

Harwell Community Primary School

The Styles, Harwell, Oxfordshire, OX11 0HX

Inspection dates 23–24 April 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
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

- Leaders have been too slow to take the measures required to improve teaching so that all pupils reach their full potential. This is because, until recently, they have not used information about pupils' achievement to inform their decisions.
- Pupils do not do well enough in mathematics because there is inconsistency in how pupils are taught how to calculate and there are not enough opportunities for them to solve problems.
- Teachers' planning is not always precise enough to enable pupils to do work which fully stretches them.
- Although the numbers are very small, the extra government funding for free school meals pupils is not being effectively directed to accelerate their progress.
- Not enough leaders are involved in checking on the quality of teaching and setting precise targets as to how individual teachers can improve their work.
- Marking, particularly in mathematics, does not consistently indicate to pupils how they can improve their work.
- Plans for the future do not indicate milestones that can be checked by leaders to see if they are improving pupils' achievement.
- The governing body is not involved enough in making the most of improvements from the information it is getting.

The school has the following strengths

- Progress in reading is good because pupils are taught their letters and the sounds they make very well in Reception and Year 1, and the love of reading is promoted throughout the school.
- Progress in Reception is good because children's learning is well planned and adults provide good support and challenge.
- The school looks after pupils very well, and pupils who are potentially vulnerable or find learning difficult are well cared for and take a full part in the school community.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and pupils feel safe at school. They are very polite, well mannered and courteous and enjoy good relationships with adults and each other. They leave the school as confident young people.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons, of which four were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, inspectors made a number of other short visits to lessons and observed a singing assembly and another assembly. They also looked at pupils' books and observed other aspects of the school's work.
- Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body and another governor and teachers. Pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 took the inspectors around the school. The inspectors also spoke to pupils about their reading and listened to them read. A meeting was held with a representative of the local authority and an external consultant who helps the school to analyse the data on pupil achievement.
- Inspectors took account of the 29 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), spoke to parents and carers at the school gate and considered three letters and emails from parents. Inspectors reviewed nine questionnaire responses from staff.
- A number of documents was looked at, including the school's own data relating to pupils' achievement in the school year 2011/12 and since September 2012, the school's self-evaluation summary and school development plan, planning documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, policy documents and documents relating to safeguarding. The inspectors looked at the school's website. The inspectors also examined documentation in relation to the school site security following a concern raised by a parent.

Inspection team

Martin Marsh, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Robert Ridout

Additional Inspector

Lesley Voaden

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is smaller-than-average-sized primary school and most pupils are of White British heritage.
- One in six pupils is eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding which in this school supports pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those from service families). This is below average.
- One in eight pupils is disabled or has special educational needs, which is broadly average, and these pupils are supported through school action. One in 16 is supported through school action plus or with a statement which is below the national profile.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the last inspection the school has appointed two teachers that are new to the profession.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to be at least good by:
 - planning work that is at the right level to support and challenge all pupils
 - providing regular written feedback to pupils that shows what they need to do to improve, particularly in mathematics
- Raise achievement in mathematics by:
 - making sure there is a consistent approach to teaching calculation skills
 - giving pupils problems to allow them to apply their calculation skills more frequently and so deepen their understanding.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - developing the skills of leaders at all levels to enable them to check regularly on the quality of teaching and learning
 - making sure that targets set to improve the performance of individual teachers are precise and are being met
 - directing pupil premium funding so that it enables pupils who are on free school meals to make more rapid progress
 - using the improved information about pupil performance to make plans for the future that have clear actions, precise outcomes and milestones by which leaders can regularly check on progress
 - providing the governing body with the knowledge and the skills to challenge the school more effectively and contribute more to making plans for the future.

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

- Progress in mathematics is not fast enough through Key Stage 2, particularly in Years 3 and 4, and some pupils do not attain as highly as they could by the end of Year 6. This is because calculation skills are not built upon quickly enough and there is not a consistent approach to teaching them. There are also not enough opportunities for pupils to deepen their knowledge through applying their skills to problems.
- Children enter Reception with skills below those typical for their age and progress well, so that by the end of Year 2 pupils are attaining age-related expectations in English and mathematics. Progress in English in Key Stage 2 is maintained and pupils attain in line with national averages by the end of Year 6.
- Children get a good start to learning to read because there is a very structured approach to helping them learn their letters and the sounds they make (phonics), particularly in Reception and Year 1. This is built on well as they go through the school so that pupils develop confidence and enjoyment of reading.
- The small number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals attains lower than other pupils. These pupils are 16 months behind other pupils in English and 24 months in mathematics based on attainment in the 2012 Key Stage 2 statutory tests. This is because the school has not targeted the funding sufficiently well to ensure they accelerate their progress. More positively, pupils of service families are at the levels of progress expected, which is similar to most other pupils.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is similar to other pupils because the support they get in class from additional adults enables them to take part in lessons. Additional small groups to help them catch up, particularly in reading, are effective.
- Children make good progress in Reception because there are lots of interesting things for them to do, both inside and outside the classroom. Adults interact well with the children and support and challenge their learning well.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching in some lessons does not build well enough on what pupils already know and understand and as a result pupils, over time, do not always make the best possible progress they are capable of.
- Marking, some of which is good, does not provide pupils with enough guidance as to how they can improve their work, particularly in mathematics, and there are also some inconsistent expectations as to what is expected in terms of presentation of work. This is particularly the case in mathematics books where diagrams are often poorly drawn and work is not always corrected. As a result, pupils make mistakes that might have been avoided through more care and attention.
- The quality of questioning in lessons is variable. Teachers do check regularly on how well pupils are doing as they are working and provide good support in enabling pupils to overcome difficulties. However, teachers do not always encourage the secondary questions that would deepen pupils' thinking and this hinders progress.
- Pupils enjoy good relationships with each other and with their teachers. As a result, they listen well and willingly help each other in lessons. This was notable in a Year 2 religious education lesson where pupils were working together to sequence events in the story of Noah's Ark, with adults supporting and developing their understanding through good questions. As a result, they made good progress.
- Additional adults make a good contribution to learning. They are well deployed by teachers and have an important role in ensuring that all pupils can access the lesson. When they are working with small groups or individuals they are confident and knowledgeable, and enable pupils to

learn well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils enjoy coming to school and are very polite, well mannered and courteous. 'It's like one big family.' This was the comment of one parent and many commented on the strong sense of community. Pupils in the school are shown a great deal of care and respond to this by showing it to each other.
- Pupils are proud of their school and were keen to show the inspectors their work and tell them about things that they did. Year 4 pupils talked enthusiastically about the 'Tudor Times' museum they had helped to create in their classroom. They particularly value all the opportunities to take part in sports and musical events. An inspector witnessed a highly accomplished performance of the Beatles' song *Yesterday* at a singing assembly.
- There are plenty of opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities, such as through being part of the school council. The older pupils ensure that the younger ones are looked after in the playground and enjoy helping out in the dining room at lunchtimes. Pupils have a good understanding about how to care for the environment.
- Pupils understand about the different types of bullying, including cyber bullying. However, they were unable to recall any incidents, and the school did not have any recorded incidents of bullying so infrequently do they occur. All parents who responded on Parent View thought this aspect was very well managed.
- The school celebrates the diversity within the wider community of the United Kingdom so the pupils understand about other cultures and faiths not represented in the school. This shows that the school is successful in promoting equality of opportunity and fairness, fostering good relations and tackling discrimination.
- One parent raised an issue about the site security. The inspectors looked at the procedures for ensuring that all pupils are safe on the site, together with documents related to an incident 18 months ago, and are satisfied that the risks are adequately managed. All parents who responded to Parent View believed their child felt safe in school and the vast majority felt their children were well cared for.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good but there are times, when teaching is less strong, that the pupils lose concentration and so their behaviour is not outstanding.
- Attendance is average and pupils typically arrive for school on time.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders are starting to use the recently introduced systems to inform plans for the future, although there is some lack of clarity about using the data to best effect. This means that it has taken too much time to put in place measures to improve teaching more rapidly so that pupils make the best possible progress.
- Teachers are given suitable targets for improvement, but not enough leaders are involved in checking these. Consequently, there is a lack of clarity in ensuring that the quality of teaching improves at the most rapid pace.
- The school's evaluation is accurate but future plans do not have the milestones needed to ensure the school improves at the highest rate. Nevertheless, there have been improvements from the last inspection and, as a result, pupils' progress has improved.
- Since the last inspection, achievement in English has improved, and so have teaching and progress in Early Years Foundation Stage. This has been done despite the loss of two experienced members of staff. This provides evidence that the school has the capacity to improve.
- The school's curriculum is good and effectively promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and

cultural development. This means that pupils leave the school as confident young people who have an excellent understanding of right and wrong and are ready for the next stage in their education.

- The local authority has supported the school well and given clear guidance as to what it needs to do to improve. The school is taking on board these suggestions and acting upon the advice.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governors are totally supportive of the school, but are not challenging leaders sufficiently well. They understand the main strengths and areas for development for the school, but have an overinflated view about achievement and the quality of teaching. They have recently been gaining the information to enable them to evaluate how well the school is doing and are using the expertise of the local authority's governor services to make sure that all new governors receive induction training. The governing body understands how the pupil premium is used but understands it needs to have further training on the impact it is having on pupils who are eligible to receive it. The governors understand that there is a close link between the checks on teachers' performance and teachers' pay, and what is being done to reward good teachers and tackle underperformance. The governing body gives satisfactory support to the school in meeting safeguarding responsibilities, particularly regarding the safety of pupils and the appointment of staff, and the school's arrangements for safeguarding meet legal requirements.
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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	123062
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	406134

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	162
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lynn Wilkinson
Headteacher	Peter Cansell
Date of previous school inspection	17–18 March 2011
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