

Butlers Court School

Wattleton Road, Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire, HP9 1RW

Inspection dates 8–9 October 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.

- There is a good positive atmosphere in school where mutual respect is promoted between pupils and staff. The headteacher has created an effective team spirit which pupils, staff, parents and carers are proud to be part of.
- Teaching over time is good and pupils make good progress across the school, so that they reach significantly above average standards of attainment in English and mathematics when they leave the school in Year 6, preparing them well for secondary education.
- The teaching of reading is a real strength of the school; consequently pupils are confident and fluent readers from an early age. The well-resourced central library in school is well used to promote a love of reading.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils feel safe and display very positive attitudes to learning. Attendance rates are above average.
- The school works well with parents and carers and they are overwhelming positive about all aspects of the school. A very large majority would recommend the school to another parent or carer.
- Leaders and governors have maintained the good quality of teaching since the previous inspection.
- Governors know the school well and challenge the school effectively to improve further.
- A wide range of subjects is on offer, taught by specialist teachers who provide many extra-curricular activities in the areas of music, sport and the arts.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Teaching is not yet outstanding. Some teachers do not move pupils on to more challenging work quickly enough at the start of lessons.
- There is a good deal of information on pupils' progress but leaders are not always able to access this information quickly.
- Teachers do not always allow children to choose how they can challenge themselves in order to develop their own study skills.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 29 lessons, of which two were observed jointly with headteacher and one jointly with the deputy headteacher. In addition there were a number of short visits to lessons.
- Inspectors considered the 117 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), two letters from parents and carers and also talked to parents and carers on the playground. They looked at the 25 responses from the staff survey.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read; they talked to pupils in classrooms and around the school. They attended two assemblies and looked at work in books and around the school.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, pupils, subject leaders and other staff. They also met with the Chair of the Governing body and another governor and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at other evidence, including: the school's self-evaluation of its progress; monitoring reports about the effectiveness of teaching and learning; the school's information for tracking the progress of pupils; the documentation relating to teachers' appraisals; and the school's documents relating to keeping children safe, behaviour and attendance. They also looked at the minutes of the governing body meetings and at the sports funding action plan.

Inspection team

Susan Currie, Lead inspector

Patricia Wright

Mark Wilson

Additional Inspector

Additional Inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Butlers Court School is a larger-than-average sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils identified as disabled and those with special educational needs that are supported through school action is below the national average. The proportion who are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below the average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium, which is additional funding provided by the government for children in local authority care, service children and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is below the national average.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- There are private childcare facilities on site. These did not form part of the inspection.
- The headteacher and Chair of the Governing Body were appointed after the previous inspection.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by:
 - ensuring that teachers carefully match the level of work to the needs of the pupils, particularly during the start of lessons, so that pupils move quickly on to work that is suitably challenging for them
 - giving pupils more opportunities in lessons to make choices for themselves about their level of challenge in learning
 - ensuring that examples of outstanding teaching practice are shared more widely across the school.
- Ensure that leaders review, refine and summarise information on pupils' progress in order to gain a deeper in-depth understanding of the progress of individuals and groups of pupils.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Achievement over time is good and pupils leave the school with attainment that is higher than the national average in English and mathematics, well prepared for their next stage of education. It is not yet outstanding because some of the most able pupils could do even better.
- The majority of pupils who now enter the school have skills typical for their age. A small group of children have weak language and literacy skills on entry. This is a change from the previous inspection when pupils entered with skills at levels higher than typical for their age. Pupil premium funding has enabled these pupils to make stronger progress particularly in their language development and personal and social development. The vast majority of pupils enter Year 1 with skills above the levels expected because of the good teaching in the Reception classes.
- Pupils continue to make good progress from their starting points across the school. In 2013, national test data indicated that the proportion of pupils who now make good progress in writing compares favourably with the national average, and is greater than the proportion in 2012. Proportions of pupils making good progress in mathematics and reading at the end of Year 6 remain strong compared to national averages. In other year groups a good proportion of pupils are now making better than expected progress.
- Work in books and observations of pupils in classes show that pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs are generally making good progress in English and mathematics, which is line with their peers. In the best lessons they are well supported by effective teaching assistants.
- The progress of pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding is good and sometimes outstanding across the school in reading, writing and mathematics. The school's information shows that the gap in attainment level between them and their peers is closing rapidly in all year groups. For example, in the current Year 6, information shows this has narrowed substantially over the time and that these pupils are now about six months behind their peers in reading, writing and mathematics. Previously they were at least two years behind their peers.
- In the large majority of lessons, most-able pupils are achieving well, however more pupils could achieve even better because sometimes teachers do not enable these pupils to get on with more challenging work quickly enough. There is an impressive range of activities in place to support the most able, for example, mathematics challenges, self-publishing, film making and targeted extra classes.
- Achievement in reading and mathematics is good across the school. Children have a good start to learning about letters and sounds (phonics) in Reception which is taught in a very fun and lively multi-sensory way; for example, pupils hear, see, draw, write and feel letters and sounds. Pupils also do well in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 and as a result become strong motivated readers who portray a love of reading as well as good comprehension skills to equip them well for the next stage of their learning.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching over time is good and is leading to good progress and strong attainment. There is some very strong practice in the school but this is not routinely shared with other teachers. Pupils speak fondly of their teachers and how they enable them to move on in learning in a fun and motivating way. They value the specialist teachers in music, the arts and sport.
- The teaching of reading is a strength in the school, leading to good fluent readers with good comprehension skills.
- In the best lessons teachers expect pupils to work and think for themselves. They settle pupils

quickly into work that challenges them and have high expectations of what can be achieved. They plan imaginative and creative tasks that capture the pupils' interests. For example, in Year 6 pupils were asked to act out the witches' scene in *Macbeth* as a preparation for their writing.

- Teaching assistants effectively support the learning of disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those eligible for the pupil premium. Teachers use questioning well to target and probe individual pupils' understanding. They intervene quickly if pupils are not sure or need further help.
- Where teaching is less strong work is not always correctly pitched to the level of the pupils at all times in the lesson. Sometimes lessons have long introductions which some pupils do not need as they already understand what is needed. Pupils do not always have enough opportunities to work on their own and make choices about the level of challenge for themselves.
- Teachers generally mark work effectively. The school is improving this by ironing out some minor inconsistencies through closer monitoring by leaders across the school.
- Teaching in the Reception classes is good and children make good progress. Teachers plan a varied range of activities using books such as *Funny bones* to structure activities based around children's interests such as painting, drawing and making skeletons. Good use is made of the outdoor area where children can practise skills such as chalking letters or counting.
- Teachers have developed good practice to improve writing by preparing first in talk, drama and modelling. There are good examples of the writing process displayed in classrooms. In Year 3 pupils were editing and drafting a diary entry and were fully engaged by interesting subject matter. All pupils were effectively challenged. This is leading to better outcomes in writing across the school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave very well in class and have extremely positive attitudes to learning. They are very polite, courteous and respect adults and each other. One parent or carer said that 'The school is a very nurturing environment for all pupils.' Pupils say, 'It is alright to make mistakes in our work because we learn from these.' Pupils feel valued in school. The school ethos is inclusive of all.
- Behaviour is not yet outstanding because pupils are not always given the opportunity to work on their own and are sometimes over reliant on adult supervision in their lessons. Also, occasionally, where teaching is less strong and pupils are not challenged enough, pupils may lose concentration and become less engaged with their learning.
- Pupils have a good understanding of all types of bullying, including name calling, and they say there is very little bullying of any type in school. When bullying happens it is dealt with quickly. They know to talk to an adult if they need help. The school records show it tackles any form of discriminatory behaviour promptly. There have been no exclusions.
- Virtually all parents and carers who contributed their views during the inspection agreed that their children felt safe and happy at school.
- Pupils say the school has taught them about e-safety and keeping safe on the internet and are encouraged to remember the 'smart' acronym to help them remember how to do this. Parents' workshops are also held in order to ensure parents and carers fully understand what is being taught.
- Pupils learn how to keep fit and healthy and sports clubs are well attended. Coaches such as members of Wycombe Wanderers Football Club also teach in school helping pupils and teachers to develop their own skills.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to take on responsibility, for example: being library monitors, taking part in enterprise activities such as the recent 'Dragons Den' project, raising money for charities, developing their own podcasts and contributing to Butlers Court FM.
- Attendance is above average. Pupils said they 'love coming to Butlers Court and enjoy their learning'. The school has effective procedures for calling parents and carers if pupils do not attend school and tracks attendance carefully to see patterns and trends.

The leadership and management are good

- The staff, pupils, parents, carers and governors speak highly of the headteacher who has 'reinvigorated' the school since her appointment. She has created a strong staff team who feel valued and appreciate the opportunities they have to develop professionally and take on leadership responsibilities. Teachers with responsibility for a particular subject are developing their roles and have a good understanding of what they need to do to improve their subjects further.
- Performance management is used appropriately to identify areas for improvement. The school's new system for appraisal aims to tighten this further. School leaders check on the performance of teachers. They ensure teachers' pay progression is linked to good teaching and pupils' progress. They have not checked that lesson planning ensures that pupils are sufficiently challenged. Outstanding teachers are not yet sharing their skills enough with other teachers across the school.
- The curriculum is leading to good achievement. It is broad and balanced. Pupils' personal skills develop very well. There is a wide range of skilled specialist teachers. There are many visits and visitors to enhance the curriculum. Pupils from Year 4 upwards have the opportunity to take part in residential visits.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. There are opportunities for pupils to experience our diverse society through visits to places of worship, learning about other religions, assemblies and stories that tell children about other parts of the world, such as reading *Journey to Jo'burg* as part of the South Africa topic.
- There are systems in place to check on the progress of pupils, and senior leaders have all the data needed but cannot always put their hands on the relevant information quickly. There is no comprehensive executive summary of this information that can be used by all.
- The school works well in partnership with parents and carers, other local schools and external agencies that support pupils. Equal opportunities are well promoted in school.
- Safeguarding requirements are met. Governors have undertaken relevant training and taken steps to ensure the school site is safe.
- The local authority has provided appropriate light touch support for this good school. This includes an annual data check and supporting governors with the appraisal of the headteacher.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school well. There is a good range of skills within the governing body. Governors manage the finances well. They know that the funding for primary school sport will be used to bring subject specialists into school as well as enhancing the annual programme of sports events held. Governors plan to evaluate this at the end of the first year and believe it will enhance staff skills as well as pupils' skills. They understand the links between performance and pay and how staff progress. They know that the appraisal process is robust and that the quality of teaching is good. They have reorganised the governing body to work more effectively and ensure that there is equal measure of support and challenge to the school. They know that pupil premium funding is used for additional adults in school to support the pupils with reading interventions and one-to-one support and they know that the information shows that the progress of these children is at least good. Governors have a good understanding of data and how well the school is doing compared to other schools through using the 'data dashboard'. They have undertaken relevant safeguarding training to meet current safeguarding requirements.

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	110291
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	426576

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	429
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Storey
Headteacher	Jeanette Marshall
Date of previous school inspection	2 October 2008
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