

# Queen's Crescent School

Windsor Close, Chippenham, Wiltshire, SN14 0QT

**Inspection dates** 4–5 March 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Children make an excellent start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are very well taught and cared for and make good academic and personal progress.
- Pupils' attainment has improved quickly in the last year, particularly in mathematics. The school's regular checks on how well pupils are doing help it to adapt what it provides to meet each pupil's needs. This promotes rising progress across the school. The achievement of all groups of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics is good.
- Teaching is good and an increasing proportion is outstanding. Careful planning ensures lessons are pitched at the right level and engage pupils' interest. Well-targeted and skilfully delivered additional help is provided to those who need it. Marking is excellent, providing pupils with a very clear picture of the quality of their work and where it needs improvement.
- The fascinating range of activities and subjects offered provides varied learning opportunities and excites pupils' enthusiasm to come to school. Absence rates are very low.
- The way pupils behave is exemplary. They display a strong appetite for learning that has a positive impact on progress. Courtesy and collaboration are the norm and bullying is virtually unknown. Pupils have a firm grasp of how to maintain their own safety and that of others.
- The headteacher works closely with all staff to set very high expectations for both adults and pupils. Rigorous checks help ensure that all staff are empowered to perform at a high level. Leaders and managers have established a safe and happy environment where pupils thrive.
- The governing body has very good systems to check up on the school's work. It uses this information astutely to both support and challenge the school.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Achievement in mathematics has only just caught up with reading and writing and these improvements are not yet fully established.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 16 lessons taught by 16 teachers and undertook four joint observations with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with pupils, teachers, the headteacher, representatives of the governing body and a local authority officer.
- The inspectors examined numerous school documents, including policies, assessment information, planning documents and records of all kinds.
- The views of 41 parents and carers were analysed through the Parent View questionnaire.

## Inspection team

John Carnaghan, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
David Beddard	Additional Inspector
Mary Usher-Clark	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional funding for looked after children, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those from service families, is below the national average.
- Less than one tenth of pupils are from minority ethnic groups, which is below the national average. Almost all pupils speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is a little above average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on recent successes in promoting higher attainment in mathematics so that achievement in mathematics consistently matches that in reading and writing.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the Reception class with attainment that fluctuates annually and is similar to or below that typical for their age. Good teaching from skilled practitioners promotes good progress over the Early Years Foundation Stage. Planning puts an appropriate focus on developing reading and writing and staff use every opportunity to develop children's literacy skills. For example, a very messy recipe for 'cake' was followed to the letter outdoors and children were encouraged to sniff each ingredient in turn and suggest a word to describe milk, baked beans and other elements in the mixture. This developed their confidence and vocabulary in an informal setting.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is particularly successful in developing children's personal skills so they learn to take turns, to be considerate of others and to collaborate when working and playing. This lays firm foundations for children's continuing education and their excellent behaviour throughout the school.
- Good progress continues across Key Stages 1 and 2 because teaching is consistently good or better. The strengths of formal and informal assessment (through questioning) keep staff up to date with pupils' various needs and enable them to adjust what they provide to promote learning. This helps them to give the correct level of challenge to higher-attaining pupils so that the progress of this group is equal to that of others in the school.
- The school is quick to react to any slippage of standards. When mathematics attainment stood still a variety of new initiatives were introduced that gave teachers greater confidence, targeted expert assistance to those in danger of falling behind and introduced new teaching methods of certain topics. This has had the desired effect and there has been a sharp upturn in mathematics attainment this year. Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is above average; this represents good achievement.
- Reading standards are above average. The school is rich in books of all kinds and there are efficient systems to promote pupils' reading both at school and at home. Children make a good start as letters and sounds are very well taught in the Reception class. They develop a fluency in their reading and are comfortable tackling a wide variety of book types, some as young as Year 1 using a dictionary to help them.
- The school makes determined efforts to include disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs in all aspects of its activities. Skilled teaching assistants are carefully deployed to help those facing learning and other difficulties. Numerous booster activities are usually successful in overcoming learning barriers so that the progress of this group is similar to that of others in the school. The achievement of all groups at the school is good.
- The school has allocated its additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils wisely. For all such pupils, that is those known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and those from service families, there has been an increased intensity and frequency in the extra help provided. Over the last two years this has steadily closed the attainment and progress gap in reading, writing and mathematics between this group and their peers. In 2013, pupils in receipt of this additional funding were approximately half a term behind their peers in mathematics and reading and, remarkably, a term ahead of them in writing.

### The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching has improved and an increasing proportion is outstanding. This has led to a sharp upturn in achievement. The school's focus on mathematics in recent months has led to a rapid rise in attainment and progress in this subject, although this is not yet fully established.
- Typically, teaching displays very high expectations that are clearly communicated at the start of each lesson. Teachers use their excellent subject knowledge to plan stimulating activities that

engage and enthuse pupils.

- Questioning of pupils is often thoughtful and subtle, promoting pupils' thinking and also giving staff a precise picture of what pupils know and where they may be unsure. Linked with other regular checks, teachers are kept fully aware of any variations in pupils' progress. This information is used to plan activities for different groups of pupils to ensure that they are always working at full stretch.
- Pupils are well managed. They listen well and respond to teachers' instructions with alacrity. This enables lessons to run at the right pace and very little time is lost. Teachers work consistently and successfully to foster good relationships.
- Pupils say they enjoy their learning because teachers make lessons such fun. For example, Years 3 and 4 pupils thoroughly enjoyed working together on prime numbers and fractions because their work was pitched at the right level to challenge them. Very positive relationships enabled pupils with learning difficulties to feel secure and attempt challenging work. All pupils worked at a terrific pace and made excellent progress. Their books indicated that this good learning had been sustained throughout the year.
- Pupils' work is thoroughly marked. Comments are extremely supportive and provide very clear indications of how pupils can improve and what their next steps are. Often, time is given for pupils to respond to teachers' comments. One effect of this excellent marking is that the presentation of pupils' books is invariably neat and orderly.
- Additional adults are deployed to great effect to support pupils' learning. Pupils look upon these staff as friends who help them improve. The assistance given to those who most need it, including physically disabled pupils, is of very high quality, enabling these pupils to be fully included in all aspects of school life.
- These support staff are very well trained and work with skill and confidence. They work very closely with class teachers, are well briefed for each lesson and understand their role.

## **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils are invariably mature and courteous in both formal and informal situations. For example, they act quickly to hold doors open for adults and play together harmoniously in the playground. Notably, disabled pupils are able to work and play with their friends in a natural, unaffected way because their peers help them join in all of their activities.
- Pupils demonstrate a great appetite for learning. They settle quickly in lessons and listen to teachers and other adults intently. Classrooms are calm and purposeful places as pupils move quickly from task to task. Their positive attitudes are a significant benefit to their learning.
- Relationships are warm and supportive. Pupils help one another from the youngest age almost as a matter of course. Pupils are encouraged to be helpful and smile at one another. They love school; a number of those in Year 6 said they could not think of anything that needs improvement.
- The 'buddy system' was initiated by pupils to keep an eye on children of all ages to promote their well-being. It ensures pupils feel safe and well looked after throughout the school day. Some 'buddies' look out for any potential disputes among pupils and intervene to mediate and prevent any instances of bullying occurring. Pupils, staff and parents and carers report that bullying of all kinds is exceptionally rare.
- Staff are excellent role models of positive behaviour. Pupils are managed very kindly and are gently but insistently steered towards making the best choices in their behaviour and relationships. The reward system is carefully designed so that all pupils are eligible if their behaviour is exceptional.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Specially designed sessions have raised pupils' awareness of the dangers of the internet and cyber bullying. Visitors brief pupils how to stay safe in their daily lives, such as on the busy local roads.
- Systems to ensure pupils' safety are exemplary. Risk assessments are appropriately rigorous.

Numerous staff are fully trained in important areas like child protection and first aid.

## **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher sets the tone for the school and her ambition for the pupils and pursuit of excellence are fully embraced by all staff and governors. Leadership and management responsibilities are shared among many staff, including middle leaders. Teachers at all levels report that they feel both empowered and respected by senior leaders. This close harmony ensures all work constructively to meet the goals that are so clearly expressed in the school development plan.
- This good and improving school receives effective support from the local authority and has the capacity for continuing improvement. However, securely good achievement in mathematics is not yet fully established.
- Leaders and managers at all levels make close checks on pupils' progress and on how well they are taught. Any concerns over pupils are quickly acted upon so that, for example, additional support from skilled teachers and teaching assistants is rapidly put in place. This has the effect of ensuring equality of opportunity for all, that there is no discrimination and that the progress of all groups of pupils is closely matched.
- Should checks reveal any concerns over teaching, leaders offer firm advice and assistance. Teachers are held to account for the progress of their pupils during regular meetings and actions are taken should issues arise. For example, additional training is provided when it is needed. This rigorous yet collaborative approach has ensured that there are consistent qualities in teaching, such as the high expectations that are commonplace.
- An outstandingly rich mixture of subjects and activities greatly enhances pupils' learning experiences. Themes that are followed link subjects together to make learning more relevant and enjoyable. The arts are a great strength, as shown by a second granting of the Artsmark gold award. Enrichment activities, such as French club and drama productions, offer a broad variety of experiences. A good mix of educational visits and visitors provides additional stimulation and expertise.
- Additional sport funding has been creatively spent, particularly by employing a specialist sports coach. As a result far more pupils take part in sport and exercise and staff confidence in delivering physical education has risen markedly. This has improved pupils' physical well-being and their awareness of healthy lifestyles. The school's offer is highly inclusive, for example the sport of Boccia is enjoyed by physically disabled pupils alongside their able-bodied friends.
- International links, such as that with a partner school in the Gambia, widen pupils' horizons and promote cultural understanding. The use of 'learning gems' provides incentives for pupils' moral and social development and enables those of all abilities to gain rewards. For example a number of pupils have been honoured for perseverance in their studies. Assemblies promote the caring atmosphere of the school and encourage pupils to reflect on how to treat one another. They also offer moments for quiet reflection and prayer, promoting spiritual understanding.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body regularly checks up on the school in a variety of ways so that it maintains a clear picture of its qualities. These checks enable members to understand the strengths of teaching and how the quality of teachers' work is linked to their pay progression. The governing body has a good grasp of attainment and progress data, and the effective training they have undertaken enables members to understand how pupils' performance compares with national averages. The wealth of information held by governors enables them to ask relevant questions and properly challenge school leaders and managers and ensure that extra funds such as pupil premium and sports funding are well spent. Very close attention is paid to the safety of all who work and study at the school and contributes well to the school fully meeting all 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	126294
<b>Local authority</b>	Wiltshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	441067

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	345
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Rachel Dimech
<b>Headteacher</b>	Julia Hawkins
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9–10 February 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01249 460190
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