

Wexham Court Primary School

Church Lane, Wexham, Slough, SL3 6LU

Inspection dates

18–19 March 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		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Pupils' achievement is not consistently good across the school. Although this is improving, pupils do not do as well as they should in all classes, especially in mathematics and spelling.
- Teachers do not always adjust pupils' work so that it is hard enough for the most able or easy enough for those with special educational needs.
- Not all teachers make clear in their marking what pupils need to do to improve the standard of their work, or give pupils the opportunity to follow up any advice given.
- Learning slows when teachers give pupils either too much time or not enough time to complete a task.

The school has the following strengths:

- Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and become confident and successful learners. Teaching is good and attainment rises to above average by the end of the reception year.
- Pupils in Year 1 do particularly well in learning about phonics (the sounds letters make) and this helps them to improve their reading.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and they feel safe at school. They are polite and courteous and want to learn.
- The school is improving despite the high mobility of staff, governors and pupils at the school.
- Leaders have high expectations for the school and know what to do to make it good.
- The leadership and management of teaching, including by governors, are effective in building up the skills of teachers and this is having a positive impact on teaching and pupils' achievement.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed teaching in 22 lessons, some with the headteacher and acting deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, teachers, pupils, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection took into account 15 responses to the online Parent View survey and the school's own parental survey. Informal discussions were held with a random sample of parents and carers.
- The inspectors considered the views expressed in survey responses from 60 members of staff.
- A range of information supplied by the school was scrutinised, including the school's own information about how well pupils are doing, planning documents, checks on the quality of teaching, the school development plan, records relating to behaviour and attendance and safeguarding procedures.

Inspection team

Alison Cartlidge, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Veronica Stoodley

Additional Inspector

Keith Homewood

Additional Inspector

Sue Cox

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Wexham Court is much larger than the average-sized primary school and numbers are rising.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium, which is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children who are looked after by the local authority and those from service families, is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs at school action is broadly average and the proportion at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- Pupils come to the school from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. The school has a high proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language, although only a small proportion are at the early stages of learning to speak English.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- A high number of governors and teachers, including senior leaders, have joined the school in the last two years. The headteacher was newly appointed to the position of headteacher just under two years ago.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good or better by:
 - making sure that pupils in all classes are given the right amount of time to complete good quality work
 - ensuring that comments made in teachers' marking are precise enough to help pupils' learning move forward and so that the standard of work improves
 - giving pupils enough opportunity to follow up the suggestions made in marking.
- Increase achievement, especially in mathematics and spelling, by:
 - always providing hard enough work for the most able and providing appropriate support and work for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs
 - making sure that teachers encourage pupils to move on to challenging work more quickly when undertaking open-ended mathematical investigations and do more than the minimum
 - encouraging pupils in all classes to use their knowledge of spelling patterns and to check their spelling for avoidable mistakes.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement, including that of those who are learning to speak English as an additional language, while improving, is not consistently good enough in all classes and subjects. Attainment is rising for boys and girls and is broadly average by the end of Year 6, although it is stronger in reading and writing than in mathematics, reflecting the recent priorities for improvement set by senior leaders.
- In mathematics, progress is not always fast enough because work is sometimes too hard for those who have special educational needs or too easy for the most able. Pupils sometimes undertake mathematical investigations that do not challenge them sufficiently. Teachers do not encourage them to move on to more difficult work soon enough and to do more than the minimum amount of work.
- While pupils are developing their writing skills well in all years, spelling is often weak because pupils do not make enough use of their knowledge of regular spelling patterns or check their work rigorously for avoidable mistakes.
- Most children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage with levels of attainment that are lower than those that are typical for their age. They make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes, especially in developing their communication, language, literacy and confidence, and their attainment rises to above average by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Year 1 pupils did well in the national phonics (the sounds letters make) screening check in 2013, and results were much higher than in previous years. This followed a successful emphasis on developing the teaching of phonics, with a mentor ably supporting members of staff in improving their teaching in this subject.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is improving rapidly, especially when they are working on specific support programmes. It is not yet good because not all pupils with learning needs do as well as they could in some classes; there are occasions when the work they are given is too difficult and progress is limited.
- The most able pupils are not consistently expected to complete hard enough work so that they can learn quickly in all lessons. For example, at times they complete similar work to other pupils when they are ready to try something more challenging.
- The attainment gap for pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium funding remains, although it is closing more quickly than in the past. In national assessments at the end of Year 6 in 2013, eligible pupils were two terms behind other pupils in reading and mathematics, but were close to other pupils in writing. The school has developed the way that pupils' individual progress is checked so that work can be targeted more closely to accelerate progress.
- Pupils reach the standards of which they are capable in physical education. For example, during the inspection, pupils were developing new ball handling skills, although occasionally the pace of learning slows when pupils are waiting too long to take turns.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is improving rapidly. However, while there are examples of good teaching across the school, it is not yet consistently good or better.
- Some teachers misjudge the time allowed for activities, either giving pupils too long to work on a given task so that they work too slowly and progress slows, or not enough time so that work is rushed and standards slip. For example, in one mathematics lesson, the teacher was keen to keep the pupils on task but gave only a few minutes for each activity and so many pupils did not complete tasks to the best of their ability in the allotted time.
- Pupils' work is frequently marked following the school's implementation of a clear marking policy. However, the quality of teachers' comments to help pupils to do better next time varies and, in addition, pupils are not always expected, or given the time, to respond to advice swiftly.

Opportunities are also missed to pick up misspelt words which can detract from otherwise good quality writing.

- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is a strength. A wide range of exciting activities supports children's learning well and members of staff adjust tasks expertly to suit the children's needs and interests. For example, in the Nursery, children worked creatively and with sustained interest when making birthday cakes from dough to celebrate one child's birthday that day.
- Teachers across the school form good relationships with the pupils and manage their behaviour positively. Teachers use praise well to support learning and to build the pupils' confidence.
- In some of the lessons, work is not suitable for all pupils. At times work is too hard for those with special educational needs and at other times it is too easy for the most able so learning is not consistent.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good, including over time, because they want to do their best and are keen to follow the teachers' instructions. Where learning is too slow, it is because pupils are given inappropriate work or the wrong length of time to complete it and not because pupils are disruptive or unwilling to do well.
- Parents, carers and members of staff are positive about behaviour at the school. The pupils follow the behaviour policy, which uses a traffic light system to build self-discipline, and agree that 'it is good to be green'. Instances of poor behaviour or bullying are rare and are tackled by staff quickly and effectively. Very occasionally, pupils lose interest and drift off task when teachers do not make sure that the work is just right for them.
- Pupils are very friendly and courteous. They are proud of their school and their work and are pleased to show others what they are doing. The school promotes equality of opportunity and discourages discrimination of any kind. Pupils follow the good example set by members of staff and are enthusiastic about taking responsibility. They show respect for others from different cultural backgrounds and are keen to care for the environment.
- The school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe and secure are good. Effective steps are taken to discuss unsafe situations with the pupils and, as a result, pupils know how to stay safe, including when using the internet. Most parents and carers say that their children feel safe at school and the pupils feel the same.
- Arrangements to promote good attendance are more stringent than in the past and, consequently, attendance is rising and is broadly average. Pupils are keen to come to school and make positive comments such as, 'It's a nice school; there are lots of nice people here.'

The leadership and management are good

- Senior leaders, led by the dynamic headteacher, have high aspirations for the school and set other members of staff a good example through their obvious enthusiasm, high ambition and well-focused drive. Improvement plans are firmly based on a thorough and accurate evaluation of how well the school is doing. The right priorities are identified and pursued rigorously and, consequently, teaching and learning are improving.
- The school's capacity to improve is evident in the rising attainment and the timely way leaders are moving the school forward, including in subjects and classes where teaching is not as strong as in others.
- Achievement in reading and writing is higher than in mathematics, reflecting the order in which leaders have tackled weaknesses in subjects.
- Leaders have developed the information on how well pupils are doing and any remaining gaps in attainment are being tackled relentlessly. The roles of middle leaders are developing well. They work in leadership teams to share information, promote best practice and plan next steps.
- The work of teachers is monitored closely and there are tangible signs that teaching is

improving. Clear expectations and targets are set for all members of staff and the right training is provided to strengthen the impact of teaching on the pupils' learning.

- Parents, carers and members of staff are positive about the school and appreciate the opportunities they have to help pupils with their learning through workshops and home learning. Parents and carers typically make comments such as, 'You're confident to send your child in to school' and 'There are lots of good things and activities.'
- Funding is being used well to support the pupils eligible for the pupil premium so that the gap in attainment between these and other pupils is closing. A well-thought-out programme of specific support is starting to have a positive impact, although progress remains uneven between subjects and classes.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported well, enabling pupils to care for others and to learn about different lifestyles, cultures and faiths, and respect and responsibility. Pupils are aware of what they need to do to act as good future citizens.
- The new funding to develop sport is being used to train staff and to provide guidance on how skills can be developed. It is too soon for the school to be able to check up on the impact of these resources, but pupils are appreciating the greater opportunities they receive to take part in competitive sport with other schools.
- Safeguarding policies, procedures and practice meet requirements. Members of staff are trained to care for the pupils and are thoroughly checked for suitability.
- The local authority provides good support for this improving school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are knowledgeable and keen to expand their roles further by being more involved in planning for the future. They have a comprehensive understanding of the school's strengths and about the next steps to make the school good. They are aware of how well the school's performance compares with that of others and have a well-developed knowledge of the pupils' progress and the quality of teaching. They know about the systems in place to check teaching, how weaker teaching is being supported and how good teaching is to be rewarded.

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	109943
Local authority	Slough
Inspection number	432187

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	649
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jon Reekie
Headteacher	Navroop Mehat
Date of previous school inspection	24–25 June 2010
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