

Robert Sandilands Primary School and Nursery

Digby Road, Speen, Newbury, Berkshire, RG14 1TS

Inspection dates 12–13 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Require improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' progress from their different starting points is inconsistent and achievement is not yet good. Attainment by the time pupils leave school in Year 6 is not high enough.
- Teaching requires further improvement because some weaknesses in pupils' learning and progress have not yet been rectified.
- Work given is sometimes too easy or difficult and, when this happens, pupils' learning does not move on quickly enough. Resources are not always used as well as they should be.
- Progress information is not used sufficiently well to help target additional support to boost pupils' achievement.
- Pupils who are supported by the pupil premium are not always doing as well as other pupils and there are gaps in attainment between this group and other pupils.
- Leaders and managers have not improved teaching fast enough and pupils' achievement as intended because checks on the quality of teaching and professional development have not been fully effective.
- Governors have yet to get to grips fully with challenging leaders about how well pupils in the school are doing.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders demonstrate improvement in several areas and recognise that pupils' progress is yet to be consistently good. The school is on the way to becoming good.
- Action taken by school leaders to make teaching better is improving the achievement of some groups of pupils.
- Young children make a positive start in Nursery and Reception and are developing their reading and writing skills well.
- Teachers provide a very supportive climate for learning in lessons. Pupils use their targets and marking well to help them to improve.
- Teaching assistants support pupils' learning in lessons effectively.
- Pupils have consistently positive attitudes to learning and their conduct is welcoming and orderly. They feel safe and secure in school and free from bullying.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons of which three were observed jointly with the headteacher. They also scrutinised samples of pupils' work and heard pupils read.
- Meetings were held with staff, members of the governing body and groups of pupils. A meeting was also held with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 44 responses to the online parent questionnaire (Parent View). Parents' views were also gathered from informal conversations and from letters and emails sent. The views of staff were gathered through discussions and 12 questionnaire returns.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documents, including improvement plans, safeguarding documents, checks on the quality of teaching, records relating to attendance, and the school's data on pupils' attainment and progress.

Inspection team

Peter Clifton, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Andrea Curtis

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Robert Sandilands Primary is an average-sized school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The pupils are taught in eight classes.
- The school has its own nursery which runs in the mornings only.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported by school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and other groups, is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching, so that lessons are good or outstanding, to enable pupils to strengthen their achievement and reach higher attainment by:
 - making sure that tasks provided for different groups of pupils are not too easy or difficult, and resources are used better so that pupils are able to learn and achieve as well as they can.
- Strengthen the impact of leadership and management by:
 - driving through improvements in teaching more rigorously, for example by closer checking on the learning and progress of different groups of pupils in lessons so they make better progress
 - improving the use of information available about the progress of different groups of pupils from their different starting points, so that teaching and additional support provided can be better directed to ensure that pupils achieve well
 - reviewing the use of the pupil premium funding in order to ensure that the eligible group of pupils achieves as well as others across the school.
- Undertake a review of governance, including a focus on pupils' progress and how the school's results compare with the national picture, in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be strengthened.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Over the past three years, pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 has been average and their progress broadly in line with that expected. In 2013, pupils' achievement was weaker because the proportion of pupils making better than the progress expected was below the national picture.
- Similarly, over the same period, pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 has been broadly average. In 2013, pupils' attainment improved and was slightly above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Their progress is similar to that expected.
- Samples of work seen and the school's tracking show that pupils' progress across different year groups is inconsistent. However, the current Year 6 pupils are on track to do well in both English and mathematics and Year 2 pupils are doing at least as well as they were at the same time last year. Pupils who are more able make progress that is similar to their classmates.
- In 2013, the overall gap in performance between pupils eligible for the pupil premium and other pupils in Year 6 was equivalent to being eight months behind and wider than that in 2012. In 2013, this group of pupils did not do as well as others in reading, writing and mathematics. Currently, the attainment of this group of pupils in Year 6 is closing in mathematics and writing, but is further behind in reading.
- Older pupils in Years 3 to 6 read a broad range of different authors. Year 3 pupils, for example, talk enthusiastically about what they are reading. Younger, lower-attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 use their knowledge of letters and their sounds (phonics) securely to read. The proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check in 2013 was above the expected standard.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make progress which is broadly in line with their classmates. Teaching assistants typically provide tasks which are tailored to pupils' individual needs so that these pupils learn securely.
- In Nursery and Reception, leaders analyse the progress of different groups carefully and the curriculum is adjusted to help the children improve their skills and understanding well. In 2013, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development by the end of Reception was slightly above the national average, and they were well prepared to start Year 1.
- Records kept by the school show an increasing proportion of lessons being taught where learning is good and, as a result, pupils' progress is strengthening.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is not yet typically promoting good progress in both English and mathematics across the school.
- Planned activities given to pupils are sometimes too easy or difficult. This results in some groups of pupils not always achieving as well as possible. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Key Stage 1, several pupils got stuck on how to work out change from different amounts and their progress stalled.
- There are a few occasions in lessons when pupils' learning is not as strong as it should be. This happens when resources are not used well enough, for example as a stimulus to write descriptive sentences or to help with counting in mathematics.
- In lessons observed, pupils who are supported by the pupil premium generally work as well as others. However, the extra support provided for this group of pupils has not yet had the desired effect of boosting progress and achievement.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are a strength of the school, and learning in lessons is calm and purposeful. Pupils comment that they are treated with respect and respond quickly to requests from staff.

- Typically, teaching assistants provide sensitive support to help pupils, including those who are disabled or have special educational needs, for example, in counting activities and to help solve problems in mathematics. In Year 4, good support helped pupils to write in the first person using the past tense.
- The use of targets by pupils and the quality of marking successfully promote learning. For example, pupils regularly use their targets to assess their own writing to decide how it can be improved.
- In Reception and Nursery, children enjoy choosing from a broad range of activities, including ones which develop their number and writing skills. They cooperate well together when playing in the sand and investigating bubbles in water.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour and safety of pupils are both good. Pupils' attendance is typically better than the national average. Pupils are clear about what is expected of them in lessons and around the school. They are enthusiastic about lessons, the range of after-school clubs and other activities
- In lessons, pupils usually maintain good levels of concentration when listening to the teacher or working together in groups. On occasions they are confused about how to complete work and attempt to help each other, although this is not always successful. When this happens, they lose heart and their concentration wanes, particularly with older pupils.
- Pupils spoken to at break times confirmed that the school is a happy and friendly place and that there are few incidents of poor behaviour. Many enjoy break time snacks, but there is no evidence of litter because pupils take pride in their surroundings. Classrooms are tidy and well organised.
- Discussions with different groups of pupils confirm that there is hardly any bullying and this is reflected in the school's bullying log. Incidents are rare and, when they do occur, the pupils confirm that they are dealt with by staff.
- Pupils feel safe in school. They have a clear awareness of internet safety and keeping themselves safe, for example when on the roads. They are confident in the supervision by adults at play and lunchtimes.
- Parents and staff rightly think that pupils' behaviour and their safety are strengths of the school. Overall, parents' responses to the online survey and through discussions are very positive about the school and about how well their children are looked after.
- Pupils say that it is unusual for their learning to be disrupted by bad behaviour. However, there are a few pupils, mainly boys, who occasionally try to avoid work and require reminders about concentrating.

The leadership and management require improvement

- Leadership and management have not ensured that teaching is good enough to enable pupils to make rapid progress and achieve consistently well. Learning activities are not always planned well enough for different groups of pupils. However, school records show that teaching is improving and pupils' progress and achievement are strengthening.
- There are detailed and regularly updated records mapping the attainment and progress of individual pupils. However, this information is yet to be used to its fullest extent to help evaluate the progress of different groups in order that additional support can be better targeted to those pupils who need it the most, including those who are supported through additional pupil premium funding. Leaders are, rightly, reviewing how this additional funding is being used.
- Middle leaders know about subject strengths and weaknesses in literacy and numeracy. A focus on writing is helping to boost progress. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, staff work together well across both Nursery and Reception to support children's learning and progress.
- The school's curriculum helps pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural

development successfully. Pupils in assemblies support each other well and show their appreciation sensibly during performances.

■ Leaders have used the additional money from the primary school sports funding to provide specialist training for staff and to increase pupils' participation in sport, for example in after-school sport clubs and to develop facilities in the Early Years Foundation Stage to support children's physical development. Leaders report improved participation rates in school sports clubs.

■ A local authority representative regularly visits the school. A recent report notes, appropriately, that the proportion of pupils making better than the progress expected is below the national picture.

■ **The governance of the school:**

– Governors have some knowledge and understanding of how the school's results compare with the national picture and how well different groups of pupils are doing, including those who are supported through the pupil premium funding. However, this is an area of their work that is not yet sufficiently strong and, as a result, their challenge has not always been sharp enough. Some training has been identified in order to extend their knowledge and expertise, for example in relation to child protection. Decisions about whether or not teachers should move up the salary scale have been made appropriately and new arrangements strengthen this process. Governors fulfil the statutory requirements, including those for safeguarding pupils. They monitor the budget regularly and evaluate spending decisions.

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	109861
Local authority	West Berkshire
Inspection number	431450

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	245
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sarah Llewlyn
Headteacher	Richard Blofeld
Date of previous school inspection	4–5 June 2009
Telephone number	01635 40318
Fax number	01635 580948
Email address	office@sandilands.w-berks.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit <http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/>, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/>

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/>

© Crown copyright 2014

