:
 - challenging pupils of all abilities consistently and recording and tracking their on-going progress clearly through an effective system
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to read widely and independently following their own lines of enquiry.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the Reception class of the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are expected for their age, but with some variation from year to year. They make good progress and many exceed the expected levels in all the areas of learning by the end of the year.
- Pupils make good progress as they move through the school. Progress is particularly strong in writing and is greatly improved in mathematics. Some uneven progress in reading is being carefully tackled, particularly in Years 5 and 6. More pupils achieved the expected two levels of progress in both English and mathematics in 2012 than in the previous year and currently pupils are on track to meet the school's targets in these subjects.
- As a consequence of sustained good progress, standards in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 6 have improved over the past three years. They are now above national averages, particularly so in writing and in mathematics, the school's priority last year.
- Reading is taught systematically and practised on a daily basis. The school also encourages parental involvement and many parents and carers contribute to their children's success by listening to reading at home and writing comments in reading diaries. Comments written in the diaries by teachers are sometimes rather too general to be of help to parents in advancing their child's reading skills.
- Good progress is made by the few pupils who are learning English as an additional language and by those who are disabled or have special educational needs. Their needs are identified quickly and extra support from skilled extra adults means they keep up with their peers.
- The small numbers of pupils eligible for pupil premium support make at least the expected progress because they receive effective help from teaching assistants in reading, writing and mathematics.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently good and often outstanding. The effective teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) enables pupils of all abilities to develop good reading skills, particularly in Reception and Years 1 and 2.
- Progress across the school has improved due to much improved quality of teaching and higher expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- Teachers boost progress in writing by providing pupils with many interesting opportunities to write in different subjects. The effective use of 'story maps' to create their own stories has had a positive impact on pupils' progress in writing.
- Teachers plan interesting, practical lessons for the wide ability range in each class. All groups of pupils are fully involved, independently, in pairs or in small groups. For example, a small group practising the recitation of a poem in Year 2 showed interest and enjoyment in reading out aloud with developing confidence and expression.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage enables children to make good progress. As well

as effective teaching of key skills, children are helped to think about what they are learning and how to work by themselves. They are well supported in learning letters by name and sound because of the interesting activities they are given, such as a treasure hunt for shapes or letters.

- Teaching assistants are deployed well in all year groups. They provide effective support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs as well as those supported by pupil premium funding. They also work well with small intervention groups to support the development of reading and writing.
- Marking and feedback written in pupils' books is good, but they are not always given sufficient time to correct their work and show improvement.
- While some pupils' work is always well presented and praised, on occasion not enough attention is paid by teachers to presentation of work, particularly joined-up writing.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour in class, around the school and on the playground is exemplary because that is what is expected by all adults. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning, are proud of their school and keen to take on responsibilities. They enjoy school, care for each other and have no concerns about bullying.
- Pupils agree that they feel safe in school and know who they can talk to if worried about anything. This attention to pupils' well-being, through the focus on each individual and the automatic inclusion of all, is a significant factor in promoting positive learning attitudes and thus good progress.
- Pupils have a very clear sense of what is right and wrong. Older pupils understand how younger pupils might need support and readily help them. They take seriously the important jobs of house captains or monitors at playtimes.
- Staff give high importance to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. A good example of the way in which pupils take initiative and accept responsibility was seen in their work on a range of different stalls at the Christmas Fare, providing entertainment and raising money for charity.
- Pupils attend school regularly and are punctual.
- Pupils feel safe because the school's policies and procedures are comprehensive and systematically followed. Appropriate risk assessments are carried out for trips or the use of shared outdoor spaces. Parents and carers are very satisfied with the safety arrangements for their children.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, ably supported by the governing body, knows the school very well. She has developed a whole-school approach to decision making and ensures that there is a shared vision to drive improvement.
- There are good systems in place to monitor pupils' progress and for evaluating key aspects of the school's work. As a result, subject leaders and the Early Years Foundation Stage leader have

a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas that need improving. School self-evaluation is accurate.

- Leaders across the school want the best for their pupils. They use data to identify pupils who could be making better progress and provide them and the staff with the necessary support. Systems for tracking progress are currently being improved with the support of local authority training.
- Teaching is monitored rigorously. The staff team is held to account for pupils' progress. Targets and on-going training to strengthen teachers' performance are closely linked to school priorities. As a result, teaching and pupils' achievement have improved over a sustained period.
- All staff are very receptive to training and other initiatives to improve their practice. The programme of lesson observations is matched with a good level of support and success is evident in the improvements in performance across the school.
- The curriculum is good because of its purposeful links between subjects which enable pupils to apply their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills widely. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is reflected in the school's atmosphere of tolerance and harmony. All pupils benefit from wider curricular experiences than would otherwise be the case through trips, sport and music as part of the school's policy for inclusion, promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating discrimination.
- The school benefits its pupils in education and sports from being a part of the Hitchin Partnership and been involved in small schools' partnership working with four other small schools on a variety of areas. There is also a link with two other schools to develop writing, following a successful joint training session on 'Stories for Writing'.
- Parents are kept well informed and involved, for example the mathematics course 'keeping up with the kids' by the North Hertfordshire College, was well attended.

■ **The governance of the school:**

Governors ensure all statutory duties are met including those related to safeguarding. They make good use of the full range of information on the school's performance and so are able to contribute effectively to the school's strategic planning. They use their thorough knowledge and understanding to ensure effective support for pupils eligible for pupil premium. A rigorous process has been set up for teachers' performance management. It is now much more targeted and focused on raising pupils' achievements and providing appropriate staff training linked to school's priorities. The governors skilfully use the information about pupils' progress and the school's priorities to hold senior leaders to account about how well the school is doing.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| 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

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| Unique reference number | 117177 |
| Local authority | Hertfordshire |
| Inspection number | 401649 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 101 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Luke Clampitt |
| Headteacher | Alison Emmerson |
| Date of previous school inspection | 9 November 2009 |
| Telephone number | 01438 354583 |
| Fax number | 01438 354583 |
| Email address | head@wymondley.herts.sch.uk |

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