

Caversham Park Primary School

Queensway, Reading, RG4 6RP

Inspection dates 18–19 April 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

- The headteacher, with the strong support of senior staff and the governing body, has driven significant improvement since the last inspection.
- Pupils make good progress because the teaching is good and at times outstanding.
- Lessons include engaging activities that motivate pupils to try their best. Pupils are eager to contribute ideas and they take a pride in their work.
- Pupils are courteous and considerate. They support one another in lessons and willingly cooperate. They feel very safe and secure and enjoy coming to school.
- A wide range of clubs and other activities support pupils' learning and personal development.
- School leaders regularly review the quality of teaching and track pupils' progress meticulously. This enables them to provide teachers with further guidance and training, and to arrange support for any pupils falling behind.
- Governors work closely with school leaders in reviewing the school's performance. They keep up to date with developments and gain first-hand information by visiting the school regularly. This enables them to provide perceptive guidance and support.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 lack confidence in using their number skills to tackle mathematical problems.
- In some lessons, in Years 1 to 3, work which has a good level of challenge for pupils of all abilities is not introduced early enough.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 lessons, three of which were joint observations with the headteacher. They listened to pupils reading and discussed their reading habits and preferences with them.
- Inspectors discussed various aspects of the school with pupils and looked at a range of their work. They took account of the school's data on pupils' attainment and progress.
- Meetings were held with school leaders, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- During the inspection, inspectors took account of the 38 responses to the online Parent View survey, a recent parental survey conducted by the school, and discussions with parents. They took account of the 18 questionnaires returned by staff.
- Inspectors looked at a number of documents, including plans for improvement, teachers' plans, safeguarding arrangements, records relating to behaviour and attendance, governing body minutes and records of the school leaders' monitoring of lessons.

Inspection team

Rob Crompton Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Raminder Arora

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average sized primary school. Most pupils are White British, with around 20% from a range of minority ethnic groups. A below average proportion of all pupils speak English as an additional language and very few are at an early stage of learning English.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, for whom the school receives additional funding through the Pupil Premium, is below average. (The pupil premium provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, children of parents serving in the armed forces and for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.)
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported by school action is broadly average. The proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational need is also broadly average. These needs relate mainly to moderate learning difficulties or speech, language and communication problems.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate progress in mathematics in Years 1 and 2 by:
 - teaching pupils to use their basic number skills to make simple calculations quickly
 - helping pupils to use their rapid recall of basic number facts to solve mathematical problems.
- Ensure that pupils in Years 1 to 3 do not spend too much time going over old ground before tackling more challenging work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- When children enter the Reception class, their social, language and number skills are generally below those expected for their age. They build well on their starting points so that, typically, their levels of attainment are broadly average by the end of Reception. The rate of progress in subsequent years has varied, but due to decisive and successful leadership, progress has accelerated considerably and levels of attainment by Year 6 are above average. Indeed, many Year 5 pupils are already working at the levels expected by the time they leave.
- A strong emphasis on teaching phonics (the sounds letters make) enables pupils to read and write with increased confidence. For example, a group of Year 2 pupils quickly spotted the teacher's deliberate mistakes as she wrote 'futbal' and 'plaigrowd', and then went on to write these words correctly in joined script. Older pupils read widely and fluently. Discussing their current reading, one said, 'I like Jacqueline Wilson because the scenarios are real'. 'Yes, and it's her evocative language that appeals', added her classmate.
- Pupils make good progress in writing and increasingly apply their phonic skills in their written work. For example, some Year 1 pupils used their knowledge of different vowel sounds when independently writing 'The blue bird flew away'. In Year 4, pupils quickly picked up how to engage the reader with an opening question and came up with sentences such as, 'Do you know how smoking harms you?'
- Many older pupils write with considerable flair. There were several examples of this when Year 5 pupils were describing their imaginary creatures. One wrote 'His devilish roar silences the land with terror'; another began, 'A mane like molten lava planting terror in your heart'.
- Initiatives to ensure pupils are able to quickly recall multiplication tables and basic number facts are paying off. This has contributed to the steep rise in attainment by Year 2 in mathematics in recent years. However, some pupils, particularly in Years 1 to 4, do not readily apply what they already know when solving everyday problems.
- Due to highly effective teaching, pupils in Years 5 and 6 make great strides in mathematics. Pupils in Year 5 used a variety of methods to multiply large numbers, for example. The more-able pupils were adept at multiplying numbers to three decimal places, showing a deep understanding of place value. Year 6 pupils interpreted information from a spreadsheet, confidently calculating percentages and drawing accurate graphs.
- The school's firm commitment to promoting equality of opportunity, fostering good relations and tackling discrimination is seen in its success in supporting different groups
- The rate of progress made by pupils entitled to free school meals closely matches that of other pupils. In 2012, there were very few pupils in this group and there was gap of approximately two terms between their attainment and that of other pupils. During this current year, almost all have made the progress the school expects of all pupils in each class. The gaps in attainment between Year 6 pupils who are benefiting from the pupil premium and other Year 6 pupils has narrowed significantly in English and in mathematics, and they have made better than the expected progress in both these subjects. Almost all are on track to reach national averages by the end of the year.
- Due to effective support, both within lessons and during small group sessions, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teachers in Reception make learning fun both indoors and outdoors. When learning about how things grow, for example, one group searched for plants, another looked for insects under logs while other children used magnifying glasses to check an aquarium for tadpoles. Adults supported their enquiries effectively through engaging them in conversation, asking questions, and encouraging them to draw and complete survey sheets.

- Across the school, teachers are adept at asking questions which move pupils' learning forward. Skilful questioning, for example, reinforced Year 6 pupils' understanding of the difference between two kinds of graph. In many lessons, drawing lots for who is asked the next question, rather than a 'hands up' approach keeps pupils on their toes.
- A strength of teaching, particularly in Years 4, 5 and 6 is the way teachers involve pupils in deciding 'what makes good work'. In Year 4, pupils drew up a 'recipe for success' to guide their persuasive writing and, in Year 5, pupils discussed how well they had created gripping character descriptions using the success criteria they had generated earlier.
- Similar successful approaches feature in the younger classes, although the pitch of work does not always challenge pupils early enough in lessons. Pupils of different abilities are usually given different tasks but occasionally each group is given something they can cope with easily before going on to more demanding work. This limits the rate of progress in a few lessons.
- Teachers mark work very well, providing comprehensive feedback and guidance on pupils' next steps. They frequently raise questions in their marking and establish a written dialogue. Commenting on his mathematics work, one boy wrote, 'I have learnt to use brackets correctly and that sometimes brackets change the equation.' Teachers often use the information gained from marking to change tack during the next lesson, at times going back and at times moving on more quickly than planned.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Relationships are strong and these underpin pupils' good behaviour in lessons and around the school. Pupils are treated with respect and respond positively to opportunities to perform roles of responsibility, such as being members of the school council. 'The school council is the people's voice', said one member proudly.
- The school is a harmonious one and pupils fully understand the importance of good behaviour. They are courteous and helpful.
- The vast majority of parents and all members of staff agree that behaviour is good. Pupils were keen to point out that they had instigated a 'red/yellow card' system and they too said that behaviour was generally good.
- Any incidents of inappropriate behaviour are quickly resolved. Staff manage behaviour well, rewarding good behaviour and using sanctions judiciously and sensitively, especially where pupils find social interaction difficult.
- Pupils readily help one another out, for example if someone is upset or has a minor accident in the playground. A well-established buddy system means that older pupils keep a watchful eye on the individuals to whom they have been assigned.
- Pupils say that there is no bullying and were clear about the difference between occasional incidents and bullying. They understand the different kinds of bullying, including the potential hazards when using computers and mobile phones, and are aware of how they might deal with them. Pupils are fully confident that the staff would take any occurrences of bullying seriously and therefore feel safe, secure and well cared for.

The leadership and management are good

- The leadership team, under the strong leadership of the headteacher, provides effective direction. Senior leaders have an accurate view of the school's performance which, coupled with effective planning, has resulted in the significant improvement from satisfactory to good since the previous inspection.
- Teaching has improved because rigorous performance management ensures that teachers only move up the pay scale when they can clearly demonstrate that their teaching is good enough to secure good achievement. Leaders are decisive when it comes to eradicating weak teaching.

They monitor lessons regularly, provide perceptive feedback, and arrange further training when necessary.

- The curriculum provides positive experiences and promotes good quality learning, reflecting the school's motto 'Together we enjoy, create and achieve'. Links between subjects enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding. For example, French incorporates aspects of geography work, and in history and science lessons pupils practise and consolidate their writing skills.
- Pupils enjoy a wide range of clubs and visits. Reflecting on a visit to Hampton Court, for example, one boy said, 'It's one of those things that you'll remember all your life and might go back to as an adult.'
- Personal development is promoted well. Taking part in assemblies and science week, and in projects such as hatching chickens and building models of the Titanic, provide good opportunities for pupils' to reflect on moral values and the wonders and power of nature. In celebrating different festivals and events pupils gain an understanding of cultures outside their own experience.
- Parents feel welcome in school. They are kept well informed about how their children are doing and they benefit from frequent information meetings, such as the one held during the inspection on 'Wizard maths' (a mental arithmetic challenge).
- The local authority provides effective support. For example, specialist advisors worked alongside school staff on a recent 'talk for writing' project.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors know the school and understand its context well. They make decisions and provide challenge to school leaders that is firmly rooted in an understanding of the needs of the school and its community. Governors understand the data about the school's progress well. They are clear about the purpose of the pupil premium and seek assurances about its impact. Governors demonstrate a close knowledge of the school's systems for improving teaching and managing the performance of staff. They support the headteacher's work in ensuring that any underperformance is challenged.

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	109925
Local authority	Reading
Inspection number	401088

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	199
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Heather Hester
Headteacher	Gail Ray
Date of previous school inspection	17–18 May 2010
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