

Maple Infants' School

Maple Road, Surbiton, Surrey, KT6 4AL

Inspection dates 7–8 October 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. Their attainment is consistently above average by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children get off to a good start in the early years setting and then continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2.
- Good teaching helps pupils to acquire new skills quickly and to develop a love of learning. Teachers plan exciting work that engages and motivates pupils well.
- Pupils are well behaved and feel safe. They are friendly, sociable and articulate. They take pride in their work, and are tolerant and respectful of the needs of others.
- Good leadership and management have helped the school to continue to improve since its previous inspection. High levels of achievement have been sustained and the quality of teaching improved further.
- Leaders are not complacent. They are preparing well for the next stage of the school's development, including its imminent expansion.
- The governing body supports the school well. Governors provide good levels of challenge to the other school leaders.
- Parents are very happy with the work of the school, especially the way that adults care for pupils.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The school's systems for checking pupils' achievement do not give leaders a clear enough picture of progress over time.
- Middle leaders and teachers have too small a role in checking whether all pupils are achieving well enough.
- Teachers sometimes give the most-able pupils work that is too easy for them, especially in mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 15 lessons, five of which were observed jointly with the headteacher or the deputy headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made some short visits to lessons.
- Discussions were held with pupils, staff and members of the governing body.
- The inspectors took account of the views of 56 parents who responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View). Inspectors also analysed the school's own surveys of parental views and talked to some parents at the start of the school day.
- The inspectors observed the school's work, heard some pupils read, and looked at a number of documents, including: the school's own information about pupils' learning and progress; planning and monitoring documents; the school development plan; records relating to behaviour and attendance; safeguarding information; and health and safety documentation.
- The inspectors analysed 21 questionnaires from staff.

Inspection team

Mike Capper, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Heidi Boreham	Additional Inspector
Andrew Lyons	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized infant school.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds but around one in four speaks English as an additional language. This is a slightly higher proportion than found in most schools nationally.
- Children in early years provision attend the Nursery for either morning or afternoon sessions and then start attending school full time in the Reception Year.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is below average. 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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve procedures for checking pupils' progress so dips in achievement in classes, subjects or across the school can be identified more quickly by:
 - ensuring they give a clear picture of attainment and progress for individuals and groups from term to term
 - ensuring that middle leaders and class teachers take responsibility alongside senior leaders for analysing data on pupils' attainment and progress.
- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching by ensuring that teachers always expect enough of the most-able pupils, especially in mathematics.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders, including governors, have ensured that there have been good improvements since the previous inspection. Pupils' attainment has been sustained at above average levels. Leaders successfully foster pupils' positive attitudes towards learning and their good behaviour, and have ensured continued improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. The local authority has provided the right level of support for this good school.
- Leaders diligently promote equality of opportunity and tackle discrimination so that pupils can flourish both socially and academically. They are good role models and foster good relations across the school, ensuring that all members of the school community feel valued. They build strong partnerships with parents, and they support the school well and are almost unanimously pleased with its work.
- The school has a good track record for improving teaching. Senior leaders work closely with teachers to identify what they need to do to make teaching even more successful. The headteacher's judgements on teaching are accurate. Consequently, teachers are given training and support based on a good understanding of what will help them and the pupils most.
- Leaders ensure that disadvantaged pupils who receive additional funding receive good support. This aspect of the school's work has been greatly strengthened over the last year with leaders providing more support outside lessons for these pupils. For example, eligible pupils benefited last year from extensive and well-focused support to improve their reading skills. Consequently, pupils who receive additional funding are now making good progress and catching up with others.
- Leadership and management are not outstanding because, until recently, the school's wealth of data on pupils' work has focused too much on attainment rather than progress. Consequently, it does not give a clear enough picture of achievement over time. This makes it difficult for leaders to respond quickly to any minor dips in progress as soon as they arise.
- Although many middle leaders such as those in charge of subjects are new to their role, they are already playing a good part in ensuring improvement. They are knowledgeable about what is going well and what still needs improving. However, the analysis of data on pupils' progress is not shared widely enough. Consequently, teachers and middle leaders do not take on enough responsibility for checking progress in their class or subject.
- The curriculum (the topics and subjects taught) promotes good learning in numeracy and literacy. It provides a good variety of interesting and meaningful activities both in and out of lessons including a good number of clubs. These make a positive contribution towards pupils' good enjoyment of school and to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils show good concern for the needs of others by, for example, raising funds for a school in Malawi. Leaders, including governors, successfully promote respect and tolerance for various cultures and beliefs. These values help to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.
- The school focuses well on developing pupils' healthy lifestyles and their physical well-being. Additional sports funding is used to good effect to introduce pupils to new sports and it has already improved the skills of teachers. The impact of spending is monitored carefully to ensure that it provides value for money.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements and ensure that pupils are kept safe. For example, leaders have worked very closely with contractors to ensure pupils' safety during ongoing building work on the school site.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is effective in securing school improvement because governors provide good challenge and support. They have used training well to improve their skills and have a good understanding of how well the school is performing in comparison with others. They analyse test data thoroughly to check whether the school is doing well enough and to identify what still needs improving. As a result of this, they have been instrumental over the last year in challenging the school to provide more effective support for disadvantaged pupils. They have ensured that additional funding is now being used to support academic as well as social development, and this has resulted in the gap in attainment between eligible pupils and others closing much more rapidly in 2014 than in the past. Governors know where teaching is especially strong and how the school continues to improve it. Their systems for rewarding good teaching through performance management are thorough and are well understood by teachers.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The school has effective systems for promoting good behaviour which are applied consistently by adults. School logs confirm that poor behaviour is rare. Inspectors found that pupils typically behave well and are enthusiastic learners.
- Pupils greatly enjoy school, with rates of attendance being consistently above average. There is a happy working atmosphere in lessons. The school has successfully encouraged pupils to work without fear of failure. As one pupil commented, 'Sometimes you learn from things that go wrong.'
- Pupils are polite and friendly, and take pride in their work. They take great care to present it neatly. Their positive attitudes ensure that they try hard most of the time although, just occasionally, they become inattentive when work does not engage them fully.
- They support each other well both in lessons. At break times, pupils from differing backgrounds play together happily. Pupils who arrive at the school during the school year say that they quickly make friends.
- Parents agree that behaviour is good. They are very positive about the way that the school supports their children's personal development. As one wrote, 'They develop into compassionate and self-confident individuals.'

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils report that they feel safe at school. They are very confident that bullying or 'falling out' is extremely rare, but that if it does happen, it is tackled very quickly. Pupils say that there is always someone to talk to if they have a worry.
- Pupils know how to avoid many of the dangers they may face in or out of school. For example, they explain clearly about how to cross safely the busy road outside school.
- The school has done some work on teaching pupils about how to use the internet safely but this is not recent. The headteacher already has plans to tackle this issue now that pupils have changed classes so that all have a clear understanding for their age about how to avoid potential dangers.

The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils' achievement is good in literacy, reading and mathematics because they are taught well. Members of staff have excellent relationships with the pupils. They plan interesting activities that make pupils keen to succeed. Teachers manage behaviour consistently well through the constant use of praise. High-quality displays celebrate pupils' achievements and motivate them to do well.
- Teachers regularly check up on how well pupils are learning by, for example, asking them challenging questions or listening to their discussions. They are becoming increasingly skilled at changing work in response to this questioning, when necessary. However, just occasionally, teaching does not take enough account of what pupils already know. This results in work sometimes being too easy for the most-able pupils, especially in mathematics.
- Throughout the school, well-planned support, particularly in reading, has a good effect on pupils' learning, helping to ensure that disadvantaged pupils, or those who are disabled or who have special educational needs, make good progress. Teaching assistants provide especially valuable support, for example, when working with small groups of pupils. They explain new vocabulary to those who are at the early stages of speaking English so that they can play a full part in activities.
- The quality of feedback given to pupils both during lessons and through the marking of work has improved greatly since the previous inspection. Teachers now give pupils clear guidance about what they have done well, and this helps them improve their work.
- Nearly all parents who responded to Parent View are pleased with the teaching of their children. They support teachers well by helping their children with homework, hearing them read or sharing 'story bags' with them.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- When children start school in either the Nursery or Reception Year, most are working at a typical level of development for their age. From these expected starting points, pupils make good progress. Pupils' attainment improves as they get older and is consistently above average by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- By Year 2, pupils confidently use their good literacy and numeracy skills to good effect in different subjects. They develop a love of reading and they write enthusiastically in subjects such as science and history. They have a good knowledge of phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) and confidently 'sound out' new words when reading. In the national phonics screening checks at the end of Year 1, the school has exceeded national averages for the last three years.
- In mathematics, pupils add and subtract accurately. They have a good understanding of mathematical concepts such as shapes.
- The school successfully ensures that all groups achieve well over time. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive good support, enabling them to acquire new skills and knowledge quickly.
- The most able also achieve well most of the time, although just occasionally, teaching does not expect enough of them, slowing their progress. This is most evident in mathematics, where work is not always challenging enough.
- The quality of support given to the small number of disadvantaged pupils who receive additional government funding has improved greatly over the last year. Historically, these pupils did not always do well and the gap between their attainment and that of others was larger than that found nationally. However, leaders responded decisively to this over the last year, increasing the level of support they give to eligible pupils. Consequently, eligible pupils now make good or better progress across the school and the gap is closing much more quickly than in the past. In national assessments at the end of Year 2 in 2014, eligible pupils were working around a term behind their classmates in reading and writing, and at the same level as them in mathematics. They were attaining at the same level as all pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make rapid progress in improving their speaking skills. Their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is as high as others by the end of Year 2.

The early years provision

is good

- Children achieve well in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Their attainment is above average by the end of Reception Year. They are prepared well both socially and academically for their move to Year 1.
- Children learn rapidly because they are taught well. In the Nursery, a strong early focus on social and emotional development ensures that children settle quickly and become acclimatised to class routines.
- Teachers ensure that there is a very happy atmosphere in the Nursery and Reception Year. Adults have good expectations and focus strongly on teaching children about the importance of good behaviour and staying safe. Consequently, children behave well most of the time and become increasingly confident about trying new activities without fear of failure. For example, over two days, Nursery children became more and more adept at balancing on a beam because adults quietly encouraged them to 'have a go'.
- Teachers have good systems for assessing children's prior learning, including making home visits when they start school. They use this information well to provide the right level of challenge for children most of the time. However, just occasionally, the most-able children do not receive enough adult support in developing their ideas so that skills can improve even more quickly.
- Disabled children or those who have special educational needs make good progress. They are given unobtrusive support to help them take part in all activities. Teachers also give good help to children who are in the early stages of learning to speak English as an additional language. They model new vocabulary carefully, helping to improve language skills quickly.
- Provision is well led and managed. Senior leaders have a good picture of where further improvements are needed, including giving the new early years leaders better opportunities to become more involved in analysing data on children's attainment and progress. Leaders ensure that parents are kept well informed when their children start school.

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	102577
Local authority	Kingston-upon-Thames
Inspection number	448711

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	296
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Geoff Hilliard
Headteacher	Liz Robinson
Date of previous school inspection	13–14 January 2010
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