

# Speenhamland Primary School

Pelican Lane, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 1NU

**Inspection dates** 17–18 January 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- The proportions of pupils attaining the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics by Year 6 are not rising quickly enough.
- Lower- and some middle-attaining pupils do not consistently progress well in spelling, grammar, punctuation and handwriting. These skills are not taught consistently well enough, especially in Years 3 and 4.
- Not enough is done to ensure pupils consistently apply phonics (the links between letters and sounds) when reading and writing.
- Teaching is not consistently good. Sometimes lessons do not build well on pupils' previous attainment, including in mathematics.
- Children in Reception are not consistently given challenging learning opportunities when learning through play.
- Checks on teachers have not yet resulted in consistently good teaching. Subject leaders are not yet observing their colleagues teach.
- Members of the governing body do not have enough ways of evaluating the impact of initiatives for improving achievement.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher and senior leaders have taken effective action, including the introduction of teacher performance measures, so that the quality of teaching has improved.
- Pupils' progress accelerates in Years 5 and 6 because of much good teaching in these years.
- Physically disabled pupils are well supported and achieve well.
- Pupils behave well and feel safe and secure, and their attendance is above average.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 25 lessons, of which seven were joint observations with the headteacher, and heard a sample of pupils read from most year groups.
- Inspectors had discussions with pupils, looked at a wide range of their work and examined the school's data on pupils' attainment and progress.
- Meetings were held with representatives of the governing body, senior and middle leaders, and a local authority representative.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to the online Parent View survey, discussions with parents and carers, the few parents' and carers' letters to inspectors and staff's responses to inspectors.
- They observed the school's work and looked at a broad selection of documents, including plans for improvement, safeguarding arrangements, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and records of school leaders' evaluations of teaching in lessons.

## Inspection team

Eileen Chadwick, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Shela Rowan

Additional inspector

David Wolfson

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Speenhamland is an above-average-sized primary school.
- There are 11 pupils in the specialist resourced provision for physically disabled pupils. These pupils are mainly taught alongside mainstream pupils.
- Most pupils are White British, although approximately one tenth speak English as an additional language, which is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average. These pupils' needs mainly relate to physical disabilities, language, literacy and numeracy difficulties, and also to behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. All of the pupils in the specialist resourced provision have a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding (additional funding provided for looked after children, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children from service families) is average.
- The school was inspected in November 2011 as part of Ofsted's monitoring of satisfactory schools.
- The school has received support from the local authority for over a year.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The two deputy headteachers acted jointly as headteacher in the term before the headteacher's arrival in April 2012.
- The daily before- and after-school clubs are managed by the governing body. The nursery for children aged 0–5 years situated on the same site is privately managed and was not part of this inspection. The report can be found on the Ofsted website.
- There is no alternative provision off-site that pupils attend.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching to at least good by:
  - strengthening the teaching of literacy by enabling pupils to consistently apply their phonics skills (the sounds that letters make) when reading and writing
  - ensuring teachers match work in mathematics fully to the needs of middle- and lower-attaining pupils, and address any gaps in pupils' skills and knowledge
  - ensuring homework is consistently challenging, and reading records show parents and carers their children's reading targets, including in phonics where appropriate.
- Raise achievement and quicken pupils' progress by:
  - improving lower-attaining pupils' phonics skills and ensure they are heard to read very regularly in school
  - improving pupils' spelling, grammar, punctuation and handwriting in Key Stage 2, and improving the teaching of these skills in Years 3 and 4
  - providing children in Reception with consistently challenging learning opportunities when learning through play, and ensuring they make balanced choices.
- Improve the management of the school by leaders and members of the governing body by:
  - evaluating how well different groups are learning when observing lessons

- monitoring the impact of initiatives for raising achievement and improving teaching, including for those in receipt of pupil premium funding
  - developing subject leaders' skills in monitoring teaching and learning so they have a full impact on helping to raise achievement.
- An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Having entered Reception with knowledge and skills which are typical for their age, pupils make uneven progress across the school. Attainment over time has been broadly average and has recovered from a dip last year. Inspection shows the current Year 6 attain average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Overall, a minority of average and the more-able pupils make good progress in Key Stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics and over a half of pupils reach higher levels in reading and mathematics.
- However, slightly fewer Year 6 pupils reach the levels expected in English and mathematics because middle- and lower-attaining pupils do not always progress as well as they should, particularly in Years 3 and 4. Accelerated progress in Years 5 and 6 enables pupils to make up some ground lost earlier.
- By the end of Reception children's attainment is average. In Reception, children's progress slows at times because play activities are inconsistently challenging. Some children do not spend enough time on literacy and numeracy when choosing activities for themselves.
- Attainment in Year 2 is average, including in reading. Inspection shows that new Key Stage 1 arrangements for teaching phonics in ability sets are improving pupils' phonics skills. For example, in a Year 2 phonics lesson, pupils made good progress in learning their sounds. However, pupils in Reception and the lower-attainers in Key Stage 1 do not apply their knowledge of sounds sufficiently well when reading and writing.
- Most pupils are fluent readers by Year 6 but lower-attaining pupils sometimes have gaps in their phonics knowledge. Most pupils write effectively for different purposes but a few middle- and lower-attainers have weaknesses in their spelling, punctuation, grammar and handwriting. In Years 3 and 4, pupils make uneven progress in developing these literacy skills.
- In mathematics, in Key Stages 1 and 2, a few middle- and lower-attaining pupils are restricted by gaps in their basic numeracy skills.
- Pupils with physical disabilities, in the specialist resourced provision, make good progress. Specialist staff are very knowledgeable about these pupils' progress and ensure activities are well matched and adapted to their needs. As a result, their achievement is at times better than other pupils at the school.
- Disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make progress similar to their peers. Small-group teaching speeds up the progress of both of these groups but their progress is uneven across the school.
- The few pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding make similar progress to their peers. Although improving, their attainment is still lower than their national counterparts and at times other pupils in school, as shown by their lower average point scores.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- There is not enough consistently good or outstanding teaching, despite recent improvements.
- Literacy lessons are usually relevant to pupils' interests and linked well with the broader curriculum. However, in Years 3 and 4, there is not always enough direct teaching of basic grammar, punctuation and handwriting skills for the middle- and lower-attaining pupils. Occasionally, work in mathematics is too hard for some middle- and lower-attainers in mathematics.
- Teachers do not consistently encourage pupils to use their phonics when reading and writing, while reading records show that some lower-attaining pupils do not read often enough in school or at home. Teachers' marking is developing well, but a few inconsistencies remain so that there are times when teachers' written comments do not help pupils to fully understand what they need to do to improve.

- Parents and carers expressed concern about homework in Key Stage 2. Inspectors find that homework is not always challenging in Key Stage 2 and there is insufficient information in pupils' reading records to enable parents and carers to fully support their reading at home.
- In Reception, there is insufficient planning for stimulating play provision, including for literacy and numeracy. Children's use of the activities is not always monitored carefully enough. Children's physical development is well catered for, both indoors and outside.
- Pupils make good progress where teachers' subject knowledge is good and activities are well matched to their needs. For example, during guided reading in Years 5 and 6, the teachers' careful planning ensured no time was wasted and all groups of pupils spent maximum time on reading activities well matched to their needs.
- Specialist support staff for physically disabled pupils have a good impact on learning. They ensure that physical space, resources and learning activities are well adapted to pupils' needs and enable them to take full a part in activities. Other teaching assistants often support pupils effectively in their learning but occasionally are constrained when some activities set by teachers do not fully build on previous learning.

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

- Most parents and carers are pleased with behaviour at school. Inspectors found that pupils are friendly and polite, and pupils of all ages and backgrounds work and play in harmony. Behaviour is often good in lessons and around the school but, occasionally, pupils lose concentration when work is not fully matched to their needs.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children are responsive and often behave sensibly but sometimes wander from task to task when play activities are insufficiently purposeful or lack challenge.
- Pupils are treated with respect and respond positively to opportunities to perform roles of responsibility, such as 'House Captains'. They enjoy school and are keen to do well. This is reflected in above-average attendance.
- Pupils have a secure understanding of what bullying is and know about its different forms, such as cyber-bullying and name-calling. School records indicate that bullying is rare, and there are clear procedures in the school to deal with issues should they arise.
- Pupils with behavioural difficulties are supported sensitively and improve their social skills so that disruption to learning is rare.
- The before and after-school clubs provide a happy and caring start and end to the school day.

### **The leadership and management** require improvement

- Since her arrival, the headteacher has clarified senior leaders' roles and appointed subject leaders. However, although senior leaders systematically observe teaching and provide detailed feedback to teachers, they do not consistently identify the impact of teaching on the development of specific subject skills for different abilities.
- The school has responded very positively to guidance provided by the local authority which has helped to improve teaching. Leaders have set challenging targets for teachers in order to hold them to account. Performance management of staff is now closely linked to pupils' progress and teachers' professional development needs. The headteacher has robustly addressed an element of weak teaching. Thorough management systems are now in place to provide a whole-school focus on continuing the drive to improve the quality of teaching.
- Achievement is unevenly balanced across the school, and initiatives such as the introduction of guided reading and setted phonics lessons in Key Stage 1 have yet to be monitored throughout the school. However, the right priorities for improving pupils' achievement have been identified, and pupils' improving achievement in Year 6, including the more-able pupils' rising attainment, demonstrates the school's capacity to secure further improvements.

- Staff share the headteacher’s vision for the future of the school. Senior leaders are capable and committed, and are ably supported by subject leaders who are developing a clear understanding of their roles in relation to school improvement, and who are receiving training for monitoring lessons, but their impact is not yet being fully realised on rapidly improving pupils’ achievement.
- Systems for assessment and observing lessons have been strengthened. Teachers, as well as school leaders, are now involved in evaluating pupils’ progress through regular analyses of assessments. A new phonics coordinator has been appointed and there is now phonics assessment tracking across the whole school.
- The school ethos is inclusive in seeking to promote equality, and discrimination is not tolerated. The curriculum promotes pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well and contributes to pupils’ enjoyment of school and their mature attitudes.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is ambitious for the school. Governors are now developing an understanding about performance management, salary progression and how underperformance is being tackled in the school. They offer increasing levels of challenge, particularly in relation to pupils’ achievement, teaching and the way in which the budget is spent, especially pupil premium funding. Governors have improved their understanding of data, the work of the school and how it is performing in relation to other schools because they have had training. They are beginning to have an impact, although they do not always have ways of evaluating the effect of initiatives for improving achievement, including for pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding. Safeguarding policies and practices are robust, and the governing body ensures that they fully meet requirements.

## 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>	109822
<b>Local authority</b>	West Berkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	401082

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	277
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Bowness
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rebecca Neeves
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 May 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01635 41077
<b>Fax number</b>	01635 551239
<b>Email address</b>	office@speenhamland.w-berks.sch.uk

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