

Caldecott Primary School

Caldecott Road, Abingdon, Oxfordshire, OX14 5HB

Inspection dates 21–22 May 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.

- Good teaching means that pupils achieve well and their attainment rises to broadly average levels by the end of Year 6.
- Children make a good start to school life in the Early Years Foundation Stage where they are taught well.
- Across the school, teachers inspire pupils to develop a love of learning. Work is exciting and purposeful and motivates pupils to do their best.
- Pupils behave well and feel very safe. They have good manners and are hard working. They keenly take responsibility and get on very well with each other.
- Good leadership is ensuring that the school continues to improve. There is no complacency and leaders are doing the right things to iron out remaining weaknesses.
- The school has a wealth of data about how well pupils are learning. It intervenes quickly if it identifies from this information any pupils who are in danger of falling behind so that they soon catch up.
- Additional government funding (the pupil premium) is used well to support eligible pupils and to close quickly the gap between their attainment and that of others.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and the way that learning is enriched through a good number of visits and clubs.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' attainment is slightly lower in writing than in reading and mathematics. This is because pupils have too few opportunities to use their knowledge of letters and sounds (phonics) to improve their spelling and, occasionally, pupils do not take enough care with their handwriting.
- In a few lessons, work does not provide enough challenge for the most able.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 28 lessons, most of which were joint observations with senior leaders. In addition, the inspectors made a number of short visits to lessons.
- Meetings were held with pupils, members of the governing body, members of staff and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the views of 32 parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View). The inspectors also read letters from parents and carers and talked to some at the end of the school day.
- The inspectors observed the school’s work, heard pupils read, and looked at a number of documents, including the school’s own information about pupils’ learning and progress, planning and monitoring documents, the school development plan, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and safeguarding information.
- The inspectors analysed 17 questionnaires from staff.

Inspection team

Mike Capper, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Joyce Cox

Additional Inspector

Cliff Mainey

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two Reception classes and a Nursery.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported at school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding given to the school for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children who are looked after by the local authority and the children of service families) is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headship is a job share, with one headteacher working for four days per week and the other for one day per week. For the rest of the week, the latter is the school's deputy headteacher.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve progress in writing so that it is as consistently good as it is in reading and mathematics by:
 - ensuring that teachers and teaching assistants focus more in phonics lessons on teaching pupils how to use their knowledge of letters and sounds to improve their spelling
 - expecting pupils to always take enough care with their handwriting so that their work is consistently neat.
- Ensure that the most able pupils are always fully challenged in every lesson.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- When they start school in the Nursery or Reception Year, very few pupils are working at the levels expected for their age. From these low starting points, pupils make good progress, and attainment rises to broadly average levels by the end of Year 6.
- Children's progress is consistently good or better in the Early Years Foundation Stage. In the Nursery, children quickly improve their personal and social skills. They show good concentration when working on activities such as making mud pies or writing books, cooperating well at these times. In the Reception classes, early reading skills are taught well, and children make good progress in learning about letters and the sounds that they make (phonics).
- The school successfully promotes equality by ensuring that all groups do equally well over time, although in just a few lessons, the learning of the most able pupils does not move forward quickly enough. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are given good support, both in and out of lessons, and they make good progress.
- The gap between the attainment of pupils who benefit from the pupil premium and others closes quickly. Consequently, the gap in national tests at the end of Year 6 was smaller than that found nationally, with eligible pupils around a term behind their classmates in English and mathematics. Eligible pupils and others who are in danger of falling behind are given good support, including individual teaching and additional help outside lessons, helping them to catch up quickly.
- In Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils' attainment is slightly lower in writing than in reading and mathematics. Both boys and girls are enthusiastic writers and they have a secure knowledge of basic grammar and punctuation rules. They make good use of their phonics knowledge when reading unknown words but find it hard to use these skills to help them with their spelling when writing.
- In mathematics, where progress is consistently good, pupils become increasingly confident as they get older at explaining the strategies they are using to solve problems. They apply their calculation skills well to investigations and make good progress in lessons when exploring more complex concepts such as ratio and proportion.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is typically good and is sometimes outstanding. Teachers get on well with the pupils and are very enthusiastic. They manage behaviour well and this means that time is rarely wasted in lessons.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, teaching helps children to improve their skills quickly. There is a good balance of activities taken by the teacher and times when children choose for themselves where they are going to work. In the Nursery, where teaching is especially strong, teaching encourages high levels of independence from the moment children start school, and adults are particularly adept at asking questions at just the right time to move learning on when children are working independently.
- In Key Stages 1 and 2, teachers successfully encourage pupils to work hard. They break down new skills into small steps so that they can be understood easily. They have high expectations most of the time, although sometimes handwriting that is not neat enough is accepted too readily. The use of marking and the setting of targets are well established and help pupils to understand how to improve. Pupils say that they find their target 'bookmarks' helpful because 'we can always check what it is we need to do better'.
- Teaching assistants are organised well so that they have a good effect on pupils' learning, especially when working with disabled pupils or those who have special educational needs. They provide sensitive support, while ensuring that these pupils do not become over reliant on adult help.

- Although teaching continues to improve it is not yet outstanding because in just a few lessons work does not provide enough challenge for the most able. Most teaching in literacy lessons is good, and reading skills in particular are improved quickly, but in phonic sessions pupils do not always get enough opportunity to apply their knowledge of letters and sounds to writing tasks so that the links between phonics and spelling are more firmly established.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' positive attitudes contribute well to their good learning. They are proud of their school and are well motivated by rewards such as being the 'Caldecott Star' (which culminates in attendance at the headteacher's tea-party for all winners). This means that pupils are keen to succeed as they strive to be 'Star Learners'.
- The behaviour of pupils is good both in and out of lessons. They are polite, courteous and work hard, although not all pupils take enough care with their handwriting to ensure that work is neat all of the time.
- Pupils feel safe and know that if they have a worry it will be sorted out quickly. They say that there is no bullying in school but 'falling-out' is tackled well if it happens. They have a good understanding of what bullying is, including name-calling and cyber bullying. A recent focus in lessons means that pupils know how to stay safe when using the internet and they are aware of the other dangers they may face outside school.
- The school successfully fosters good relationships between pupils and adults and it tackles discrimination effectively. Pupils from different backgrounds play together happily and take good care of each other.
- Pupils enthusiastically take responsibility. For example, older pupils volunteer to run clubs and both the history and pop-dance clubs that they organise are greatly enjoyed by others.
- Rates of attendance are broadly average. They have been improving because the pupil premium has been used well to help more parents and carers understand the importance of good attendance.
- Parents, carers and pupils agree that behaviour is typically good. It is not outstanding because, just occasionally, when they are working in small groups, especially with a teaching assistant, a small number of pupils do not listen well enough, slowing the pace of learning.

The leadership and management are good

- Good leadership means that this is a school that continues to improve. The shared headship works effectively with the two leaders complementing each other's skills well. Their passion for providing the best possible start to pupils shines through in all their work and is evident in the strong push for further improvement.
- School leaders, including teachers who are in charge of subjects, check provision carefully and their planning for improvement is thorough. Leaders are setting the right priorities for improvement and are tackling remaining weaknesses with rigour. Consequently, boys' writing is much improved since the previous inspection and an increasing number of pupils are now on track in the current year to reach the higher levels in national testing at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Leaders have a good track record for improving teaching and they are doing the right things to ensure that all teaching is good or outstanding. Teachers are given clear targets to help them improve and they are given additional support when needed.
- The school has a wealth of information to show pupils' progress and attainment, and uses it effectively to see how well different groups are doing. The pupil premium has been used successfully to support both pupils' personal and academic development.
- The curriculum (subjects and the topics taught) is rich and varied. It promotes good learning in

literacy and numeracy, although there are still some inconsistencies in the way in which phonics are taught across the school, and this slows the pace at which spelling skills improve.

- There is a successful focus on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils learn to be sensitive to the needs of others by organising fund-raising events. Work on topics such as Ghana ensures that pupils develop a secure knowledge of life beyond Abingdon.
- The local authority has provided good support to the school. School leaders enthusiastically embrace local authority initiatives such as the 'Oxfordshire Reading Campaign' and these have helped to improve pupils' learning.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - There have been many changes to the governing body in the last year. New governors are quickly improving their skills through carefully chosen training. Consequently, they have an increasingly strong picture of how well the school is doing in comparison with others. This is helping them to become more confident about challenging other school leaders when it is needed. Governors are kept well informed about the quality of teaching and they ensure that only good performance is rewarded financially. The monitoring of spending is thorough, and governors ensure that the pupil premium is used well to support eligible pupils and to close the gap between their attainment and that of others. The governing body gives a high priority to keeping pupils safe and ensures that safeguarding procedures meet requirements.

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	123087
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	413161

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	341
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	James Corbett
Headteacher	Margaret Wolf and Katy Walsh
Date of previous school inspection	9–10 June 2010
Telephone number	01235 523132
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