

Knaphill School

High Street, Knaphill, Woking, Surrey, GU21 2QH

Inspection dates 28–29 January 2014

| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Satisfactory | 3 |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------|
| | This inspection: | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Quality of teaching | | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Requires improvement | 3 |
| 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, leaders have not been able to provide pupils with teaching of sufficient quality in English and so too many do not achieve what they are capable of.
- The most able pupils, particularly in Years 3 and 4, are not given sufficiently demanding work and sometimes spend too long practising things they already understand.
- Pupils who are not fluent readers are not systematically and accurately taught their letters and the sounds they make and so make slower progress.
- Some middle leaders, although very keen and enthusiastic, do not have the skills or experience to make significant contributions to improving teaching.
- Feedback that pupils receive does not always precisely identify how they can improve their work, especially in writing.
- Insufficient emphasis is placed on improving spelling, grammar and punctuation and so pupils make too many errors.
- Incidents of inappropriate behaviour and actions that are taken are not recorded sufficiently well. There are inconsistencies in the way such behaviour is dealt with by staff.
- Communication with parents and carers is sometimes not effective in helping them to understand how and why decisions are made.
- Governors do not understand the school's work well enough. As a result, they cannot provide informed challenge to school leaders or take a strong lead in shaping its strategic direction.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils, regardless of their starting points, make good progress in mathematics. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons that are suitably challenging for different groups of pupils.
- Teaching is improving across the school. Recent developments to the curriculum are making learning more relevant and interesting to pupils and, as a result, their progress is improving.
- The headteacher knows exactly what the school needs to do to improve and has the full support of the teachers who are motivated and want to improve their teaching.
- Pupils are polite, well mannered and dress smartly. They are happy at school and the school is safe. Attendance is above average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons, of which seven were joint observations with the headteacher and his deputy. In addition, inspectors made a number of other short visits to lessons. They also looked at pupils’ books and observed other aspects of the school’s work.
- Meetings were held with five governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body, and teachers and school leaders. Pupils took inspectors on a tour of the school. The inspectors also listened to pupils read and spoke with them about their reading. A meeting was held with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 170 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), spoke to parents and carers at the school gate, considered three communications from parents and two letters from pupils. Inspectors reviewed 20 questionnaire responses from staff.
- A number of documents were looked at, including the school’s own information relating to pupils’ achievement, the school’s self-evaluation summary and development plan, records relating to behaviour and attendance and checks on teaching and documents relating to safeguarding. The inspectors also visited the school’s website.

Inspection team

Martin Marsh, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Keith Homewood

Additional Inspector

Julie Sackett

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average primary school.
- One in 12 pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding which supports pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children or children of service families). This is well below average. In this school, all the eligible pupils are those entitled to free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- One in five pupils belong to ethnic groups other than White British. About half of these pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Half of the teachers are new to the school since the previous inspection and two teachers who are new to teaching have been appointed since September 2013. There is also a new Chair of the Governing Body and several new governors.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so a greater proportion of pupils make good or better progress, particularly in reading and writing, by:
 - providing pupils with more precise guidance as to how they can improve their work
 - giving more able pupils, particularly in Years 3 and 4, more challenging tasks which build on the skills they already have, particularly when they are asked to write
 - making sure that pupils who are not fluent readers are given systematic and accurate help to improve their reading, particularly in learning their letters and the sounds they make
 - developing pupils' accuracy in spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- Manage pupils' behaviour more effectively by:
 - making sure that all staff have a common approach to dealing with inappropriate behaviour
 - more carefully recording, tracking and analysing incidents of inappropriate behaviour.
- Develop leadership and management by:
 - strengthening governance to enable governors to understand all aspects of the school's work so governors can challenge more effectively and provide better strategic leadership
 - improving communication with parents so that they have a better understanding of how the school works and how and why decisions are made
 - developing the skills of middle leaders so they can play a greater role in improving the quality of teaching.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Progress in reading and writing is not fast enough for too many pupils, particularly in Years 3 and 4. Standards of attainment in national tests English have been broadly in line with national averages. However, given their starting points, pupils are capable of more. The recent improvements in teaching seen during the inspection indicate that more pupils are now making faster progress.
- Most pupils enter the school as reasonably fluent readers. Some are less confident and because they are not given accurate and systematic support with learning their letters and the sounds they make (phonics) they do not develop fluency quickly enough. By the time they leave the school, pupils have developed an interest and enjoyment of reading.
- Progress in writing over time has not been fast enough. This is because pupils are not given precise enough guidance as to how they can improve their work and insufficient emphasis is placed on improving spelling, grammar and punctuation. Progress is now improving, particularly for the most able, because topic work gives them greater opportunity to research and write longer pieces of writing.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics. By the time they leave the school they can confidently calculate in their head and on paper and use their skills to solve problems. The most able are given a high level of challenge, especially in Years 5 and 6. Pupils can solve complex problems involving finding the areas and perimeters of shapes, including circles, and calculate exceptionally well.
- Pupils eligible for pupil premium were about eight months behind their peers in mathematics and writing and four months behind in reading based on 2013 Key Stage 2 assessments. The targeted support and intervention are now much more effective than in the past and are closing the gap. The use of a learning mentor to free teachers to work with eligible pupils, good additional one-to-one adult support and careful tracking of progress are all contributing to this group of pupils now making faster progress than their peers.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils, as do those from a wide range of different ethnic communities or whose first language is not English. The school is successful in providing equal opportunities for all.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching has not been of sufficient quality over time to enable pupils to achieve what they are capable of in reading and writing. This is because expectations of what pupils can achieve have been too low and work planned has not built sufficiently well on what pupils already know and understand.
- Marking, although generally helpful in letting pupils know how well they are doing, is not precise enough to help pupils understand how they can improve their work.
- In mathematics, the work done to improve teachers' subject knowledge since the previous inspection is paying dividends. Teachers are able to plan well for the range of different groups of pupils and ask probing questions which make pupils think hard and so deepen their learning. As a result, they progress well.
- Good relationships exist between teachers and pupils in all classes and pupils listen attentively and want to contribute when asked questions. In a few lessons, teachers tend to only ask pupils who put their hands up and do not check often enough on the learning of others. When asked to work on their own, or in a group, most pupils work hard. Other adults support groups of pupils well in lessons particularly those who are disabled or who have special educational needs. This ensures everyone can contribute fully in lessons.
- Teaching seen during the inspection is stronger than that reflected in previous test results. In most lessons pupils are now making faster progress because learning is more relevant and

interesting. Pupils in Year 3 made rapid progress in using a wide range of words like 'because' and 'whereas' to make longer sentences to describe the Taj Mahal as part of their study of India. In Year 6, pupils were using Berlie Doherty's novel *Street Child* as a stimulus for writing persuasively and were totally absorbed and learning well as a result.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Almost a third of parents and carers who responded on Parent View believed that behaviour was not well led and managed. Parents and carers spoken to during the inspection also expressed similar views, and there were some concerns raised by support staff. There were no concerns raised by pupils. Inspectors found that systems for recording and tracking inappropriate behaviour and recording actions were not as good as they could be and that there were some inconsistencies in the way behaviour was dealt with by staff.
- Pupils' behaviour, both in lessons and around school during the inspection, was generally good, but there were some signs of inappropriate behaviour. There was sometimes a lack of concentration by a small number of pupils, usually boys, when working on their own. Some pupils felt that those playing ball games in the playground did not always show consideration to those not playing. Most pupils, though, behave very well and several parents and carers commented that behaviour since September 2013 had improved considerably.
- Some parents believe bullying incidents are not dealt with quickly enough. The school uses a separate log to record such incidents. Although the number of recorded incidents is low, they show that the school took appropriate and timely action. Pupils said that sometimes they fell out with friends and 'things are said' but 'that isn't bullying'. They said that situations are always sorted out quickly. Pupils know about cyber bullying and how to keep safe when using the internet. They are confident that all forms of bullying will be dealt with should it happen.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Rigorous procedures and systems are in place to ensure the site is secure. Pupils told us they feel happy, safe and cared for in school. They return the care shown to them by being well mannered towards adults and kind to each other. 'If someone sits on the friendship bench in the playground someone will go and sit with them straight away,' said one pupil. Pupils understand about other faiths and cultures and the importance of valuing these. This shows the school is successful in fostering good relationships and tackling discrimination.
- Pupils willingly take on responsibility. Year 6 pupils pair up with Year 3 pupils to help them settle into the school, wear prefect badges with pride, represent their class on the school council and enjoy being 'reading ambassadors' for their class. They are also involved in designing the new library.
- Attendance is above average and pupils arrive for school on time.

The leadership and management

require improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because teaching and achievement over time, particularly in reading and writing, are not consistently good, and improvements are needed in governance. The improvements in mathematics, the stronger teaching and better progress seen during the inspection and the development of the curriculum are evidence that the school has the capacity to improve.
- Whilst some parents have concerns about how the school is led and managed overall, the inspection team finds that the headteacher has a real drive and commitment to the pupils and the school. One parent expressed the view that 'the headteacher will never give up on any child'. Plans for how the school needs to improve are appropriate and based on an excellent understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The teachers are wholeheartedly behind what the school is doing and are enthusiastic in their desire to improve their teaching.
- Leaders' efforts to communicate with parents about decisions that affect their children and how

the school works are not effective enough. For example, some parents have not received enough information when there has been a change of teacher or about the school's approach to dealing with inappropriate behaviour.

- Middle leaders, despite being very enthusiastic and starting to have an impact on teaching, are inexperienced and lack the skills necessary to make a significant contribution to improvements. The school's systems for managing teachers' appraisal are rigorous and making a strong contribution to improvements in teaching.
- The school is making good use of its additional government sports funding to train teachers to become more confident in teaching physical education. A local secondary school is helping teachers to develop teaching plans and provide training. Students from the secondary school also coach pupils as part of their GCSE courses.
- Developments in the curriculum through the topic approach since the previous inspection are making learning more relevant to pupils and providing a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They are also helping to raise attainment in reading and writing because pupils are given more opportunity to research topics and write at greater length. The curriculum is supplemented by a good range of trips, residential visits and visitors to school.
- The local authority gives good support to school leaders. It has also made significant contributions to strengthening teachers' subject knowledge in mathematics and improving the teaching of writing.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Since the previous inspection there have been significant changes to the personnel within the governing body, including the appointment of a new Chair. Although governors receive good information from the headteacher on the quality of teaching and how the school's performance compares to others, they do not understand it well enough. This makes it difficult for them to make clear judgements about the performance of the school, to challenge leaders appropriately and to make significant contributions to plans for the future. When they do visit the school, for instance when a group of governors visited the school to spend time in lessons last November, they develop a much better understanding of the school's work.
- Governors understand how pupil premium funding has narrowed the gap in attainment during the last year. They also understand how teachers' pay is linked to the progress pupils make.
- They give good support to the school in meeting safeguarding responsibilities, including those in relation to recruitment. The school's systems for safeguarding meet statutory requirements.

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 | 125000 |
| Local authority | Surrey |
| Inspection number | 431054 |

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

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| Type of school | Junior |
| School category | Maintained |
| Age range of pupils | 7–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 341 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mark Muir |
| Headteacher | Kevin Davies |
| Date of previous school inspection | 13–14 June 2012 |
| Telephone number | 01483 888899 |
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