

# Owslebury Primary School

Beech Grove, Owslebury, Winchester, SO21 1LS

## Inspection dates

13–14 March 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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 headteacher's ambitious vision for the school aims at high achievement and excellent personal development for pupils. She has high expectations of staff and pupils.
- The school evaluates itself accurately. Improvement planning is good. Pupils' performance is tracked rigorously and the quality of teaching is thoroughly evaluated. Weaknesses are addressed robustly.
- Pupils are currently achieving well. By the end of Year 6, their attainment has historically been above average, particularly in English. In Reception, children make good progress in almost all areas.
- Teaching is well planned and organised. The level of challenge for pupils is good because of the close match of tasks to the needs of the different groups in the classes with wide spans of age and ability.
- The school's positive ethos encourages pupils' mature behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Pupils' good relationships with teachers, and the brisk pace of lessons, help their good learning and progress.
- The curriculum focuses on basic skills as well as on art, music and pupils' personal development. An interesting extra-curricular programme contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Almost all parents are highly supportive of the school and its leadership. One described it as a 'hidden gem'.
- The governing body is experienced and understands the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors carry out their responsibilities well, and have the confidence to hold the school to account.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' attainment in national tests fell to below the government's floor standards in 2012, and it is too early to judge the impact of the measures taken to put matters right.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics is not as rapid as it is in English. Pupils do not always know how to apply their mathematical understanding to analyse and solve problems, and marking does not always show them what they need to do next.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in seven lessons, of which two were joint observations with the headteacher. The inspector also heard some pupils in Years 1 and 2 read.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector analysed the 36 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), as well as written communications received from six parents. The inspector also took account of the 13 responses to the questionnaire for school staff.
- The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documents, including the school's own information on pupils' current attainment and progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to safeguarding and the management of the performance of staff.

## Inspection team

Chris Grove, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

# Full report

## Information about this school

- This is a primary school that is much smaller than average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those from service families, is well below average. There are no children who are looked after by the local authority or who are from service families.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- In 2012, the school did not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Following the retirement of the previous headteacher, the school was led by an interim headteacher. The present headteacher took up her post in November 2010, and a new deputy headteacher was appointed in September 2012.
- Among the school's accreditations are the Artsmark (Silver) and the Hampshire Trailblazer awards.

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

- Accelerate pupils' progress in mathematics so that it matches their more rapid progress in reading and writing by ensuring that teachers:
  - tell pupils how much time they have to complete tasks set in lessons
  - improve the impact of their marking by indicating more precisely to pupils what they need to do to reach the next level of attainment
  - give pupils more opportunities to apply their mathematical skills and knowledge to problem-solving tasks.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils in classes in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are presently making good, and sometimes outstanding, progress, especially in reading and writing. However, pupils' progress in mathematics is less strong.
- Since the last inspection, pupils' attainment as measured by national tests at the end of Year 6 has mostly been above average, especially in English. However, it was sharply lower in 2012, dropping below the government's floor standards. Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics in the current Year 6 is now markedly higher and, evidence suggests, on track to be above average again in 2013.
- When children first start school their levels of knowledge and skill are generally as expected for their age, although there is some variability. Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, so that by the end of the Reception year their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics, and in all other areas of learning except creative development, has been above national figures in the last two years.
- The small numbers of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs mostly make good progress but, like their classmates, do better in reading and writing than in mathematics.
- Those pupils eligible for the pupil premium improve their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at a rate similar to, and sometimes faster than, others, as measured by average point scores. The school uses pupil premium funding to good effect, for instance to provide additional specialist teaching on a one-to-one or small-group basis. The funding also supports eligible pupils' participation in wider curriculum opportunities. This exemplifies the school's strong commitment to promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils' current good progress is the result of consistently good teaching. With hardly an exception, parents agree that their children make good progress and are well taught. One delighted parent wrote that her son 'had his thirst for learning re-ignited by his class teacher. Her enthusiasm is palpable'.
- The relationships between pupils and teaching and support staff are notably good. Together with teachers' high expectations of pupils, this contributes significantly to pupils' successful learning.
- Teachers plan and organise lessons well. Tasks are effectively matched to the different groups, which ensure well-judged levels of challenge, particularly for classes with a wide span of ages and abilities. In an especially successful lesson, for instance, pupils in Years 1 and 2 tackled, at one of four different levels, the task of writing a letter. Whereas the most-able pupils worked largely independently on the most challenging task, the other three groups were carefully supported by the teacher or assistants, with work that was closely matched to their previous attainment, so that all achieved well.
- All teachers set a brisk pace, which gives pupils a good sense of direction. However, teachers do not make enough explicit reference to the time available to complete set tasks in order to maximise pupils' productivity and achievement.
- In mathematics, pupils' work is marked regularly, with positive comments. There are also well-devised arrangements to record pupils' targets. However, marking does not refer pupils sufficiently precisely to their targets, or indicate what they need to do next to reach them.
- Mathematics teaching regularly includes opportunities for pupils to engage in problem-solving tasks. However, older pupils, in particular, do not always understand well enough how to analyse problems so as to apply their mathematical understanding appropriately.
- Learning support assistants contribute well to the progress of pupils, especially low-attaining pupils and those who have additional needs.

- Teaching in the Reception year has a very positive impact. The teacher's questioning of, and discussions with, children do much to promote their understanding. The emphasis on learning from practical experiences is well linked to the expansion of children's vocabulary and to the development of their reading and writing skills. In learning how to grow a bean seed, for example, children had not only to understand about planting, but also how to set out instructions and spell such 'tricky' words as 'water'.

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

- Pupils show mature attitudes and behave considerately, reflecting the school's positive, friendly ethos. Their conduct is good.
- In lessons, pupils listen attentively, and cooperate well with others, for example when discussing their learning with partners. They are responsive when teachers ask questions, and apply themselves diligently when given work to complete. For instance, in a lesson in religious education, pupils in Years 5 and 6 paid avid attention as each group gave short presentations on particular Christian messages.
- Pupils are also well behaved in the playground and at lunchtimes. One pupil commented, 'We are like a family – we look out for each other.' Pupils say that there is little bullying, and that they are confident to involve trusted adults if problems arise. Nearly every parent who completed the on-line survey agreed that the school makes sure its pupils are well behaved, although a very small number were hesitant to agree that the school deals effectively with cases of bullying. There have been no racist incidents.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and secure in school. Almost all parents agree that their children feel happy and safe at school. Pupils also understand the need for caution over internet use and for care when cycling or crossing roads.
- Attendance has improved and is now broadly in line with the national average. The headteacher is working hard to reduce the number of holidays taken by pupils during term time.

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

- The headteacher's very clear vision encompasses both high achievement and well-rounded personal development for pupils. This vision is widely shared, as is shown by the unanimous expression of pride in the school by all respondents to the staff questionnaire. The new deputy headteacher works in close support of the headteacher to realise their ambitions for the school.
- Leadership and management are not outstanding because of the sharp fall in standards in 2012. One reason was the particularly small Year 6 group that included a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Weaknesses in teaching were another factor. Resolute leadership action has successfully addressed the issues with teaching, and the school is confident that pupils will do better in 2013.
- High expectations are set for pupils and for staff. At the half-termly progress meetings, each pupil's performance is reviewed against appropriately challenging targets. Where underperformance is identified, additional support is provided.
- The headteacher is fully aware of the quality of teaching from frequent informal monitoring as well as from regular formal observations. The good impact of teaching is confirmed by inspection evidence. In addition, every respondent to the staff questionnaire strongly agrees that leaders do all they can to improve teaching.
- The school's three-year improvement planning is ambitious and well detailed, and is underpinned by a thorough evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses in provision and performance.
- The local authority has an accurate view of the school's recent performance. It has rightly judged that the risk of underachievement is low, and therefore the school is not a priority for external support.
- The curriculum is a broad and well balanced. One parent accurately encapsulated the quality of

provision by writing that, 'Beside attention to progress in core subjects, the school ensures richness of the curriculum through arts, sports, topic work, cookery and swimming.' The Artsmark and Trailblazer awards reflect the emphasis on the expressive arts and outdoor education. The extra-curricular programme involving sports, clubs for French and computing, and tuition in a range of musical instruments, does much to foster pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

- A developing strength is the extent of parental engagement through improved communication, termly workshops and the extent of their involvement as parent helpers and in extra-curricular provision.
- Leaders focus rigorously on all aspects of safeguarding, which fully meet statutory requirements. They are meticulous in ensuring that pupils who may be vulnerable are carefully supported.
- The capacity for improvement is demonstrated by the headteacher's comprehensive and systematic approach to all aspects of self-evaluation, and by the robust action in response to underperformance in 2012. New appointments to the roles of deputy headteacher and Early Years Foundation Stage leader have also strengthened capacity. Leaders have successfully addressed the issue of improved challenge for more-able pupils from the previous inspection.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is experienced and understands its role in holding the school to account. Governors have an accurate overview of the school's context and hence had anticipated the underperformance in 2012. They have a clear and up-to-date view of the quality and impact of teaching. Governors are confident and effective in undertaking the management of the headteacher's performance. They know that the headteacher has introduced greater rigour into the appraisal process for other staff, and they have ensured that salary progression is merited by teaching performance. They understand how pupil premium funding is spent, and that the impact has been positive. The Chair of the Governing Body ensures that governors attend relevant training, such as in safer recruitment and strategic financial issues. Further training in the new expectations of governors is already booked.

## 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>	115934
<b>Local authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	412062

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>	87
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sally Curtis
<b>Headteacher</b>	Elena Ponsen
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3–4 June 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01962 777452
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