

Alwyn Infant School

Mulberry Walk, Maidenhead, Berkshire, SL6 6EU

Inspection dates 25–26 September 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.

- Pupils make good progress and achieve well in both their personal and academic development during their time at school. At the end of Year 2, they are well prepared to move to the junior school.
- Different groups of pupils, including pupils entitled to pupil premium, those with special educational needs and those from different ethnic backgrounds, make good progress and achieve well.
- Early years provision in Little Alwyn is outstanding, and all pupils make at least good progress.
- Teaching is good or better in nearly all classes. Teachers plan interesting activities that motivate pupils to learn.
- The school is a cohesive learning community where each individual pupil, parent/carer and member of staff is valued and is an integral part of the learning journey.
- The school is extremely popular in the community. Pupils like coming to school and say they feel safe. They behave well and respect one another and their teachers.
- The leadership of the headteacher is exceptional. She is very clear about the quality of teaching in the school and teachers have clear targets to help them to improve their practice. The governing body challenges and supports her well to help the school to improve so that pupils achieve well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The proportion of outstanding teaching is not high enough to ensure all pupils make rapid progress.
- Marking and feedback do not always give enough guidance to pupils on how to improve their work.
- The teaching of reading and writing using sounds and letters (phonics) is not yet fully embedded into daily lessons.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors worked in partnership with the school’s senior leadership team when analysing information about the school. This included the school’s self-evaluation documentation, development planning, monitoring and evaluation records and also data related to pupils’ progress and attainment. Inspectors also analysed the progress made by different groups of pupils in the school.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school’s policies and procedures, particularly those relating to pupils’ safety. They also analysed a selection of pupils’ work, especially in mathematics and English.
- The inspection team observed 19 lessons. Nine were joint observations with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors analysed the 81 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). Informal discussions were held with 30 parents. Thirty two staff questionnaires were also scrutinised. Results from a pupil questionnaire developed by the school were also considered.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, a representative of the local authority, two governors and pupils. Pupils from Years 1 and 2 read to an inspector.

Inspection team

Sarah Varnom, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Keith Homewood

Additional Inspector

Barbara Carr

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Alwyn Infant School is a larger than average-sized primary school. The school's Reception children learn in a separate building across the school's playground, known affectionately as Little Alwyn.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding for children in local authority care, from service families or those known to be entitled to free school meals) is below the national average.
- There is a higher-than-average proportion of pupils supported at school action.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- Most pupils are from a White British background.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so it is all outstanding by making sure that:
 - lessons are consistently challenging for all groups of pupils, with tasks set that are well matched to their different needs
 - teachers regularly check that pupils are clear about what they are learning and appropriate support is provided if needed
 - high-quality marking and feedback are given to all pupils so that they understand how to improve their work
 - the teaching of phonics is embedded into everyday practice to raise standards further in reading and writing.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most pupils coming into Little Alwyn are working below the levels expected for their age. Children make at least good progress, with many making outstanding progress in all areas of learning. The children had only been in school for eight days at the time of the inspection, but their levels of confidence and independence were high. For example, during an outdoor lesson where the children were asked to make different sounds with their music beaters, they went about the task with great energy but returned to a circle immediately at the request of their teacher. They showed good listening skills as they listened to other sounds and offered suggestions as to why one sound was louder than another.
- Achievement is good because all pupils make at least good progress, particularly in reading and writing. Most able pupils make at least good progress. The school has been successful in narrowing the achievement gap between boys and girls in reading by raising the profile of books in and out of school. For example, a homework challenge to produce a collage or model around a favourite book was accepted by boys and girls equally and work is on display ranging from *The Hobbit* to *Aliens Love Underpants*.
- Attainment at the end of Year 2 is in line with national averages for writing and above average in reading and mathematics. Disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those from different ethnic backgrounds have made clear gains in their learning because they receive good support from teachers and teaching assistants who plan appropriate and sensitive interventions to meet pupils' needs. They make good progress.
- The funding the school receives for those pupils eligible for the pupil premium is used well to offer these pupils extra support with their learning. The attainment of pupils in receipt of the pupil premium at least matches that of other pupils and is rising. Interventions have been successful in closing this gap where they support the best teaching.
- All pupils benefit from daily discrete phonics teaching and the pupils' outcomes at the end of Year 1 phonics screening have improved greatly on the previous year. However, phonics skills are not taught consistently well to bring about better gains in reading and writing across the curriculum.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching in Little Alwyn is outstanding. Children have space to explore and use their imagination and purposeful activities in which to learn. Their learning benefits from high-quality adult intervention. For example, some boys built a car and wanted it to float. The adult responded well to their conversation about the problem and through careful questioning supported the boys as they tried out different materials. There was a 'wow' moment when it was decided to float the car on large building blocks, and one child exclaimed, 'It floats! The base is bigger!'
- Teaching in all subjects, including in mathematics and English, is usually good, with examples of outstanding practice. This ensures that, over time, all pupils including those with special educational needs, those from different ethnic backgrounds and those in receipt of the pupil premium make at least good progress.
- The staff continue to reflect upon and refine the teaching of phonics. Good progress has been made, but phonics skills are not yet taught consistently well enough to bring about further improvement in reading and writing.
- Most teachers have high expectations of the progress pupils are capable of making. However, where teaching is not consistently good, tasks are not well matched to pupils' needs and lack challenge. Consequently, not all pupils then make as much progress as they might.
- Teachers are good at encouraging pupils in their learning and use careful questioning to move learning on. Occasionally, opportunities are missed to check the understanding of pupils of what they have to do and for teachers to intervene if necessary to get them back on track.

- Teachers and teaching assistants are skilled at working alongside pupils, providing additional support needed, particularly for pupils with special educational needs. The progress of these individuals is carefully monitored and shows that the support they receive helps them to catch up with their learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils enjoy learning and have a good attitude to school. They are very polite and welcoming and support one another. One pupil said, 'We are not all perfect. We are all different so we need to understand and help each other.'
- Pupils say that they feel safe and secure in school. Their parents agree and value the very good level of care and support the school provides for their children.
- Pupils have developed a very good understanding of the different forms of bullying, including physical, emotional and cyber bullying. However, they are adamant that little bullying takes place in the school. They are also confident that adults always deal with any rare instances quickly and firmly.
- Pupils enjoy playtimes and lunchtimes and behave well, enjoying the outdoor space and equipment provided.
- Behaviour in lessons is good, although where there is the occasional lack of challenge a small minority of pupils do not fully engage in their learning.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides exceptional leadership. She is ambitious for the school and is very clear about the strengths and the steps needed to make the school outstanding. She bases her actions on a deep and accurate understanding of the school's performance and of staff and pupils' skills and attributes.
- The headteacher ensures that every pupil has an equal chance to achieve their best.
- The effective and accurate monitoring and evaluation of data ensure that the school's development plan meets the priorities identified.
- Most teaching is good or better and the headteacher and deputy headteacher are accurate in the judgements they make about the quality of teaching. The school has developed effective systems to check the quality of teaching and uses the information provided to ensure that teachers obtain the training they require in order to improve their effectiveness.
- The curriculum excites and motivates pupils while providing them with a secure framework to practise and build upon their reading, writing and mathematics skills. The school promotes positive behaviour and a broad range of experiences that contribute well to pupils' social, moral, cultural and spiritual development. For example, pupils give gold awards to each other to recognise particular kindness.
- The school makes good use of additional funding for physical education and pupils are benefiting from extra sports resources and additional clubs, for example football and kick boxing. These activities have had a positive impact on pupils in developing healthy lifestyles and better physical well-being.
- The headteacher is very clear about the needs of the pupils in her school. She carefully directs additional funding to support pupils' learning and, with governors, monitors the impact of this spending regularly to ensure money is well spent. The leadership has rightly recognised the need to ensure its monitoring of teaching improve the teachers' use of marking and also embed the teaching of phonics in everyday lessons.
- The local authority provides light touch support for this good school.
- All parents who returned the online questionnaire, Parent View, said that they would recommend this school to other parents.
- **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body fulfils all its statutory duties effectively and ensures that arrangements for safeguarding pupils are robust. Governors have a clear understanding of the school’s strengths and areas for improvement, and know how well the school is performing in relation to pupils nationally. They receive regular evaluative reports from the headteacher about the quality of teaching and pupil progress, and question and challenge robustly. Governors hold senior leaders to account for all aspects of the school’s performance. They are aware of the systems used by senior leaders to monitor the performance of staff. They are clear where best teaching is to be found in the school and that this is appropriately rewarded. Governors manage financial resources well, ensuring that funds, including those for pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium, are directed appropriately and make a difference to pupils’ attainment and progress.

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	109818
Local authority	Windsor and Maidenhead
Inspection number	426570

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	308
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Maxine Woods
Headteacher	Miss Nicky Cale
Date of previous school inspection	7 October 2008
Telephone number	01628 622477
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