

Tickford Park Primary School

Avon Close ,Newport Pagnell, MK16 9DH

Inspection dates 17–18 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
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

- The leadership team is ambitious for the school and its pupils. They have created an atmosphere where hard work, high achievement and initiative are highly valued.
- Pupils make good progress and reach standards that are above average.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils in relation to their learning and their behaviour. Good subject knowledge and relationships contribute to the positive and purposeful atmosphere in the school.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Pupils are keen to learn, behave well in lessons and work hard. They feel safe in school.
- Attendance has been improving over time and is above the national average.
- Members of the governing body know the school well and are very proud of its achievements. They provide a good level of support and challenge to school leaders.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding because teachers do not always ask probing questions and ensure that time is used effectively when pupils finish their work early.
- The evaluation of teaching is sometimes too generous because not all leaders link teaching closely enough to the progress pupils make or make sure that the school improvement plan provides clear guidance on how success can be measured.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 20 lessons, of which five were joint observations with senior leaders. In addition, inspectors listened to pupils read in Years 2, 4 and 6 and attended two assemblies.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation including teachers' planning, the school's own assessment data, school improvement plan and self-evaluation, the school's safeguarding documents and attendance data.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff, including senior leaders. The lead inspector spoke to a representative of the local authority by telephone.
- Inspectors took account of 60 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), the school's most recent questionnaire distributed to parents and carers, met with parents and carers who requested an interview and had informal meetings.

Inspection team

John Sweet , Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Alison Cartlidge

Additional inspector

David Westall

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Tickford Park Primary School is a larger-than-average-sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as a second language is below the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who need additional support at school action is well below average. The proportion of pupils who are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, for which the school receives additional income (the pupil premium - funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and children from service families) is well below average.
- A higher than average number of pupils enter or leave the school at different times, including a number of pupils joining Year 3 from local infant schools.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all teaching is good and that a greater proportion is outstanding by:
 - using more probing questions to involve all pupils and to check their understanding
 - making sure that time in lessons is effectively used and that pupils who complete tasks are not having to wait for others to catch up.
- Sharpen school improvement planning by:
 - including more detail identifying how success can be measured
 - making sure that evaluations of teaching are linked more closely to its impact on pupils' progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Attainment by the end of Year 6 is above average in both English and mathematics. A high proportion of pupils reach the higher levels, particularly in reading and mathematics. Standards in writing are improving and, as a result of the work that has been undertaken, boys are now more confident and positive about writing.
- Children begin school at the expected level and make good progress in the Reception classes. Progress in Key Stage 1 was slower in 2012 and this reflects some changes to staffing. These have now been remedied and pupils are on course to meet challenging targets for the summer. Older pupils make good progress overall, with the best progress being made in Years 5 and 6.
- Ambitious targets for individuals and every year group ensure that this good achievement is maintained and improved. This is reflected in good progress made by pupils of all abilities and ethnic backgrounds.
- Reading is taught well through the school and this has resulted in pupils leaving the school with good standards of literacy. A recent initiative to improve and speed up the acquisition of skills in basic literacy is beginning to have an impact on pupils' knowledge of the relationships between sounds and letters (phonics) and their spelling.
- Progress and achievement in mathematics are good. This is because teachers have good subject knowledge and make lessons interesting and fun. The recently introduced times tables testing has a positive impact on pupils' ability to manipulate numbers at speed and their understanding of place value.
- Pupils make good progress in writing because there are good opportunities for them to concentrate on developing longer pieces of writing about subjects which interest them. They learn to review and edit their own work and write purposefully in a range of subjects. Year 6 pupils had written movingly about what they would take with them if they were forced into confinement like Anne Frank. One wrote that the most important thing would be her diary because: 'It has all the memories from my first day to my last day at primary school.'
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress in relation to their starting points because they are well supported in lessons by their teachers and teaching assistants.
- Pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium make good progress and achieve better than their peers nationally. Their attainment at Key Stage 2 was more than two points better than their peers. The school has used the funding to provide more individual teaching, additional resources and music therapy.
- Pupils are proud of their work and achieve well in a range of subjects.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is typically good and some is outstanding. Teachers are most often clear about what they have to teach and why, and usually take the time to discuss this with pupils in lessons.
- Explanations are clear and teachers use visual aids well, including the electronic whiteboard, to illustrate points and set challenges. Questions are used well to check pupils' understanding and to stimulate discussion. However, questions are not always as probing as they might be, to check the understanding of pupils who do not volunteer answers.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and know the pupils well. This enables them to plan lessons which lead to improved learning because work is set at the right level and planning sets out the next steps which need to be undertaken.
- Pupils enjoy good relationships with their teachers and other adults who work with them. This

means that the atmosphere in classes is friendly, relaxed and conducive to learning.

- Teachers in the Reception classes make learning pleasurable and memorable through the use of puppets and a good range of fun activities.
- Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and learning. In the most effective lessons, they plan learning that will stretch the most-able pupils and the pace of learning is good. Where teaching is less effective, the pace is slower and sometimes pupils are not sure what they are to do when they have completed tasks.
- In a small number of lessons, pupils are expected to be inactive for too long. This results in some pupils becoming restless and fidgety, and the pace of learning slows.
- Praise and feedback are used well in lessons. This serves to build pupils' confidence in attempting new learning.
- Pupils know how to improve their work in mathematics and English because they have targets which set out the next steps in their learning. These are often referred to when pupils are engaged in a task. Marking is regular and helps to improve learning.
- Teaching assistants make an important contribution to the quality of teaching. Many take an active role in managing and teaching classes or groups. They play an important role in supporting some of the most vulnerable pupils and ensuring that they fully access learning in lessons.
- There are strong links between subjects so that pupils can apply what they have learned in literacy and numeracy when working in other subjects.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour around the school, in lessons and at breaktimes is good. In some lessons and assemblies, it is exemplary. Pupils say that there are a few pupils who misbehave, but these are dealt with quickly and fairly.
- Pupils feel very safe in school and that staff take good care of them. They are taught about keeping safe in a number of situations, both in school and out. They have a well-developed sense of internet safety, which has been given a high profile in the school. 'Think before you click,' pupils say.
- Older pupils are aware of the different forms that bullying can take but say that bullying is rare, and pupils say that it is not an issue in the school as there is no real bullying. 'If there was,' one pupil said, 'the teachers would soon make it stop!'
- Pupils are proud of their school. They are polite and friendly and establish lasting friendships. A pupil who recently transferred from a smaller school said that he had settled very quickly and had already made some very good friends.
- Pupils are highly respectful of each other and of the adults they work with. They support each other well in lessons and are genuinely pleased to congratulate and applaud the achievements of their classmates.
- Pupils show very positive attitudes to learning. They enjoy coming to school and say that teachers make lessons interesting. They are particularly keen on lessons where they are actively involved and the subject matter interests them. In most lessons, pupils concentrate hard and persevere with tasks, even when they are difficult or humdrum.
- Pupils relish opportunities to take on responsibilities around the school. Some are on the School Council; others take a leading role in preventing problems in the playground or encouraging road safety.
- Pupils are keen to come to school and this is reflected in the above-average attendance which has been improving since 2010. Parents and carers are keen to get their children to school and to be punctual. There have been no exclusions in recent times.
- Parents and carers who completed the online questionnaire and the school's own survey agreed

that their child is well looked after and that the school keeps their child safe.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and other school leaders are an effective team. They are ambitious for the school, its pupils and staff. They are united in their mission to 'inspire each other and create opportunities'. They encourage an ethos of working hard and perseverance.
 - The school is committed to its work in the training and development of teachers and collaborative work with other schools. This ensures that there are good professional development opportunities for its own staff and that it is well prepared to support new teachers.
 - There is a comprehensive programme of monitoring teaching. Strengths and weaknesses in teaching are identified and this leads to appropriate professional development and training.
 - The relationship between performance management, pay progression and the progress that pupils make is clearly established.
 - A wide range of staff and governors are involved in monitoring and evaluating the performance of the school. They observe lessons, look at pupils' work and discuss their progress. However, the conclusions that they reach are not always as precise as they could be because the information they use is not accurately linked to pupils' progress.
 - Good achievement and teaching have been maintained since the last inspection. However, the school improvement plan does not show clearly enough how the school will continue to improve because it lacks clear targets against which expected improvements can be measured, for example it does not include the robust achievement targets that have been set for each year group.
 - The needs of pupils are met through the well-planned mix of subjects and themes. This is proving successful in motivating pupils and encouraging them to be more independent learners. There is a good range of sporting activities and clubs, visits and visitors to the school; a recent overnight stay in the school was a great success. The curriculum contributes well to pupils' equality of opportunity and their spiritual, moral social and cultural development.
 - School leaders are rigorous in tackling discrimination and there is a very low incidence of recorded bullying, harassment or use of racist language.
 - Well-qualified and enthusiastic subject leaders for English and mathematics have made a positive impact on the work of the school and the achievement of pupils. They lead important initiatives designed to continue to improve basic skills in literacy and numeracy, including the newly introduced literacy programme which is improving pupils' ability to match letters to sounds.
 - The partnership with parents and carers is good. They feel that pupils are happy to come to school, that they are safe and that the teaching is good. They particularly like the range of out-of-school activities that are on offer. One parent was exceptionally pleased with the progress that her child had made and commented that the school had set her child well up for 'everything and anything that she is likely to encounter'.
 - Safeguarding arrangements are rigorous and meet statutory requirements. All staff have received recent training in child protection and first aid.
 - The local authority has had limited involvement in the school because it is viewed as a successful school with strong and capable leadership.
- **The governance of the school:**
- Members of the governing body have been actively involved in the school and visit regularly to attend meetings and undertake other duties. Consequently, they have a clear picture of what is happening in the school and know that the school is good. They know the strengths of the school and about how well teachers are doing and how the school is tackling any underperformance. They understand how well the school is doing compared with other
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schools. They know that the budget is spent wisely, including funding designated for pupils in receipt of the pupil premium. They are aware of the procedures used for checking up on teachers' performance and relate this to salary progression. However, governors' evaluation does not always make the link between the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' achievement.

Governors keep up to date with their own training.

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

Unique reference number	135107
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	403666

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	335
Appropriate authority	The governing Body
Chair	Tracy Stewart
Headteacher	Ann Tobia
Date of previous school inspection	5–6 June 2008
Telephone number	01908 610431
Fax number	
Email address	tickfordpark@miltonkeynes.gov.uk

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