

Bushy Hill Junior School

Sheeplands Avenue, Merrow, Guildford, GU1 2SG

Inspection dates 3–4 July 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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:

- Over time, teaching has not been challenging enough to ensure that all pupils make good progress, including those in receipt of pupil premium funding.
- Pupils' progress varies too much across year groups. Fewer pupils attain the standards they should, given their above average attainment on entry to the school.
- Some lower attaining pupils do not have a good grasp of phonics (knowledge of letters and their sounds) and read hesitantly.
- Weaker spelling, handwriting and punctuation mar the quality of some pupils' writing.
- Pupils are inconsistently challenged in mathematics, especially the more able.
- Teachers talk too much in too many lessons, which prevents pupils quickly settling down to their work.
- Improvements introduced by the new headteacher have not had sufficient time to ensure consistently good achievement. The role of middle leaders is still developing.

The school has the following strengths:

- Middle-attaining and more-able pupils make good progress in reading because of the improvement steps taken by the school.
- There is a clear sense of purpose and the headteacher, staff and governors are highly committed to further improvement.
- Pupils are keen to learn and behave well. They feel entirely safe and enjoy school.
- The imaginative lessons and activities stimulate pupils' interests.
- The after-school club is excellent. Pupils are extremely well looked after and provided for.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons, including seven which were joint observations with the headteacher, and listened to a sample of pupils reading from Years 3 to 6.
- Inspectors held discussions with pupils, looked at a range of their work and examined the school's data on attainment and progress.
- Meetings were held with representatives of the governing body, senior leaders and teachers. The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with a local authority representative.
- Inspectors considered the 63 responses to the online Parent View survey and a few letters from parents and carers, and spoke to a few parents and carers.
- Inspectors considered responses to the 23 questionnaires returned by staff.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including plans for improvement, safeguarding arrangements, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and records of school leaders' observations of teaching.
- As it was not possible to observe lessons during the second inspection day, inspectors spent this day examining pupils' work, listening to them read and holding discussions with pupils and staff.

Inspection team

Eileen Chadwick, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Anthony Green

Additional Inspector

Peter Thrussell

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Bushy Hill is a little above average in size compared with most junior schools. There are two classes in Years 3, 4 and 6 and three in Year 5.
- The majority of pupils are White British, although nearly one fifth are from minority ethnic groups, which is above the national average. Pupils are from a range of cultural heritages and the proportion who speak English as an additional language is slightly higher than in most primary schools.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also average.
- The proportion of pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding (additional funding provided for looked after children, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children from service families) is below average. Currently, there are no children from service families.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher took up post in November 2012.
- The school provides a daily after-school club for pupils. The daily breakfast club, which is separately managed, was not included in this inspection. The report for it can be found on the Ofsted inspections website.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by:
 - ensuring lower attaining pupils apply phonics when reading and are heard to read every day
 - ensuring teachers plan and teach mathematics at the right level of difficulty so pupils, including the more able, make consistently good progress
 - ensuring that pupils settle to independent work more quickly in lessons and are given clear deadlines for finishing their work.
- Raise achievement and accelerate progress in reading, writing and mathematics by:
 - raising the attainment of lower attaining pupils in reading and ensuring they make consistently good progress during intervention activities in literacy and mathematics
 - raising the attainment of pupils in receipt of the pupil premium funding
 - improving pupils' spelling, handwriting and punctuation and give them more opportunities to write at length
 - ensuring more-able pupils are consistently challenged in mathematics.
- Improve the leadership of teaching by:
 - ensuring senior leaders and middle leaders develop their roles so they play a full part in improving English and mathematics teaching across the whole school and evaluating the impact on learning
 - strengthening the link between teachers' pay and their performance.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils enter Year 3 with above average attainment and leave Year 6 with above average attainment overall, but their progress is not as rapid as it should be. It requires improvement.
- Attainment in reading is rising and is now well above average overall. In the current Year 6, approximately two thirds of pupils are achieving higher than average levels in reading because higher- and middle-attaining pupils make good progress.
- Lower-attaining pupils do not progress as well as other pupils in reading. The inspection showed these pupils often read hesitantly because they do not have the necessary phonics skills and are not heard to read regularly enough in school. Other pupils are avid readers and equally adept when researching for information as when reading fiction.
- Fewer pupils reach higher levels in writing and mathematics compared with those who do so in reading attainment. Weaker spelling and punctuation mar the quality of writing for some middle- and lower-attaining pupils. Some pupils do not join their letters well enough. Pupils write confidently for different purposes but have limited opportunities to compose longer pieces.
- A few Year 6 pupils are now achieving standards in mathematics which are four years ahead of their age but pupils' progress in mathematics requires improvement because teaching varies too much in different classes. Too often, there is not enough challenge for more-able pupils. In Year 3, pupils of all abilities do not progress well enough because of a lack of challenge in problem solving and mental calculation. During the inspection, in Year 5, all pupils learned well due to ability setting and teachers' well-matched tasks for pupils of all abilities, including in mental arithmetic and problem solving.
- Throughout the school, pupil premium funding is used effectively to use extra adult help in supporting reading, and the pupils concerned are making good progress in reading throughout the school. It is also accelerating Year 6 pupils' progress in writing and mathematics. It is having less impact in other years in these subjects and pupils receiving the funding attain broadly average standards but are about nine months behind other pupils in writing and mathematics. Funding has been used effectively to support identified pupils in their personal development.
- Disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make the same uneven progress as their peers. Intervention procedures for lower-attaining pupils are not having a good enough impact on raising their attainment and the school has arranged for new systems to be implemented in literacy and numeracy from September.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is uneven across the school. Not enough is good or better and, as a result, pupils do not always learn well enough. In too many lessons, teachers do not set challenging enough work, especially for more-able pupils. The pace of learning is not consistently brisk enough.
- At times, teachers talk for too long which leaves too little time for pupils' independent work. This limits, for example, pupils' ability to write at length. Teachers rarely give pupils deadlines and, as a result, pupils do not always complete tasks as quickly as they should.
- A systematic programme for teaching phonics has yet to be implemented. As a result, teachers do not enable pupils to apply phonics to spelling or help lower-attaining pupils to apply phonics to reading. The teaching of handwriting varies between classes and teachers' expectations are not always high enough.
- Mathematical activities do not consistently build skills well in individual lessons and over time. Progress slows when pupils repeat too much earlier learning or become confused when the context is too complex, so they are unclear about what they are expected to learn.
- Teachers' marking is regular and improving. Comments often help pupils to see where they need

to improve, although there is more limited evidence that they actually respond.

- Good relationships and the management of pupils are strengths of teaching and teachers are enthusiastic and keen to improve. They provide good opportunities for discussion, for learning key vocabulary, for pupils to share ideas and for learning through practical work. For example, in a science lesson in Year 4, pupils were introduced to key vocabulary well before investigating mini-beasts in different environments in small groups in the school grounds.
- In more effective teaching, teachers have high expectations because they have strong subject knowledge and match work well to the needs of all pupils. For example, in an outstanding Year 5 mathematics lesson on ratio for more-able pupils, the teacher's excellent on the spot assessment enabled her to fine-tune activities to match the needs of all pupils, including the most able.
- The use of teaching assistants is inconsistent. Some are deployed well but they are sometimes restricted by the type of activities that teachers provide.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- School leaders successfully promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Relationships are excellent and there is an atmosphere of kindness and respect for one another. The broad, practically based curriculum arouses pupils' interest in school and sense of wonder in the world around them. The school's international links enrich pupils' understanding of other cultures well.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They greet visitors very politely and talk proudly about their school. Pupils are courteous to one another during playtimes and in classrooms. They are well aware of the rules about behaviour and respond well to teachers' high expectations in this area.
- The very few pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties are helped well to adjust to school. This means that lessons proceed with very little interruption.
- Pupils feel safe and secure at school. They learn about forms of bullying and what to do to stay safe, including how to stay safe on the internet. They say there is very little bullying and any incidents that occur are dealt with quickly and effectively. Most parents, carers and staff agree with this view and say that behaviour is good.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning but a few lose interest in lessons when they put their hands up and are not chosen to answer questions. Occasionally, pupils' attention wanders when lesson introductions are not challenging or are too lengthy.
- Attendance is rising and is now above average. The school's stringent procedures for promoting good attendance are having a good impact on improving the attendance of the few pupils who do not attend as regularly as they should.
- The after-school club is very well attended and resourced, and provides an excellent end to the day.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because they have not led to good teaching and progress over time. The headteacher has set off on the right track to bring about improvement. She has ensured there is an appropriate leadership structure and is developing systems so that other senior and middle leaders play a full part in raising achievement.
- However, not all leaders are yet fully effective at influencing improvements. Several middle leaders have only recently taken up post and are now receiving training so they can fully perform their duties.
- Since her arrival, the headteacher has strengthened the management of teachers' performance and leaders have set challenging targets for them. Performance management of staff is now closely linked to pupils' progress and teachers' professional development needs. However,

leaders' lesson monitoring, while regular, does not consistently identify strengths and weaknesses in subjects. This sometimes limits staff's professional development.

- Improvement plans focus on the right priorities, including teaching, phonics and spelling, although they are not always very precise.
- The headteacher and senior staff have already been effective in promoting an overall rise in pupils' reading attainment and the way in which teachers are held accountable for pupils' progress. All staff have a strong drive to improve their practice and pupils' achievement and are welcoming the help they are being given to improve their teaching. This shows the school has the capacity to improve.
- The school's ethos is inclusive in seeking to promote equality, and discrimination is not tolerated. The school is fully aware that there is more to do to ensure all pupils make consistently good progress throughout the school.
- The support from the local authority has been light touch, as the school was deemed a good school. The school has acted on local authority recommendations where appropriate. The local authority has recently arranged for the school to be linked with an outstanding school.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors bring expertise and experience and generally understand the school well, although they have not always ensured that progress is fast enough. Governors have been appropriately trained, including for understanding and interpreting assessment information. They are well informed about test results and know how these compare with those of schools nationally. They also monitor the school's own assessment data and challenge the school about the performance of groups. They are familiar with Teaching Standards, although systems to ensure teachers' pay is linked to their performance have only recently been established since the arrival of the current headteacher. Governors are fully involved in setting targets, including demanding targets for the headteacher. Governors know how pupil premium monies are spent and are increasingly able to judge the difference this spending and provision are making to pupils' outcomes. Safeguarding requirements are fully met.

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	125009
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	403566

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	278
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Smith
Headteacher	Louisa Dormer
Date of previous school inspection	2 July 2008
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