

Booker Hill School

Field Road, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, HP12 4LR

Inspection dates 26–27 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.

- Achievement is good. Pupils make good progress from their low starting points, especially in reading and mathematics.
- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, especially in their physical development. The opportunities they are provided with help them become confident about making choices in their learning.
- Teaching is good and teachers provide interesting and relevant activities that help pupils to become enthusiastic learners.
- Pupils behave well and feel safe at school. They are good at working together in lessons and play together harmoniously.
- Senior leaders, managers and governors know what to do next to make the school even better and as a result teaching and achievement are continuing to improve.
- The leadership and management of teaching are good. Senior leaders check that teachers and pupils are doing well, and provide focused support to help them do better.
- Governance is good. Governors are passionate about the school and provide the right level of challenge and support.
- Provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well promoted. There are good opportunities for pupils to appreciate art and music and to learn right from wrong.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Teachers do not always give pupils long enough to complete their work and at other times, activities and discussions sometimes go on for a little too long.
- Pupils are not always given enough time and opportunities to reflect and act on advice given through teachers' marking.
- Younger pupils do not all learn their letter sounds quickly enough.
- Pupils' writing contains errors in spelling and grammar and they do not write at length often enough to refine and extend their skills.
- Subject leaders are not checking up soon enough to make sure that dips in teaching and pupils' progress are tackled as soon as they arise.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed teaching in 18 lessons, almost all jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, teachers, pupils, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors took into account 21 responses to the online Parent View survey and held informal discussions with a sample of parents and carers.
- The inspectors considered the views expressed in survey responses from 19 members of staff.
- A range of information supplied by the school was scrutinised, including the school's own information about how well pupils are doing, planning documents, checks on the quality of teaching, the school development plan, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and safeguarding documents.

Inspection team

Alison Cartlidge, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Avtar Sherri

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a broadly average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium funding (additional money provided by the government for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those looked after by the local authority and the children of service families) is high compared with the national average. There are currently no looked after pupils or service families at the school.
- The proportion of pupils on the register of special educational needs at school action is high and the proportion at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- A high proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. A small minority are at the early stages of learning to speak English.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The private nursery adjacent to the school is not run by the school and did not form part of this inspection.
- The headteacher provides support for less effective schools in the local authority.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching, by:
 - ensuring pupils have enough time to complete their independent work but are not expected to stay on one activity for too long
 - giving pupils enough time to follow up advice given through marking
 - making sure that all younger pupils learn their letter sounds quickly.
- Develop pupils' writing by improving their spelling and grammar and making sure they have enough opportunity to write at length
- Strengthen the role of subject leaders so that they act swiftly to rectify dips in teaching and pupils' progress as soon as they arise.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The vast majority of children are working at below the levels expected for their ages when they join the Nursery and Reception classes. They make good progress, and do especially well in physical development. The development of these skills is supported by a wealth of activities, including the new outdoor climbing equipment. Children gain confidence in making choices about their work and learn school routines quickly. For example, in the nursery, children are already able to take turns in discussions and pick their own resources. Occasionally, learning slows when children are being taught in a large group and are not all able to join in fully.
- Attainment by the end of Year 6 has risen since the last inspection and is broadly average. Pupils achieve well from their low starting points, although there is some variation in progress between classes. Pupils make good progress overall, but do better in reading and mathematics than in writing. The school provides additional well-focused support for pupils who struggle in these subjects. In writing, pupils make errors in their spelling and grammar and these are not always corrected quickly enough.
- Pupils' knowledge of the sounds letters make (phonics) is below the level expected by the end of Year 1. Pupils do not all learn their letter sounds well enough. Leaders are reviewing provision in this subject to provide work that is more sharply matched to pupils' differing needs. By Year 2 reading is improving and pupils understand the strategies they can use to help them to read; as one pupil described, 'I have to sound out the words and think.'
- The attainment gap between pupils eligible for the pupil premium and other pupils at the school is closing through focused support for individuals. In the Year 6 assessments in 2012, pupils caught up in mathematics but remained a year behind in English, despite making good progress in both subjects from their starting points. The school is providing one-to-one support as needed to continue to close the gaps.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because their needs are identified and relevant support is provided.
- Pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language do well because vocabulary is promoted well in lessons and there are good opportunities for speaking and listening.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers and teaching assistants form good relationships with the pupils in their classes and consequently manage behaviour well. This supports pupils' good attitudes to learning.
- Motivating activities are appreciated by the pupils and interesting resources capture and hold their attention. For example, in drama in Year 3, pupils enjoyed inventing scenes around a range of props and in Year 6 pupils were highly motivated by the role-play task of manufacturing and selling mini-kites.
- Teachers provide clear instructions for tasks and make sure that pupils know what they are expected to learn. Good questioning is used to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding and praise is used well to encourage. For example, in the Reception class, the teacher explored with a group of boys why the wall they had built was unstable and therefore potentially unsafe.
- Occasionally, teachers do not get the timing of a lesson quite right. At times they talk for too long and pupils have too little time to complete their written work and at other times pupils start to lose concentration because they are ready for a change in activity. The teaching of phonics is not strong enough because not all pupils learn quickly enough when in a large group because their needs are not met in full. Pupils enjoy using robot arms to show the number of sounds in a word, and learn more quickly in the sessions where the work is just right for them.
- Teaching assistants are skilled in supporting small groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language. For example, in the Early Years Foundation Stage, a small group of children

benefited from bilingual support when counting and identifying various fruits in a book.

- Teachers provide helpful comments on pupils' work showing them how to improve, but do not always allow enough time for pupils to respond to this advice so that errors are tackled straight away.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are friendly and confident and enjoy coming to school. They are positive about their learning. They cooperate well when working in pairs and small groups and are attentive most of the time. For example, in literacy in Year 2, pupils worked well to solve clues about the seasons. Occasionally, pupils lose a little concentration if they have been listening to the teachers for too long or have not had enough variety in the work they have been given.
- Rates of attendance are rising and are above average, reflecting pupils' positive attitudes to learning. Most parents and carers who responded to the Parent View online questionnaire were positive about behaviour at the school and pupils themselves give it 'nine out of ten'.
- Pupils say that they feel safe at school and they know how to stay safe, including when using the computers. In a literacy lesson in Year 4, pupils demonstrated a good understanding of how parents and carers might be worried about the safety of their children if they were late coming home from a visit to the fair.
- Instances of bullying are rare and pupils are happy that their concerns are dealt with swiftly. The school is successful in promoting equal opportunities, fostering good relations and tackling discrimination. Consequently, pupils play together sensibly and are respectful of differences in their cultural backgrounds.
- Pupils take responsibility well and have recently helped to plan the building of a tree house and an art studio. However, pupils do not always take enough responsibility for checking that they have corrected mistakes in their writing.

The leadership and management are good

- Senior leaders have a clear understanding of what the school does well and its next steps for improvement. There is a strong drive for success and all leaders are ambitious and want pupils to do well at school.
- Steps taken since the last inspection have resulted in a rise in attainment and improvements in pupils' handwriting, speaking and listening and in the way pupils' progress is measured. The local authority provides appropriate 'light touch' support for this good school.
- Senior leaders frequently check up on how well teachers are doing and provide helpful guidance to enable them to extend their skills. Subject leaders support and challenge teachers, but they do not always act swiftly enough so that all pupils do as well as they should in all subjects, and inconsistencies in teaching and pupils' progress are tackled as soon as they arise.
- The curriculum provides a wide range of interesting activities, including in physical education. The new special funding for physical education is providing a trained hockey coach who teaches skills in lessons and helps to run an after-school club. Pupils already benefit from specialist physical education teaching and learn skills in a structured way in lessons and well-attended clubs. These activities enable them to reach the performance levels of which they are capable and are having a positive impact on the development of their healthy lifestyles and good physical well-being.
- The funding for pupils eligible for the pupil premium has been spent well on specialist support in reading and mathematics and support for parents and carers in home learning. The school is extending support to include the development of writing.
- The school makes good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There are good opportunities for them to appreciate music and the arts such as during African drumming lessons. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop social skills. For example,

in Year 1, pupils discussed the feelings of characters in familiar books. Pupils are taught about cultural differences and have some knowledge of various religious festivals and places of worship.

- Parents and carers are positive about the school and say that their children are kept safe at school and are happy. They are impressed with the extra help they are given by members of staff in supporting their children with their reading. As one parent or carer said, 'They show us how to help too.'
- Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements. Members of staff are trained in keeping pupils safe and are checked for suitability for working in school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are knowledgeable about the work of the school and its strengths and areas of comparative weakness. They play an active part in challenging and supporting the school and are reviewing their work so that they can become even more effective. They know about the use of performance management, how good the quality of teaching is and how underperformance is supported and good teaching is rewarded. There is a clear understanding of how well pupils achieve compared with those in other schools.

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	110260
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	429959

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	240
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Shaun Bullock
Headteacher	Geraldine O'Brien
Date of previous school inspection	16–17 June 2009
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