

# Aldermaston C of E Primary School

Wasing Lane, Aldermaston, Reading, RG7 4LX

**Inspection dates** 18–19 June 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
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.

- Pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6 has been too varied during the past two years and pupils have not made enough progress from their above average starting points in Year 2.
- Year 6 test results in 2012 dipped to average levels in English and writing was the weaker area.
- There are some inconsistencies in pupils' handwriting and presentation of work and pupils do not always have enough opportunities to write extended pieces.
- The quality of teaching is improving, but has not been consistently good enough to ensure that pupils make good progress in all classes.
- Pupils' learning does not always move on at a quick enough pace and there are some weaknesses in the marking of pupils' work.
- The demonstration of good writing skills to pupils is not used consistently well in all classes.
- Leaders and managers, including governors, have not consistently promoted good achievement and good teaching in Years 3 to 6 since the previous inspection.

### The school has the following strength

- Children in Reception have a good start to school and make good progress.
- Good progress continues through Years 1 and 2 and attainment is above average by the end of Year 2,
- The headteacher, staff and governors are taking positive action to raise achievement and improve teaching in Years 3 to 6 and, as a result, pupils' progress is improving.
- There are examples of high quality teaching which can be shared.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school and feel safe and well cared for.
- Attendance is consistently above average.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 15 lessons, some of which were seen together with the headteacher.
- They held discussions with the headteacher, staff, parents, representatives of the local authority, governors and pupils.
- The inspectors took account of the 40 responses to the online survey (Parent View).
- Responses to an inspection questionnaire from 12 staff were analysed.
- The inspectors examined school policies, information about pupils' attainment and progress, teachers' planning of learning, pupils' work and the school's planning for improvement.

## Inspection team

Derek Watts, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Christine Bennett

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- Most of the pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is well below average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- A below average proportion of the pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils in local authority care, those known to be eligible for free school meals or those with a parent in the armed services
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics in Year 6.

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

- Ensure that the quality of teaching is at least good by:
  - sharing the best practice
  - ensuring that learning in all lessons proceeds at a quick pace and pupils are swiftly moved on to the main task
  - making sure that teachers' marking helps pupils to improve their learning in all classes.
- Accelerate progress in Years 3 to 6, particularly in writing and raise attainment to at least above average by the end of Year 6 by making sure that:
  - the practice of teachers' demonstrating good writing techniques to the pupils that is used so successfully in some classes is extended throughout the school
  - all pupils have plenty of opportunities to write extended pieces in English and in other subjects in all classes
  - pupils' handwriting and presentation of work are good across the school.
- Strengthen the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - senior leaders regularly check the pupils' progress, particularly in writing in Year 3 to 6, and ensure that pupils' progress improves to good in all classes
  - governors systematically check that the school is rapidly raising pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6, especially in writing

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because pupils' progress in Year 3 to 6 has varied too much over recent years and they have not reached the standards of which they are capable, particularly in writing.
- Pupils enter Year 3 with above average attainment in reading, writing and mathematics, but the school has not sufficiently built on these strong starting points. In national tests for Year 6 pupils in 2012, results were above average in mathematics but average in English. Pupils' achievement in writing was the weakest area.
- The school is taking positive action to tackle this area of weakness but progress still requires improvement because it is not yet consistently good in all year groups.
- Attainment in the current Year 6 is higher than in 2012, and achievement in writing is showing signs of improvement.
- Children start in Reception with knowledge, understanding and skills broadly expected for their age. They make good progress because of good teaching and the interesting range of indoor and outdoor learning activities provided.
- Good progress continues through Years 1 and 2 and by the end of Year 2, attainment is consistently above average. Achievement is good in the lower part of the school, where the teaching has been consistently good.
- In reading, pupils benefit from the teachers' effective teaching of phonics, letters and the sounds they make. The results of the Year 1 reading check in 2012 were above the national average. Pupils enjoy books and have developed good reading habits. By Year 6, pupils read a range of challenging texts.
- Pupils write well in Years 1 and 2 and their writing is improving in Years 3 to 6. They write in different styles and for different purposes. Pupils' handwriting skills in Reception and in Years 1 and 2 are developing well because of the clear attention paid to the teaching of this area. However, there are inconsistencies in pupils' handwriting and the presentation of their work with some of the older pupils.
- While pupils produce some good pieces of extended writing in English lessons and in other subjects in some classes, this good practice does not happen in all classes. Pupils themselves said there is not always enough time for extended writing.
- In mathematics, pupils often make good progress because tasks are well matched to their needs. They have good opportunities to solve problems through practical activities. There are also good examples of pupils applying their numeracy skills in other subjects. In science in Year 6, pupils made good progress in investigating the speed of a ball bearing travelling down a copper tube. They worked well in teams and made accurate observations and measurements. They repeated their tests and made sure that they were fair.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is similar to that of other pupils.
- In the 2012 Year 6 national tests, the few pupils supported by the pupil premium attained higher standards in reading and writing than the other pupils, but not in mathematics. Good intervention teaching is helping to accelerate the progress of pupils supported by the pupil premium.
- The more able pupils are making similar progress to other pupils. In most lessons, pupils are set suitably demanding tasks.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- The quality of teaching has not been consistent enough over the past two years to ensure that most pupils make good progress in all classes.
- In the past, expectations of what pupils can achieve in Years 3 to 6 have not been high enough

and teachers have not been sufficiently aware of the amount of progress that that pupils need to make through Years 3 to 6 in order to show expected and better progress.

- Teaching is improving but some weaknesses remain. The pace of learning declines when introductions to lessons are too long and pupils are not moved soon enough onto the main task. For example, in a few writing lessons, pupils spent too long consolidating previous learning when they were inspired and ready to move on to the main writing task.
- In most classes, teachers' marking acknowledges and praises pupils' good work. Constructive comments help to move pupils' learning on to the next stage. This good practice is not happening in all classes and so pupils are not always clear about what they have to do to improve.
- Teachers are striving to improve the teaching of writing. There are examples of outstanding practice which can be shared. For example, in a successful Year 1 lesson, pupils made exceptional progress in writing a diary entry from the story of the Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch. They responded very well to the teachers' high expectations and benefited from the demonstrations of sentence construction. They identified the teacher's intentional mistakes. They were challenged well, were productive and their learning moved on at a rapid pace.
- The good practice of the teacher demonstrating or modelling successful writing skills and techniques to pupils is not used consistently well in all classes.
- Throughout the school, teachers and support staff have developed strong relationships with pupils. Teachers create a positive classroom climate for learning. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. As a result, pupils are cooperative, show consideration for others and work well in pairs and in small groups.
- In the Reception class, children are provided with a wide range of stimulating indoor and outdoor activities. They receive well-focused teaching from adults. There are also good opportunities for children to explore, be creative and learn independently.
- The teaching of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good in Years 1 and 2 and improving in Years 3 to 6. Tasks and support are usually closely suited to pupils' learning needs.

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

- The school has successfully maintained and built on the good behaviour and safety reported in the previous inspection.
- Parents who responded to the online survey, Parent View, strongly agreed that their children were safe and well looked after. They also stated that the school promotes good behaviour and deals effectively with bullying. The inspection findings support these positive views.
- Children in Reception settle well into the school because of the positive relationships established with adults. They learn and play together and enjoy the interesting activities provided. Across the school, pupils have positive attitudes to learning and participate well in all activities.
- Pupils' personal and social skills are very well developed. They are courteous, considerate and friendly. Relationships in the school are a strong feature. Pupils told the inspectors, 'Everyone respects you', 'Everybody is considerate' and 'The school is a great community.'
- Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. In some lessons, pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour were exemplary. The school's records of incidents show that behaviour is typically good over time.
- Pupils have clear understanding of bullying and the different forms it can take, including name calling, physical bullying and cyber bullying. Pupils reported to inspectors that bullying in the school was very rare. They were confident that any incidents, including bullying, would be swiftly dealt with by the staff.
- Attendance levels are consistently above average.

**The leadership and management** require improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching have not been consistently good during the past two years in Years 3 to 6. While, leaders and managers have a clear knowledge and understanding of the school's strengths and development points, they have not been sufficiently aware of the implications of the underachievement in Years 3 to 6, particularly in writing, on the school's overall effectiveness.
  - Leaders and managers have correctly identified the pressing need to raise pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6, especially in writing. Pupils' achievement is improving because of the action being taken but it is not yet consistently good in all classes. The checking of pupils' progress is being strengthened to help ensure that pupils' progress is securely good.
  - Positive steps are being taken to improve teaching but not all teaching is good yet. The quality of teaching is regularly checked and helpful feedback is given to staff. The school's teaching and learning policy provides useful guidance and opportunities to share the best practice are being extended.
  - The headteacher and staff have created a positive and safe environment for pupils to learn and develop. Pupils are safe at school and their relationships with others and behaviour are good. Leaders and managers are successfully promoting good achievement and good teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2.
  - There are clear procedures for checking the performance of staff. Targets to improve teachers' practice and skills are linked well to the school's priorities for improvement. Staff promotion and salary increases are correctly based on responsibilities, staff performance and the progress that pupils make.
  - The pupil premium funding has been properly used to provide eligible pupils with additional support and learning opportunities.
  - The school provides an appropriate range of subjects and topics to promote pupils' learning. The range of additional clubs and sporting opportunities provided are a strength and are much appreciated by pupils. Positive action is being taken to improve learning opportunities in writing.
  - All pupils have access to the full range of learning opportunities provided. Discrimination in any form is not tolerated.
  - Reports on the school's performance by the local authority do not sufficiently challenge the school's judgements about achievement and teaching or spell out the implications of underachievement in Years 3 to 6 for the school's overall effectiveness. Judgements about teaching do not correlate with pupils' progress. As a result, the school and governing body have believed that the school is better than it is.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - Members of the governing body bring a good range of experience and expertise to the school. Governors have a sound overview of pupils' achievement when compared to similar schools nationally and are aware of the need to accelerate progress in Years 3 to 6. However, they have been less well informed about the implications of the underachievement in Years 3 to 6 to the school's overall effectiveness if it is not quickly tackled. Governors' greater awareness now places them in a better position to check that progress in raising pupils' achievement happens quickly. Governors understand recent requirements relating to the management of staff performance and the importance of promotion and salary increases being linked to the progress pupils make. They ensure that pupil premium funding is properly spent. Governors have attended a range of training to increase their effectiveness. The governors have ensured that all safeguarding procedures meet 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	109947
<b>Local authority</b>	West Berkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	413084

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>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	169
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Cathy Jones
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rhodri Bowen
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 June 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	0118 9713362
<b>Fax number</b>	0118 9714880
<b>Email address</b>	enquiries@aldermaston.w-berks.sch.uk



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