

Bowerhill Primary School

Halifax Road, Bowerhill, Melksham, Wiltshire, SN12 6YH

Inspection dates

13–14 March 2013

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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Standards of attainment are above average in Year 6 and have improved since the previous inspection. Pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- The quality of teaching is good overall and some is outstanding. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving.
- Pupils' behaviour and safety are good. Pupils get on well with each other and have good attitudes to learning. They work hard in lessons, feel very safe and enjoy school.
- Good leadership and management have ensured that the school has improved its overall effectiveness since the previous inspection. The school's leaders monitor pupils' attainment and the quality of teaching closely, and have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas in need of improvement.
- Parents and carers correctly believe the school prepares their children well for the next stage of their education.
- The governing body fulfils all its duties well and provides the school with an effective level of support. Governors are not afraid to ask challenging questions regarding the school's effectiveness when required to do so.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The progress of pupils in mathematics in a very few number of classes is not as good as in the rest of the school. This is due to gaps in the subject knowledge of teachers.
- Teachers' marking does not consistently provide pupils with a clear understanding of what they need to do in order to improve their work.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 18 lessons taught by 13 teachers. Two of these were joint observations with the headteacher.
- The inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, school development planning, teachers' planning, school tracking data regarding the progress of individual pupils, the governing body minutes and a range of other school policy documents.
- The inspectors also listened to pupils of different ages reading and made short observations of sessions on the teaching of phonics (letter patterns and the sounds they represent).
- Discussions were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, members of the governing body, staff and pupils. A telephone conversation took place between the lead inspector and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour and scrutinised the school's safeguarding procedures and documentation.
- The views of the 39 parents and carers who responded to the Ofsted online Parent View survey, and also those who held discussions with the inspectors, were analysed.

Inspection team

Michael Barron, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Shahnaz Maqsood,

Additional inspector

Fran Ashworth

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average size primary school.
- Most pupils are taught in single age-group classes, the exception being pupils in Year 3 and Year 4, who are taught in three mixed-age-group classes.
- A large majority of pupils attending the school come from White British backgrounds.
- A small number of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds, although very few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs is below average. These needs include moderate learning difficulties and behaviour, social and emotional needs.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding from the government for groups of pupils, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, children who are looked after by the local authority and the children of service families) is well below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all class teachers possess the required subject knowledge needed to make sure pupils, especially the more able, always make the progress of which they are capable.
- Improve the quality of teachers' marking of pupils' work in order to make sure that pupils always have a clear understanding of what they need to do in order to improve their work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The vast majority of parents and carers who completed the online questionnaire or who were interviewed during the inspection correctly believe that their children are taught well and are making good progress.
- Children usually enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with the skill levels expected for their age, although their calculation and writing skills are often weaker areas. However, this can vary from year to year and pupils presently in Year 2 entered the school with below-average skill levels in all areas of learning.
- Children enjoy their first experiences of school and make good progress during their Reception Year because teaching caters well for their needs. Pupils then continue to make good progress throughout the rest of the school, especially in developing their communication and literacy skills. This includes the more-able pupils, disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and also pupils entitled to additional help from pupil premium funding. As a result, pupils attain above-average standards in reading in both Year 1 and Year 2. It has also led to the consistent improvement in the school's overall results in the Year 2 national assessments since 2010. Pupils' attainment in 2012 was significantly above the national average overall.
- Attainment in English has improved consistently since the previous inspection and has been above the national average in the Year 6 national tests since 2009. A scrutiny of pupils' work confirmed that Year 6 pupils are presently on course to reach the challenging targets set for them in English in the forthcoming national tests. This was supported by information from lesson observations and school data regarding pupils' progress.
- Attainment in mathematics is presently above average in Year 6. However, the attainment and progress of pupils in mathematics in a small minority of classes is not as good as in the rest of the school. This is due to gaps in the subject knowledge of teachers. This can lead to pupils, especially the more able, not always making the progress of which they are capable.
- All groups of pupils who benefit from the pupil premium funding reach similar levels of attainment to other pupils in the school in both English and mathematics as measured by their average points scores at the end of Key Stage 2.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching over time is good overall, even though a small minority of teachers are less confident when teaching mathematics than they are when teaching other subjects. Nearly all the teaching observed during the inspection was at least good; some was outstanding.
- Teachers have good relationships with the pupils in their classes and high expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving. Pupils are attentive and behave well in lessons. They say they are confident that teachers and other adults will help them if they are having difficulties completing their work.
- A feature of the lessons observed during the inspection was the way in which teachers matched the pupils' work to their different abilities and previous learning. As a result, pupils worked hard and usually made at least good progress.
- Pupils say that they enjoy lessons because teachers always try to make learning interesting. As one pupil put it, 'Lessons are never boring in our class.' An example of this was observed during an outstanding Year 6 literacy lesson which concentrated on building up pupils' ability to use adjectives and adverbs effectively to write powerful stories. The teacher gained the attention of the class by showing a short science fiction film linked to H G Wells' *'War of the Worlds'* story. This really caught pupils' imaginations and the teacher made excellent use of this lesson introduction to discuss in detail how to use ambitious vocabulary to describe characters and write inventive story openings. As a result, all pupils worked very hard and made excellent progress in developing their ability to write story openings designed to catch the attention of the

reader.

- The attainment of pupils entitled to the pupil premium has risen because the school has used the extra funding to improve the level of academic support for these pupils. For example, the school provides several different forms of extra tuition for those pupils who need it in order to make the progress of which they are capable.
- However, although the quality of teachers' marking is good in many classes, it is not consistently good throughout the school, and pupils do not always get the feedback they need in order to improve their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour is good throughout the school and pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They are polite, well mannered and display a good deal of respect for other pupils and adults.
- The parents and carers who responded to the online Parent View survey believe that the school is a very safe and secure place, and that their children are well cared for. This was echoed in the views of parents and carers who talked to inspectors. Pupils also say that they feel safe in school and are confident that adults will always help them if they have any concerns.
- Pupils say that they really enjoy school, and this is reflected in their above-average rate of attendance and punctuality to school each morning. The school does not authorise pupils being taken out of the school for holidays in term time and rigorously enforces this policy. A number of families have received fines from the local authority for holiday absences.
- Pupils get on well together and believe that the behaviour of the vast majority of their fellow pupils is good. They have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying, such as physical, emotional and cyber-bullying. During discussions, pupils mentioned that a few isolated instances of bullying did occur in the school. However, they were also confident that should any form of bullying ever take place, it would always be dealt with quickly and firmly by adults.

The leadership and management are good

- The school is led by a well-respected and dedicated headteacher who has worked well with his staff and governing body to ensure that the school has developed very good links with parents and carers, and improved its effectiveness since the previous inspection.
- The leadership of teaching is good. The school has recently implemented improved procedures to manage the performance of staff and these are linked well to staff salary levels. School leaders regularly check on the quality of teaching and ensure that staff benefit from appropriate professional development where needed in order to improve the quality of pupils' learning. However, the school is aware of the need to ensure teachers' subject knowledge in mathematics is consistently good in all year groups.
- The school receives 'light-touch' support from the local authority, which rightly considers the school to have improved since the previous inspection and to have the capacity for further improvement.
- The curriculum has been designed to make learning interesting for pupils and to prepare them well for the next stage of their education. It promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils have frequent opportunities to meet interesting visitors to the school and to visit interesting places.
- The school uses its links with schools in India and France to improve pupils' knowledge and understanding of the wider world. Pupils from Year 2 upwards are taught French as an additional language and have regular opportunities to hold face-to-face discussions with French pupils using internet video connections.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body fulfils all its statutory duties well, including those linked to safeguarding and pupils' welfare. Individual governors take their responsibilities seriously and the governing

body as a whole contains a wealth of expertise. For example, the chair of the curriculum committee is a trained teacher and the chair of finance works for a well-known national bank. The governing body is therefore able to provide the school with a good level of support and individual governors have the confidence to ask school leaders searching questions about the school's effectiveness. As a result, governors have a realistic understanding of how well the school is doing in comparison to other primary schools. The governing body also works well with the school to ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities to succeed and that discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. Governors keep a close watch on the school's finances, including how effectively the school uses the extra money it receives to improve the achievement of pupils entitled to pupil premium funding. Governors receive regular training about their roles and responsibilities, including those linked to the safer recruitment of staff. The governing body also monitors school performance data very closely. This includes data regarding the performance of all staff, especially the quality of teaching, and its links to salary levels.

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	126290
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	402390

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	357
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nigel Webster
Headteacher	Andrew Matthews
Date of previous school inspection	15–16 October 2009
Telephone number	01225 700964
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