

Walter Infant School

Murray Road, Wokingham, RG41 2TA

Inspection dates 19–20 November 2013

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Outstanding | 1 |
| | This inspection: | Outstanding | 1 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Outstanding | 1 |
| Quality of teaching | | Outstanding | 1 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Outstanding | 1 |
| Leadership and management | | Outstanding | 1 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Achievement is outstanding, as it was at the last inspection. Pupils make excellent progress through the school from entry points which are broadly in line with those expected for their age. By the time they leave the school in Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are well above average.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive very good support and their rate of progress is similar to that of their peers. The school makes excellent provision for those pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding through the deployment of a Parent Support Adviser.
- Teaching and learning across the school have been sustained at very high levels since the last inspection and are outstanding. Teachers know the pupils very well and have very good working relationships with them so that they are keen to do their very best.
- The leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher is outstanding. They lead the school with great sensitivity and energy to develop a whole community focused on the needs of the pupils.
- Pupils and their families are very proud of their school, and pupils show great enthusiasm for learning. They benefit from a rich curriculum with significant additional provision in the form of clubs and enrichment work.
- Pupils feel very safe in school and say that adults take very good care of them. They have a very good understanding of how to keep safe and act with considerable care and consideration towards one another. Behaviour is outstanding in classes and throughout the school, where there is a vibrant climate for learning.
- The governing body is a great asset to the school and has a very good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Governors have acted with rigour to challenge and support school leaders and have the drive and ambition to continue to make the school even better.
- Together, senior school leaders and the governing body have ensured that outstanding achievement and teaching have been sustained and that the school continues to improve.
- The school's caring atmosphere promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. As a result, the school is a very happy and calm community.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 32 lessons or parts of lessons. Five of these were jointly observed with members of the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors examined the 135 responses on Parent View (the government's website for parents' and carers' views of schools), read letters addressed to them directly and took into account the outcomes of a staff survey.
- A discussion was held with a member of the local authority's advisory staff and a formal discussion was held with pupils.
- Inspectors examined information on pupils' progress and other school documentation, including safeguarding information.
- Inspectors held a discussion with three members of the governing body.
- Inspectors held discussions with parents and carers of pupils at the school and with members of the school staff.

Inspection team

| | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| Tim McLoughlin, Lead inspector | Additional Inspector |
| Shela Rowan | Additional Inspector |
| Barbara Carr | Additional Inspector |

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is an above-average sized infant school. At the time of the inspection there were three forms of entry in all year groups and a single nursery class.
- Most pupils come from White British backgrounds. Other groups represented at the school include pupils from Indian, Pakistani and any other White backgrounds.
- About one tenth of the school's population speak English as an additional language. This proportion is below average; a small number of these pupils are at an early stage of learning English.
- Only a very small number of pupils are supported by the pupil premium.
- The number of pupils with special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school at times other than the usual start of the year is very low.
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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further enhance the quality of teaching by:
 - developing the role of middle leaders so that they have a very secure and detailed first-hand knowledge of the quality of teaching and achievements of groups of pupils, so that they can coach and support all teachers, to enable all to match the very best practice in the school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Children enter the school's Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and abilities generally close to those expected for their age. By the time they enter Year 1 they have successfully acquired the expected skills needed to access the more formal work done in Key Stage 1. Taking into account their different starting points, the proportions of pupils making rapid progress in English and mathematics over time is high compared with national figures. This is due to the high quality teaching of these subjects. As a result, by the end of Year 2, the majority of pupils attain standards that are above average.
- Pupils enjoy reading widely and often. Younger pupils make a very good start with their reading skills, due to the very good teaching of the sounds that letters make (phonics) and this creates a solid foundation for further learning. Some of the school's youngest children in the nursery are already showing a keen interest in learning to read when they join the school and this is picked up quickly by teachers who cater well for their needs.
- Pupils' progress increases as they move through Key Stage 1. This strong rate of progress relates closely to the quality of teaching. The progress of different groups is very even; none, including those joining from other schools at different times in the year, underachieve and all groups progress at a similar, rapid rate. Pupils of ethnic backgrounds other than White British do very well when compared with national figures.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make particularly good progress as a result of the targeted support they receive and achieve as well as their peers. Pupils who join the school with English as an additional language also make rapid progress, due to the excellent knowledge held by both the teachers and the teaching assistants, who are strongly aware of the need for them to be immersed in a language-rich environment.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a very strong feature of the school. The teachers are very adept at spotting opportunities for moments of spirituality within lessons as well as extending pupils' cultural awareness of living in a diverse and challenging modern Britain.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teaching is consistently at least good, with many examples of outstanding practice, and this has led to the school continuing to show high rates of pupil progress since the last inspection and to pupils achieving highly. Parents and carers are very confident in the work of the teachers and appreciate the sensitivity shown by members of staff in 'going the extra mile' for their children so that they thoroughly enjoy their school experience.
- The school has a strong commitment to learning and teachers are very well supported and feel enthused to do their very best for the pupils. They have very high expectations of pupils and this is reflected in the excellent pace of much of the teaching at Walter.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a very good start in learning phonics. As a result of well-organised teaching and support, they enjoy learning to read and also to work with numbers. Parents and carers play an important partnership role with the school; they help out in class and listen to children read, and children gain extra motivation from their presence. This in turn further enhances the effectiveness of the teaching. Provision for children across this key stage is excellent and gives the children an invaluable introduction to the school.
- In Key Stage 1, teaching in mathematics and English is very strong because teachers make the lessons challenging and interesting for pupils. For example, in an outstanding English lesson in Year 2, pupils were being expertly taught to use better grammar in their writing. This work built on the previous day's work and work was tailor-made to suit the ability range of the class while still maintaining extremely high expectations of the standards pupils should achieve. In this, as in other classes, additional support assistants provide invaluable support in enabling pupils to

overcome any difficulties they may encounter to achieve well.

- In another Year 2 lesson pupils were learning that halving is the opposite of doubling. This was a very challenging lesson which was pitched at a very high level for this middle-ability group. However, the teacher showed great skill in spotting that some children were struggling, and acted quickly to bring them back into a focus group to give them further instruction so that by the end of the lesson they had fully understood the concept.
- In Early Years Foundation Stage, activities planned for the children are based around broad themes; for example the children in the Reception class were learning about owls and were making use of storybooks to help to captivate the children's natural interest and curiosity. They were highly motivated and made very good progress in all areas of their learning, and adults worked well with the children in developing their basic skills.
- Reading is taught very well throughout the school and the work in Key Stage 1 builds very effectively on the strong foundations laid in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' work is effective. It provides clear feedback on how to improve, and targets set by teachers are made clear to pupils. Homework supports learning well and is enjoyed by the pupils. It is often correctly focused on regular reading practice and number work and this encourages parents and carers to engage more fully with the work pupils are doing in school.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are taught well through an effective mix of individual and class support. Adults who work closely with these pupils make an important contribution to their very good learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils have very positive attitudes to their learning. They concentrate on their work and persevere in order to complete tasks as best they can. They are very polite, courteous and respectful to the adults who work with them in school.
- Pupils behave extremely well in lessons and around the school. Inspectors found no evidence of misbehaviour in the playground and the school had kept records to show that it had acted appropriately when there were minor incidents.
- Instances of bullying are very few in number and pupils feel that the school is a peaceful community. The school promotes understanding of a range of religious faiths and cultures and encourages an atmosphere of tolerance. Right from the Nursery class children show great tolerance of each other and are able to cooperate and listen to one another's views. This high degree of tolerance continues as they progress further up the school.
- Parents and carers feel that behaviour is very good and well managed by the school. The involvement of pupils such as the Playground Pals helps to create an orderly environment. The school uses a clear set of observable 'Golden Rules' as a basis for its highly effective behaviour policy.
- Attendance is above average and has continued to rise over the past two years. The school has an open-door policy in respect of its parents and carers and offers a number of well-attended workshops for them that go well beyond enabling them to support their children's learning by also helping them to access learning resources themselves. Their assistance in classes enhances the classroom provision and helps to create a calm and welcoming atmosphere for parents, carers and pupils.
- Pupils are aware of the dangers they face in society and have a sound understanding of issues such as cyber bullying and e-safety.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Senior leaders have worked tirelessly to sustain and further enhance the high quality of both the school's provision and outcomes for pupils. They have a clear vision for ensuring continued improvement, which is shared well with all members of the school community. Information from checking the quality of teaching is used fully to ensure that teachers are provided with the training they require in order to improve their practice.
- The headteacher manages teachers' performance very well and ensures there is a good match between the quality of teaching and pay. Teachers have challenging targets linked to the Teachers' Standards and to pupils' performance.
- Members of the middle leadership team are developing a good understanding of what is expected of them. They are starting to use their increasing expertise in the school to support the development of others and helping to check that teaching is of a consistently high quality.
- There is high-quality curriculum provision. The school offers a creative approach to the curriculum, which pupils really enjoy. The leadership team has correctly identified that ensuring pupils have a very good grounding in their literacy and numeracy skills is a priority, and these skills are firmly embedded across the curriculum.
- Many pupils attend additional clubs and activities at school, which include a Taekwondo Club, a very able school choir, musical instrument tuition, as well as sports clubs and trips which support pupils' learning. The school environment is very well maintained and pupils' work is carefully displayed to celebrate and promote high achievement. Reading resources are clearly a source of great pride and the school has an excellent and well-stocked library.
- The school makes good use of additional funds to promote physical education and sport through the deployment of a specialist coach who is well known to the pupils at the school and has a very strong rapport with them. This results in pupils having a very positive attitude towards healthy lifestyles and ensures they all take part in regular sport of a good standard.
- The school promotes pupils' positive behaviour and understanding of the world in which they live through a broad range of experiences. These contribute particularly well to pupils' social, moral, cultural and spiritual development.
- The rapid progress evident for all pupils, whatever their needs, shows that the school promotes equality of opportunity extremely well and does not tolerate discrimination.
- The local authority has been very effective in its contribution to this school and has supported the school in being more confident in its evaluation of its own success as well as critically looking at areas it might wish to improve further.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body fulfils all its statutory duties effectively, seeking additional training where necessary, and ensures that arrangements for safeguarding pupils are robust. The budget is expertly managed and governors are perceptive in their discussions about the value of spending decisions and the impact these have on pupils' progress. As a result, the governing body has made highly effective decisions about the spending of pupil premium funding and the additional money allocated to support sport in schools. Governors are well informed about the quality of teaching and the school's use of performance management. They rigorously manage the performance of the headteacher and offer appropriate support and challenge. They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement, and of performance data. They know how well the school is performing in relation to pupils nationally and are never complacent about how the school could be made even better. They are a great asset to the school.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| 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

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| Unique reference number | 109869 |
| Local authority | Wokingham |
| Inspection number | 426654 |

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

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| Type of school | Infant |
| School category | Maintained |
| Age range of pupils | 3–7 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 320 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Fiona Cross |
| Headteacher | Vanessa Mitura |
| Date of previous school inspection | 18 March 2009 |
| Telephone number | 01189 780 825 |
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