

The British School

Wortley Road, Wotton-under-Edge, Gloucestershire GL12 7JU

Inspection dates

17–18 September 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils achieve well and attain above average standards by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils make good progress because teaching is typically good and continues to improve.
- Staff work well as a team to provide a welcoming atmosphere that promotes pupils' confidence in learning.
- Pupils' attendance is above average. It reflects the warm relationships pupils share with adults and with each other and the school's effective partnership with parents.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children learn well in the lively environment as a result of good teaching.
- Pupils enjoy school because they like the varied and interesting activities, which help them to learn both indoors and outside.
- Pupils behave well. They feel safe and know that they are looked after well by caring adults.
- Leaders have acted decisively to improve teaching and restore pupils' above average attainment.
- Leaders, including governors, have high aspirations for the school. They work well together and show a secure capacity to bring further improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- At times, pupils' basic reading, writing and numeracy skills are not developed quickly enough, especially through Years 1 to 3.
- Checks on pupils' developing skills are not always used well enough by teachers to adjust teaching effectively and thus quicken pupils' progress.
- Leaders do not always check effectively enough to ensure that measures they have put in place to raise achievement are working successfully.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 17 lessons. The lead inspector was accompanied by the headteacher for some of these sessions.
- The inspectors observed morning and lunch breaks and the lead inspector also attended an assembly.
- Meetings were held with representative groups of pupils, and many other pupils were spoken to during lessons and breaktimes.
- The inspectors met with governors, and the lead inspector met with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of 46 parents' responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning and undertaking the inspection. They also spoke informally with a number of parents as they brought and collected their children from school. The inspectors also considered the school's own survey of pupils', staff, governors' and parents' views.
- Meetings were held with school staff, including senior leaders, and 31 staff questionnaires were received and considered.
- The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a number of documents. These included the school's own information and checks on pupils' progress and the planning and quality of teaching and learning.
- The inspectors also examined records relating to behaviour and attendance, and safeguarding policy, procedures and practice. They also considered the school's sports premium action plan.

Inspection team

Alex Baxter, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jonathan Moore

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than an average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or those with special educational needs is broadly average.
- Only a very small number of pupils are supported by the pupil premium. This is additional government funding provided to give extra support to those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and to children who are looked after. The number of eligible Year 6 pupils in 2014 was so small that it is not possible to compare performance with other groups.
- In recent years there has been an increasing proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school at other than the usual times.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that pupils typically make rapid and sustained progress in all parts of the school by:
 - making sure that teachers use their checks on pupils' progress to raise achievement further in reading, writing and mathematics
 - improving the efficiency of checks by leaders to ensure that the improvements to provision effectively improve pupils' progress.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has a passionate ambition for improvement. She is well supported by effective senior and middle leaders and committed governors.
- Leaders and managers fulfil their duties well, including safeguarding pupils. Senior staff leaders work closely together and have secured a high level of staff morale. For instance, staff, supported by governors, tackled a dip in pupils' performance in 2013 in a determined and decisive manner. Pupils have made good progress this year and their attainment is again above average. The school has a good capacity to maintain this improvement.
- The headteacher ensures that the performance management of teachers is carefully considered. For example, decisions about staff pay and responsibilities are linked closely to evidence of improvements in teaching and pupils' progress. This is accompanied by well-targeted opportunities for staff to benefit from further training.
- Senior and middle leadership teams have been improved well since the previous inspection. Leaders check their performance accurately. Leaders are aware, for instance, of occasional inconsistencies in the challenge given to younger pupils in Years 1 to 3. However, checks are not always followed up rigorously enough to ensure that initiatives to improve pupils' learning impact as quickly as possible.
- Leaders and managers give high regard to providing equal opportunity and eliminating discrimination. This is evident in the way staff ensure that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are fully included in all that the school has to offer.
- Leaders and managers also ensure that additional government funding is used effectively to help disadvantaged pupils achieve as well as other pupils. This also includes supporting parents in boosting pupils' confidence and readiness to learn.
- The school provides a well-balanced range of learning activities that strongly promote pupils' academic skills, their good development of reading, writing and number skills and their personal development. This successfully promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. It is enriched by effective use of the school's extensive outdoor facilities, which provide good opportunities for pupils to explore nature at close range.
- Staff promote good links with parents and the community, to enrich the range of learning facilities and activities provided and pupils' confident enjoyment of school. Most parents are very satisfied with the school's work, particularly in keeping children safe and happy.
- The primary school sport funding has been used successfully to build on the school's already strong emphasis on sport. Visiting specialist coaches have been employed to improve teachers' and pupils' skills, and the improvement in the skills of pupils are now evident in sports such as cricket, archery, handball and gymnastics.
- The school's checks show that the number of pupils, especially younger pupils, engaging in sports to improve their fitness and develop healthy lifestyles is increasing. For example, the number of pupils attending the cricket club has increased by 50% over the past year.
- The local authority provides appropriate training opportunities for staff and governors and sustains light-touch support to this good school.
- The school meets current safeguarding requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors play a supportive role in promoting the community atmosphere of the school. They are diligent in meeting their statutory obligations, including ensuring the safeguarding of pupils. Since the previous inspection governors have strengthened the way they hold school leaders to account. Governors visit the school regularly to gain a good understanding of the quality of teaching. They know about the school's arrangements for staff pay and progression, and check that these are used effectively to reward good performance and tackle weaknesses in teaching. Governors question senior staff closely and set challenging targets for the headteacher. They readily accept that checking to ensure that pupils are making the best progress that they can is still developing. Governors take part in appropriate training. They understand clearly how to examine data of pupils' attainment and know how well pupils are achieving compared to other schools. Governors manage the school's budget diligently and check that additional government funding is used efficiently to improve pupils' progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils**are good**

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are keen to learn and they work well together. Older pupils in particular apply themselves consistently well to their work and they have positive attitudes to their learning. Occasionally younger pupils lose interest and their progress slows when they are presented with activities that do not enthuse them enough. As a result although improving, pupils' behaviour and commitment to learning are not yet outstanding.
- Teachers and teaching assistants manage pupils' behaviour well. The pupils' good behaviour over time is also seen in school records, which show very few exclusions and further demonstrate the way all staff implement the school's carefully considered procedures to support pupils' good behaviour.
- The pupils' good behaviour extends out of class into outdoor break time activities, where, for example, pupils make joyful use of the school's extensive facilities to engage well in sport.
- Pupils acting as school captains appreciate the contributions of pupils on the school council and say learning the 'school values help us to understand the views of other people'. For example, values such as showing respect to other people contribute well to pupils' moral and social development.
- Pupils look forward to coming to school and share warm, supportive relationships with staff and each other. Adults are often pro-active in supporting pupils when their confidence needs boosting. The pupils' enjoyment of school is confirmed by their above average attendance.
- The leadership team, in partnership with parents, plays a key role in checking attendance and promoting the importance of coming to school regularly to help pupils learn.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- All staff are diligent in implementing the full range of safeguarding procedures, including close liaison with outside agencies. School records show that since the previous inspection there have been a few, but reducing, incidents of pupils making racist comments. The school tackles racism and promotes respectful relationships effectively.
- Pupils know about the different types of bullying and say that bullying is rare and that if does occur then staff are quick to 'sort it out'. Pupils also talk knowledgeably about how to keep themselves safe, including e-safety when using computers.
- The large majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire expressed the view that pupils are kept safe and receive good care at school. Parents interviewed by the inspectors said, 'Children love school because learning is fun.' The school's work in keeping pupils safe and secure has been strengthened. It is not yet outstanding because a minority of parents still express less positive views about how staff dealt with a few incidents of misbehaviour.

The quality of teaching**is good**

- Teaching is good and reflects the way school leaders have checked the quality of teaching and have provided training and support to sustain improvement over time.
- Teachers know the pupils well and establish supportive relationships and promote pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes.
- The teaching of literacy and mathematics is good. Pupils' learning is often accelerated, especially in Years 4, 5 and 6, when teachers, having secured the pupils' self-confidence and interest, raise the level of challenge.
- The most able pupils particularly enjoy and respond eagerly to such challenges. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Years 5 and 6, the teacher skilfully adapted his questioning in response to pupils' views. This moved pupils' thinking forward by drawing out new ideas and enhanced their understanding of decimals. During music in Years 4 and 5, the teacher made finding the right notation for each musical chord a problem to be solved and this stimulated the pupils' imagination.
- The teachers use questioning effectively to check how well pupils are doing and make adjustments when necessary to enthuse pupils and ensure they fully understand the activity.
- Teachers also check pupils' work effectively and give them regular detailed information by marking their books or talking to them about what to improve.
- The teachers encourage pupils to make positive contributions to their learning. Pupils improve their ability to check their own work as they move through the school. For example, by identifying for themselves what they have to do to improve, pupils contribute to their good and sometimes better progress through

Years 4, 5 and 6.

- At times though, particularly in Years 1 to 3, teachers do not use their checks of pupils' skills to make sure that learning activities extend their level of understanding or interest. As a result, and including sometimes when pupils are receiving additional support, their attention slips and rate of progress slows. Consequently, teaching is not outstanding.
- Teachers demonstrate good and improving subject knowledge and plan their teaching effectively. For example, this has strengthened the teaching and learning of phonics (the sounds that letters make), especially in Reception and Years 1 and 2. This is also improving pupils' writing skills across the school by enabling them to make better use of their generally good vocabulary by improving their spelling.
- Staff provide good guidance to disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and others whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Adults include pupils sensitively and effectively in learning both within and out of class. For example, teachers plan activities such as gardening and 'Forest School' explorations effectively to stimulate pupils' interest and engage them well in learning.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils achieve well and on leaving the school overall attainment is above average in reading, writing and mathematics. This is a positive improvement following a dip in attainment in 2013 that reflects assertive action by leaders in restoring the effective support that pupils receive from staff.
- The most able pupils make good progress. Their progress often quickens through Years 4, 5 and 6 where pupils respond more confidently to the teachers' high expectations. This is particularly seen in the increased and above average proportion of Year 6 pupils reaching the highest levels in national tests earlier this year.
- Disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and others who enter school at different times in the school year make good progress. This is because staff are diligent in getting to know the pupils and in providing learning activities and support that extend their skills and understanding.
- Additional government funding is used well to support individual pupils. For example, extra help from adults, both for pupils and sometimes their parents, lifts pupils' confidence in learning so that most achieve as well as their peers.
- Although most pupils achieve well overall, the basic reading, writing and numeracy skills of some pupils in Years 1 to 3 are not always developed quickly enough. This is because teachers do not always use checks of pupils' skills to make sure that work is set at the level needed to fully challenge them and promote best progress.
- Children enter the Reception class with skills and knowledge that are typically below those expected for their age. This is especially the case for their communication, language and literacy and mathematical skills. They make good progress overall through the year. They generally reach expected levels and are well prepared to move into Year 1.
- From the moment they start, pupils are encouraged to appreciate and enjoy books. Strong action by leaders in providing additional training for staff over the past year has improved the quality of teaching and pupils' learning of phonics (the sounds letters make). Pupils become increasingly confident readers as they move through school and attain above average reading skills by the time they leave.
- Pupils demonstrate a good breadth of vocabulary during class discussions and these help them to develop above average skills in writing. For example, during an English lesson in Years 4 and 5, pupils shared ideas about the horrors of the First World War, which helped them to write both descriptively and imaginatively.
- Similarly, pupils show good mathematical skills by the time they leave, for example multiplying decimal numbers confidently and accurately.

The early years provision

is good

- Children enter school with differing, but mostly below expected, starting points. Caring staff value the children's efforts and safeguard them effectively.
- As a result, children enjoy their learning and catch up well during their time in the Reception class in response to well-organised and effective teaching and support.
- Staff promote close relationships with the children's parents. These help to nurture the warm relationships, which underpin children's good progress, especially in developing their self-confidence and willingness to learn and play amicably together. Although improving, provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is not outstanding because not enough children are making better than expected

progress.

- The teacher provides good leadership and cultivates close links with the adjacent kindergarten that further supports the children's happy commencement of full-time education.
- Staff check and record the children's learning activities effectively in 'Learning Journals'. They visit children in their homes prior to them starting school and work industriously to get to know the children. This enables them to plan relevant practical activities so that children learn well across all areas of learning.
- Children make good progress in physical and emotional health and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Children often make rapid progress in developing their speaking, language and mathematical skills. For example, children joyfully develop their knowledge of letters and numbers by tracing their outline in sand and glue. They also order magnetic letters and numbers and begin to write simple words and count well into two-digit numbers.
- As a result, children are well prepared and confidently ready for future learning as they move into Year 1.

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	115739
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	444078

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	152
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Christopher Mapp
Headteacher	Jane Clarkson
Date of previous school inspection	28–29 June 2011
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