

# Oldbrook First School

Illingworth Place, Milton Keynes, MK6 2NH

**Inspection dates** 27–28 November 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		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- From below average starting points, pupils make good, and occasionally outstanding, progress so that their attainment is usually well above average by the end of Year 2.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are provided with a good start enabling them to make good progress in all aspects of their learning.
- Teaching is good and there is some that is outstanding. Staff are effective in identifying those pupils at risk of falling behind and are very good at helping them to get back on track.
- Pupils feel really safe in school. Their excellent behaviour and enthusiasm to learn help to ensure a calm working environment where staff and pupils demonstrate high levels of mutual respect.
- The headteacher sets high expectations for staff and pupils and he is well supported by all staff and governors. As a result, there have been significant improvements since the previous inspection in teaching and pupils' achievement; basic skills are now taught well and subject leaders focus much more clearly on the progress of different groups of pupils, minimising underachievement.
- There are excellent links with parents who have a greater involvement with their children's education. Their appreciation of the importance of education has been raised so that pupils' attendance is now above average.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is yet outstanding. Teachers are not yet consistent in ensuring more able pupils make even better progress, particularly in mathematics.
- There are missed opportunities to allow pupils to find more things out for themselves.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 15 lessons. Several of these were joint observations with the headteacher. The inspectors listened to pupils read from Years 1 and 2.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body, a representative from the local authority, members of staff and a group of pupils.
- The inspector took account of the 13 responses to the on-line survey (Parent View) together with the replies to a parent survey undertaken by the school and a letter received from a parent. The inspectors also took account of 29 responses submitted by staff.
- A wide range of documents were considered, including those relating to the work of the governing body, pupils' progress, teachers' planning, safeguarding and attendance.

## Inspection team

Paul Edwards, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Bimla Thakur

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Oldbrook is a smaller-than-average-sized infant school.
- The large majority of pupils are from minority ethnic groups; the largest groups are White British, Indian, other Asian background, Black or Black British African and other Black background. The proportion who speaks English as an additional language is much higher than that seen nationally. Currently, 26 different languages are spoken in the school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is similar to the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- Pupil mobility is much higher than that seen nationally, with a significant proportion entering the school in Years 1 or 2.
- The school runs a daily breakfast club.
- There is no alternative provision.
- The school has attained Healthy School status and has the Artsmark Gold among several other awards.

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

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
  - ensuring work is consistently challenging for the more able pupils and that it fully stretches them, particularly in mathematics
  - allowing more able pupils to move on to more challenging activities sooner in lessons
  - encouraging pupils to use their good mathematics skills to solve real life mathematical problems.
- Develop pupils' independence by providing more opportunities for pupils to show initiative, organise aspects of their learning and work things out for themselves.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils achieve well throughout the school. Children's skills and abilities on entry to the school are usually below those expected for their age, with particular weaknesses in social and language skills. Children quickly adapt to the school's high expectations and settle quickly. Quality support for those children with little or no English helps them to make rapid gains in their understanding of English. Overall, children make good progress so that they are well prepared for entry into Year 1.
- Pupils' good progress continues throughout Key Stage 1 so that, by the end of Year 2, their attainment is usually well above that seen nationally. In 2012 it was closer to the national average because of the higher than usual number of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and also the high proportion who entered the school during Year 2. The school's progress data show that the school is on track to attain the higher levels seen in previous years.
- The well-taught daily phonics sessions (letters and the sounds they make) provide a strong basis for pupils' reading development. In the national screening test for Year 1 pupils, their attainment was above average. Pupils develop a love of reading and they are keen to discuss their latest book. Pupils who struggle with reading have good support. Pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding make good progress because of well targeted support. For example, the reading recovery programme provides intensive and effective support so that the gap between the attainment of targeted pupils and that of other narrows considerably.
- Pupils are encouraged to write for many different purposes and their report writing, stories and poetry demonstrate an impressive grasp of paragraphing, use of adjectives and correct punctuation. Their research skills improve well. In a good Year 2 lesson, pupils researched information on the sun and other planets and wrote well-constructed and interesting questions for their classmates to answer. Pupils' handwriting and their care in presenting work are particularly impressive, the result of teachers' high expectations.
- Mental arithmetic skills develop well and pupils become increasingly confident in carrying out calculations in their heads. They develop good skills in the four rules of number. However, there are missed opportunities, particularly for the more able pupils to use these skills to find things out for themselves and to use these skills in everyday, practical situations.
- The high number of pupils who join the school later in the year settle well and make good progress because their needs are assessed quickly and accurately and well targeted support and guidance are provided. The same goes for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. As a result of effective intervention strategies, they make progress in line with their classmates and attain better than their peers nationally. Pupils from Indian, other Asian backgrounds, Black or Black British African and other Black backgrounds achieve well. White British pupils, who achieve less well than other groups, are provided with considerable support, that is effective in narrowing the gap between them and other pupils.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Almost all of the teaching observed during the inspection was good and there is clear evidence of outstanding practice. At the heart of the good practice are the excellent relationships that exist between staff and pupils. Teachers expect much from their pupils in terms of behaviour and effort and they are not disappointed.
- Teachers know their pupils well and are clear about what each is capable of achieving. Work is planned that entuses pupils and usually stretches them. Pupils know what they have to do to improve because teachers tell them and marking of their work is clear, identifying what they are doing well and how it can get better.
- Usually teachers set work that helps all groups of pupils to make good progress. Occasionally

however, the more able are not always given work, particularly in mathematics, that really pushes them to do their best. In a few lessons they spend too long listening to the teacher when they should be challenged to find things out for themselves and to use their initiative.

- Teachers have good subject knowledge that enables them to respond with confidence to pupils' questions. Pupils' speaking skills improve well because teachers question them effectively and encourage them to give extended answers and to discuss their ideas with their talk partners.
- Structured sessions that help pupils to improve their phonic skills are taught well both by teachers and support staff. For those pupils who find reading more difficult, well targeted support, often in small groups, enables them to make good progress and, in line with their peers, to become confident and regular readers.
- Teachers plan carefully so that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are given work that is well matched to their prior attainment and, where appropriate, that other adults are well briefed so that they can give the best possible support. Staff who teach reading recovery sessions are knowledgeable and they enthuse those pupils who have not always had good experiences of reading to become more skilled. Specialist staff provide very good support for those pupils at an early stage of learning English, enabling them to take a full part in all aspects of the curriculum.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are provided with a wide range of interesting activities that improve their knowledge of the world around them. Several children were really keen to talk about the owls which had 'visited' the school. They spoke knowledgeably about the food they ate and could remember the names of some of them.

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

- Pupils are extremely enthusiastic and work and play together with great cooperation. In most lessons they are totally involved in their work with little prompting from their teachers; consequently, there is no wasted time. Pupils' excellent behaviour and really positive attitudes towards learning contribute significantly towards the quality of their work of which the pupils are justly proud.
- All pupils, those parents who responded to Parent View and the school's own survey feel that behaviour is good. It is quite clear from what was seen, school records and discussions with staff and pupils that good behaviour is embedded and typical, the result of the hard work of staff. Their good work is ensuring all pupils are treated equally and with respect. Consequently, there is no discrimination and, in recent years, racist name calling has become extremely rare.
- Pupils have a good awareness of different forms of bullying but those spoken to, and parent comments, indicate that bullying is extremely rare. Pupils feel extremely safe, are aware of traffic dangers and becoming increasingly aware of the dangers associated with the internet and mobile phones.
- Older pupils care about their younger school mates and are proud of the role they have in looking after them at break times. They enjoy their role as play leaders and their effectiveness is seen in the way all pupils really enjoy play times. Lunchtimes are pleasant occasions where pupils sit and talk sensibly with their friends whilst enjoying their lunch.
- The importance of regular attendance is emphasised strongly to parents. An issue at the time of the previous inspection, this has been addressed effectively through one-to-one discussions between the headteacher and parents whose children have below average attendance. Holiday absences are not granted as a matter of course and the school's strategies have resulted in pupils' above average attendance and punctuality.

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

- The headteacher commands great respect from his staff who are highly supportive in his efforts to improve provision. They have been successful in driving up standards, eliminating inadequate teaching and underachievement. In addition, poor behaviour is non-existent and the school

provides pupils with a very happy learning environment.

- The senior leaders have a very clear understanding of how well the school is performing through a detailed and accurate analysis of information on children's progress. The achievement of groups of pupils and individuals is checked regularly and rigorously so that any pupil at risk of falling behind is spotted early so appropriate interventions are put in place. School leaders hold teachers to account for how well pupils are achieving through regular progress meeting. Performance management is linked to pupils' progress. If pupils do not make progress, teachers do not advance up the salary scale. Very effective professional development is in place and this ensures teachers' skills improve.
- The roles of middle leaders and subject leaders are developing well. They are beginning to take on more of the responsibilities previously undertaken by the headteacher. Literacy and numeracy leaders are raising pupils' achievements through the sharing of ideas and training. Staff have involved parents in training, for example workshops to explain how phonics are taught have been very successful. They rightly recognise the need to develop their skills further in ensuring more teaching and pupils' achievement are outstanding.
- The curriculum is planned carefully to provide pupils with a wide range of activities. Each term the theme provides a 'hook' on which many activities are based. For example, the theme based on the Great Fire of London, involved pupils baking bread, a visit by the fire service as well as many writing, mathematical and scientific activities. Art has a high profile and the pupils and staff have produced much high quality work, justifying the Artsmark Gold award.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the way the school cares for their children and the quality of education it provides. Pupils are looked after well during the breakfast club and the many after school activities add considerably to the quality of provision. The school links closely with the nearby children's centre and local college to provide courses and activities for parents; for example, play and stay sessions and language courses for parents at an early stage of learning English are greatly valued by parents.
- The local authority has provided light touch for this good and improving school. It will continue to monitor its performance from a distance.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governors know the school well and provide good support and challenge. They have a clear picture of the quality of teaching and use this knowledge to set targets for improvement and monitor the performance of the headteacher and staff. They recognise the link between strong teaching and pupils' achievement. They have a very good understanding of data and use this information to compare how well their school fares compared to similar schools. The governing body is very aware of performance management and uses the process very effectively to determine movement along the salary scale and when considering internal appointments. It discusses the pupil premium funding with the headteacher and considers carefully the impact it has on pupils' achievement. The governors undertake their statutory duties seriously. They have undertaken safer recruitment training, safeguarding procedures are rigorous and policies are fully in place.

## 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>	110240
<b>Local authority</b>	Milton Keynes
<b>Inspection number</b>	405275
<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	155
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Colleen Kirkbride
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kirk Hopkins
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21–22 September 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01908 604689
<b>Fax number</b>	01908 234280
<b>Email address</b>	oldbrookf@milton-keynes.gov.uk



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