

Watlington Primary School

Love Lane, Watlington, OX49 5RB

Inspection dates 12–13 June 2013

| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Outstanding | 1 |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------|
| | This inspection: | Outstanding | 1 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Outstanding | 1 |
| Quality of teaching | | Outstanding | 1 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Outstanding | 1 |
| Leadership and management | | Outstanding | 1 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Governors, staff, parents and pupils have all contributed to a clear vision, 'Bright Futures,' for a school where all can flourish.
- The school is led and managed extremely well. Governors are very well informed about the school and constantly challenge the leaders to do even better.
- Senior leaders show a relentless drive to maintain the high quality of teaching through a very well-considered programme of professional development and rigorous monitoring of teachers' performance and pupils' achievement.
- The school is a happy and harmonious community in a safe and secure environment. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted extremely well and pupils feel valued and well cared for.
- Pupils throughout the school make very rapid progress in their learning and achieve very high standards in English and mathematics. They read very well, develop wide vocabularies and speak with great confidence in front of others.
- Teaching is consistently good and much is outstanding. Teachers are meticulous in their planning and make lessons exciting, challenging and engaging so that pupils are eager to learn.
- Teachers assess pupils' work accurately and provide them with clear guidance on how to improve. They make sure pupils know how well they are doing and their next steps in learning.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. They find their lessons fun, challenging and interesting. They have exemplary attitudes to their learning and behave extremely well around the school. Their attendance is above average.
- The school provides a broad range of well-planned subjects, linked by interesting themes. Pupils have many opportunities to take on roles of responsibility and quickly develop leadership skills and the ability to work independently.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 lessons or parts of lessons, including two joint observations with the headteacher. They looked at pupils' written work in their books and listened to pupils reading.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, the headteacher and other school leaders. A telephone conversation was held with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke to two groups of pupils and informally to pupils in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors took account of the views expressed by parents as they arrived at school, through the 88 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and in three letters from parents.
- They took account of 16 questionnaires returned by staff.
- Inspectors looked at a number of school documents, such as data about pupils' progress, the school's self-evaluation and development plan, records of monitoring and evaluating teaching, and records relating to behaviour, safeguarding, attendance and minutes of governors' meetings.

Inspection team

Jim McVeigh, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Wendy Marriott

Additional Inspector

Dave Beddard

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Watlington Primary School is larger than average and most of its pupils come from a White British background. Some children start school in the Nursery but about two thirds join in Reception.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (extra government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children in local authority care and children of service personnel) is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure that teachers give pupils time to respond to written comments on how to improve their work further.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- About a third of children begin school in the Nursery while the remainder join in Reception. Children start school with skills and attainment broadly typical for their age. They settle quickly in a welcoming and secure environment and make rapid gains in their knowledge and understanding. The proportion who make better-than-expected progress has exceeded the national average in the last two years.
- Pupils throughout the school make very rapid progress in their learning in all subjects and, apart from last year, they achieve very high standards in English and mathematics. In 2012, attainment dipped although the rate of progress for most pupils was better than expected nationally.
- Pupils quickly learn to read well. They get a very good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage where phonics (the sounds letters make) is taught well. Parents are encouraged to listen to their children read and to complete reading diaries. The outstanding and well-stocked school library hosts a wide range of activities, including displays, visits from authors and competitions, which generate a passion for reading across the school. Pupils read regularly and with enjoyment.
- Pupils have developed wide vocabularies and learn to speak with great confidence in front of others. Through the school's strong focus on successful strategies, pupils develop their writing skills very well. They quickly improve their construction of sentences and their mastery of different forms of writing, such as descriptive and persuasive.
- There is a strong drive in the school to establish consistency in the teaching of mathematics, including strategies for solving problems and calculation. Pupils' mathematical knowledge and understanding are assessed regularly and very effective additional support is given to any pupils who underperform. All groups of pupils make outstanding progress.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are fully included in lessons and school life. They and their parents agree they are very well supported by caring staff. The progress they make is well above national expectations. It is closely monitored by the school as is the effectiveness of the extra support they receive.
- In 2012, the very few pupils who were eligible for the pupil premium did not do as well as their peers in school. In English, this small group was six months behind other pupils and, in mathematics, they were about a year behind. This year the few eligible pupils are doing as well as their peers.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teaching is consistently good and much is outstanding. Teachers plan their work in great detail, based on knowledge of pupils' attainment, to ensure that lessons are challenging for all. In addition, they design interesting and relevant activities that enthuse pupils and make them eager to learn. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, pupils were totally engrossed in a discussion about evidence from an accident scene, in preparation for a piece of persuasive writing.
- Teachers have established very warm relationships with their pupils. Classrooms are friendly and purposeful places where all pupils feel valued and want to learn. The learning environment is vibrant and stimulating, for example realistic models of Second World War aircraft, created by pupils, 'fly down' the main corridor. Very good use is made of 'working walls' to remind pupils of key learning points in recent work.
- Teachers make it very clear what they expect pupils to do and explain ideas really well. They often use very skilful questioning to make pupils think harder and extend their understanding, such as when a Year 6 class was asked about what they had heard in a short broadcast of a Shakespearian shipwreck; pupils were able to deduce the feelings of the characters in the scene very well.
- Teachers regularly assess pupils' work accurately, providing them with clear guidance on how to

improve. They make sure pupils know how well they are doing and their next steps in learning, but do not always give pupils time to respond fully to their comments.

- Teaching assistants are well trained. They support identified pupils in class and in small catch-up groups very well. They work in close collaboration with teachers and monitor pupils' progress regularly.
- Teachers use 'partner-talk' very effectively, such as in a Year 2 mathematics lesson where pupils explained their strategy to solve a number problem to a partner. Pupils were thoroughly engaged and discussed their own method well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour contributes extremely well to the calm, purposeful and orderly atmosphere. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted extremely well and they feel safe, valued and well cared for.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance continues to be above average. A parent commented that her children compete with each other to be the first in school because they enjoy it so much.
- Pupils are very respectful towards each other and adults. They behave courteously and move sensibly and safely around the school. They are very aware of the behaviour code and are eager to earn rewards for positive behaviour such as 'learner of the day'.
- Pupils say that teachers involve everyone in lessons and make them fun and interesting. They usually find the work challenging and stick to the task because they are keen to do well. Their exemplary attitudes to learning and their willingness to work hard are important factors in securing their rapid progress.
- The school benefits from a spacious play area with a variety of environments, including hard surface, grassed and lightly wooded areas that pupils thoroughly enjoy at playtime or as part of a lesson. Adults monitor breaks well, and Year 6 pupils, acting as playground buddies or members of the playground committee, ensure that there are engaging activities available and no one is left without someone to play with.
- Governors, parents and staff speak very positively about pupils' behaviour. School records show that there are very few incidents of misbehaviour and there have been no exclusions in recent years.
- Pupils understand the concept of bullying and its different forms well. They think bullying at school is extremely rare and know their teachers would quickly and effectively tackle any that might occur.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves healthy and safe. They have learned about 'stranger danger', how to be safe on the road, through the 'Footsteps' programme, and when using the internet.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Governors, staff, parents and pupils have all contributed to a clear vision, 'Bright Futures,' for a school where all pupils and staff can flourish. Governors, leaders and other staff have high expectations for themselves and for pupils' behaviour and achievement. Senior leaders have a detailed and accurate knowledge of the school. There is a well-organised and successfully implemented development plan, which is monitored closely.
- The school is led and managed extremely well. Senior leaders are relentless in their drive to maintain the high quality of teaching. They closely monitor pupils' progress to identify any who are underperforming and provide appropriate support for them. They are rigorous in monitoring teachers' performance through regular and robust checks on the quality of teaching and scrutiny of pupils' work.

- Senior leaders have produced a very well-considered programme of professional development for teachers and their assistants that addresses the needs identified in the school development plan as well as individual's own career aspirations. Teachers regularly work together in 'Lesson Study' and during staff meetings to share the best practice across the school effectively.
 - Subject and other leaders support the school's ambitions very well. The Early Years Foundation Stage is a leading example of good practice in the authority and the literacy and numeracy coordinators provide high quality training for the rest of the staff.
 - The school provides a broad and balanced range of subjects with many opportunities for pupils to apply and consolidate their literacy and numeracy skills. Themes that link subjects, such as the Second World War, motivate and enthuse pupils. Each theme is introduced with an exciting activity, such as a trip, that engages pupils straight away. A 'Wow' day ends the study where pupils celebrate and show off their achievements to their parents, for example displays of Bollywood dancing and written work. Further enrichment comes from a wide range of visits to places like Bletchley Park and the Jewish Museum, and well-attended clubs.
 - The school is effective in ensuring equality of opportunity for all and discouraging all forms of discrimination.
 - Very good relationships with parents have been developed. Parents receive high quality information about the work their children are doing and how they might help them at home through the school website, curriculum evenings and workshops.
 - Pupils have many opportunities to take on roles of responsibility, including the allotment and eco-councils. They quickly develop their self-esteem and leadership skills and the ability to work independently.
 - The local authority, recognising the school's qualities and high level of performance, provides light-touch support only.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have taken advantage of appropriate training opportunities from the local authority to further enhance their wide range of relevant skills and experience. The governing body is well informed about the school's work and performance through reports from the headteacher and other school leaders and school visits by its committees. Governors act as challenging friends to the school. They have an accurate view of the quality of teaching and how it affects pupils' progress. They make sure teachers are rewarded appropriately. Governors are involved in setting robust targets for the headteacher's performance and make sound financial decisions, such as allocating the pupil premium wisely. All statutory arrangements for safeguarding are securely in place.
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What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| 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

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| Unique reference number | 123032 |
| Local authority | Oxfordshire |
| Inspection number | 412222 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 294 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Jacqui Hitt |
| Headteacher | Andrew Markham |
| Date of previous school inspection | 1 July 2008 |
| Telephone number | 01491 612474 |
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