

Castlefield School

The Middle Way, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, HP12 3LE

Inspection dates

15–16 January 2015

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.

- Good leadership and management, including governance, since the last inspection have sustained the good quality of teaching and learning, despite significant leadership and staff changes.
- Pupils make consistently good progress throughout the school. Most pupils reach national averages in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6, many from very low starting points.
- Teaching is consistently good. Teachers' good subject knowledge enables them to plan work that interests pupils and meets the needs of different groups. This, together with the good relationships they enjoy with the pupils, ensures that lessons are enjoyable and pupils learn well.
- The school is a very happy place. Pupils' behaviour is good and they show respect for each other and towards adults.
- Good provision in the Nursery and Reception classes is resulting in children making good progress. Pupils for whom English is not their first language gain confidence communicating in English so that they are ready to begin Year 1 on leaving Reception.
- The school works well with different faith groups within its diverse local community. Pupils have a good understanding of different faiths and cultures, respect others' beliefs and are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- School leaders, including governors, know the school well. They have high expectations of themselves and the staff. Adults are very positive about the direction in which the school is going.
- The school's procedures for ensuring pupils are safe and secure are good.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some middle leaders do not have enough experience or sufficient skills to make a full contribution to improving the quality of teaching.
- Some teaching does not always pick up upon pupils' mistakes and misconceptions within lessons. This slows down progress for some pupils.
- Marking is not always focused enough on supporting the improvement of pupils' work. Sometimes pupils do not respond to the guidance they are given.
- Although improving, attendance for some pupils is not high enough.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors made 23 visits to classrooms to observe pupils' learning. Senior leaders accompanied inspectors on some of these visits. Inspectors also spent time examining pupils' work books. They also observed other aspects of the school's work, including visiting an assembly.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, including the chairperson, as well as with teachers and school leaders.
- Pupils took inspectors on a tour of the school. The inspectors met a group of pupils, listened to pupils read in Year 1, and spoke to individuals in their classrooms about their work. They spent time in the dining hall and on the school playground, where they also spoke to pupils.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the school gate and looked at the school's own parent survey. They also considered the 13 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and a telephone message from a parent sent via the inspection provider. Inspectors reviewed 14 questionnaire responses from staff.
- Inspectors looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information relating to pupils' achievement, the school's self-evaluation and plan of action. They considered records relating to behaviour and attendance and checks on teaching as well as documents relating to safeguarding. The inspectors also considered the school's website.

Inspection team

Martin Marsh, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Andrea Curtis

Additional Inspector

Anthony Stuart Roberts

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average sized primary school. School numbers have increased by nearly a half since the last inspection.
- Nearly a third of pupils are supported by the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who looked after). This is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs is above average.
- The vast majority of pupils belong to groups other than White British. The largest proportion – over two thirds – are from Pakistani families. An above average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school runs a breakfast club, which was visited as part of this inspection. There are also after-school clubs run by the school.
- Pupils attend the Nursery on a part-time basis. Pupils attend Reception full time.
- Since the departure of the previous headteacher in July 2014, the school's senior leadership has been made up of an acting headteacher and two acting deputies. All three had senior leadership roles in the school under the previous headteacher.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching even further to enable more pupils to make rapid progress by:
 - making sure that marking helps pupils improve their work and that they act on the guidance they are given
 - checking on pupils' learning in lessons effectively so that mistakes and misconceptions are identified and rectified.
- Develop the skills of middle leaders so that they have an even greater impact on improving the quality of teaching.
- Improve attendance levels for pupils who do not attend regularly so that attendance is in line with the national figures for primary schools.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Since the last inspection, school leaders have been able to maintain the good quality of teaching and the good achievement of pupils. They have done this despite changes in the school's leadership and significant staff changes.
- The acting headteacher and his two acting deputies have successfully taken up the reins of leadership since the start of the school year. They have quickly identified that as the school roll increases, it is important to develop the capacity of other leaders.
- The year leaders in particular are enthusiastic about their new roles and the extra responsibility they bring. They have embraced the training opportunities that have been provided and are starting to have an impact on improving teaching. However, some still lack the experience and the skills to have as much impact on improving the quality of teaching as they could.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate and leaders are fully aware of what needs to be done to make the school even better. This enables them to identify the correct priorities in their plans for the future.
- Parents and carers are very positive about the school's work. 'My child loves school. It does a great job. I am proud to have my child here.' These comments by one parent were typical of the comments the inspectors heard at the school gate and reflect the very positive responses from the school's own parent survey.
- The school is rigorous in its checks on pupils' progress and so is able to identify underachievement quickly and do something about it. Leaders ensure that teachers pay particular attention to the progress of disadvantaged pupils in their class. As a result, the gap in attainment between them and their classmates is closing quickly. Additional funding for this group is spent well to provide extra support for this group outside of lessons.
- Checks on the quality of teaching are regular and rigorous. Teachers know what they need to do to improve and value the training they receive to help them. School leaders are prepared to make difficult decisions if teachers are unable to meet the high expectations that are placed upon them.
- The school is particularly successful in reaching out to the diverse faith groups within its community. Regular visits from representatives of different religions help pupils to develop a good understanding of different faiths and cultures. They appreciate that the British values of tolerance and respect do not conflict with their own religious beliefs and so are well prepared for life in modern Britain. This work contributes significantly to the high level of respect pupils show towards each other and to adults. The school is successful in providing for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides well for the range of pupils' interests and abilities. Pupils told the inspectors about their work studying the Victorians, how they had to research countries in South America and how much they enjoyed art. There were some excellent displays of pupils' work inspired by the artwork of Robert Rauschenberg. The curriculum is supplemented by a good range of visits and visitors to school.
- The additional government funding for school sport is mostly used to provide a specialist sports coach. This is enabling teachers to learn how to become better teachers of physical education and pupils to improve their skills more quickly. One girl explained that learning how to hold a hockey stick properly had helped her to become a much better player. Pupils understand how taking part in sport can keep them healthy.
- The local authority provides an appropriate level of support for this good school.
- The school's breakfast and after-school clubs are well managed. The breakfast club is a particularly good start to the day for the pupils that attend.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body is effective. Governors have been involved in the school's self-evaluation of its performance and so understand how the school is doing in relation to other schools. Governors are aware that all aspects of the school's work are good, including the quality of teaching and the achievement of different groups of pupils. Governors also know what needs to be done to make the school outstanding.
- The new governor code of conduct gives a good framework for governors' work. It enables them to understand their role and challenge and support the school appropriately. Within this framework, governors are looking to make more frequent visits to school to deepen their understanding of its work.
- Governors ensure finances are managed well and that resources are apportioned appropriately. They understand the impact that the extra focus on the progress of disadvantaged pupils is having on their

achievement. They also ensure that pay is linked to teachers' performance through the appraisal process.

- The governors recognise the importance of training and subscribe to the local authority's governor services package. Governors are considering commissioning an external review of their work so that they can become even more effective.
- Governors ensure the school systems, including staff routines and reporting, keep children safe and meet statutory requirements, particularly in the recruitment of staff. Discrimination of any sort is not tolerated and equal opportunities are provided wherever possible.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are courteous, polite and well mannered and take pride in both their work and their school. They work hard in lessons and have good attitudes to learning. Pupils walk around school sensibly and look after the school's environment by, for example, not dropping litter. Although they are lively in the playground, pupils look out for each other and play safely.
- The pupils happily take on responsibilities. Lunchtime supervisors were very positive about how Year 6 pupils help younger pupils in the dining room and make sure they are safe in the playground. Pupils told inspectors about the annual election of class representatives, which helps pupils to understand about democracy.
- Adults manage most pupils' behaviour very well. They show pupils respect and pupils show their respect in return. There are very few instances of bad behaviour and when it does happen, pupils say it is dealt with fairly and quickly.
- Historically, attendance has been well below average. This is partly due to parents taking pupils out of school during term time for holidays and for religious festivals. The school's procedures to ensure that pupils come to school are stringent and are having an impact. Attendance is improving but is still below average.
- Occasionally pupils lose concentration when they are working on their own without the close supervision of an adult. Behaviour is, therefore, not outstanding.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The school takes all aspects of child protection extremely seriously and procedures that are in place to ensure pupils are not harmed are rigorous. All staff receive regular training in recognising possible signs of abuse. If pupils have concerns, they put a note in a 'worry box' and know that their concerns will be acted on very quickly and appropriately.
- School records and discussions with pupils indicate that incidents of bullying are very rare. Pupils feel safe from any racist and homophobic abuse and told inspectors that they never hear any prejudice-based language in school. This shows the school is successful in fostering good relationships and tackling discrimination. Pupils understand the various forms that bullying can take, including through the internet, social media and mobile phones.
- Parents and carers and pupils feel the school is safe. Procedures for ensuring that visitors are checked and supervised on site are rigorous. Regular checks by leaders ensure that any potential risks to health and safety are managed effectively.
- Pupils, particularly the older ones, have a good understanding how to keep safe when using the internet. The school promotes e-safety well, both in lessons and school assemblies.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently good across the school. Teachers enjoy good relationships with pupils, who listen carefully and respond to questions enthusiastically. This is because teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan lessons that engage pupils' interests.
- Classrooms are inviting places for pupils to learn. Teaching ensures that pupils' work is celebrated in classroom displays. Resources to support the topics pupils are learning are easily accessible. Reading is promoted well through attractive displays of books and inviting reading areas.
- Work is well pitched to the different levels of ability in the class. Pupils work hard when asked to work on their own or with other pupils. Teachers have a good understanding of what pupils know and so can provide additional help and challenge in lessons to individuals and groups. Teachers are aware of the

needs of pupils who have English as an additional language. They provide frequent and effective opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills.

- Teachers regularly set work for pupils with the right level of challenge. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils were tackling challenging percentage problems. Although pupils made mistakes, they supported each other extremely well to resolve their difficulties. This, together with additional support and probing by the teacher, redirected pupils' thinking and enabled them to make rapid progress. Teachers also provide good opportunities for pupils to apply their basic skills in subjects other than mathematics and literacy.
- Pupils' work is marked frequently and pupils say it is helpful to them in their learning. Sometimes, marking is not effective enough in showing pupils how to improve their work and so they repeat mistakes. They also repeat mistakes if guidance given to them has not been acted upon. Sometimes pupils do not read their teachers' comments.
- Additional adults generally have a clear idea of what the pupils need to learn and so can provide valuable extra help to pupils. They are particularly helpful in enabling those pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs to take a full part in lessons and learn well. They also provide good additional support to small groups and individuals out of lessons.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the school in Nursery and Reception with varying levels of skills. Their ability to communicate in English is often very limited and some do not speak any English. Consistently good teaching enables pupils to make good progress through the school. Most pupils reach national standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave.
- Good programmes in the Reception class to teach pupils their letters and the sounds they make (phonics) ensure pupils make a good start in learning to read. This is built on well in the rest of the school so by the time that pupils leave, they are competent readers and enjoy reading. Year 5 pupils study the book *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. Recently they had a visit from a writer of cookbooks who helped them write recipes and invent new sweets and chocolates to be made by Willy Wonka.
- In mathematics, more able pupils are able to calculate remainders from a division calculation as both a fraction and a decimal. They are also confident in solving problems involving percentages. Most pupils are able to calculate simple percentages of amounts. Pupils were able to explain how 40% is the same as 2/5 but that it is better to think of it as 4/10 when finding 40% of £250. They could then find an accurate solution readily.
- In the 2014 Key Stage 2 statutory assessments, the outcomes for pupils who were disadvantaged indicated that they made overall faster progress than their classmates between Years 3 and 6. Disadvantaged pupils' attainment was nearly three months ahead of that of their classmates in reading, less than three months behind in writing and about six months behind in mathematics. Compared to other pupils nationally, their attainment was less than four months behind other pupils in reading, just under six months in writing and eight months in mathematics. School data indicate the gap is continuing to close.
- The most able pupils make similar good rates of progress to other pupils. They have a good level of challenge in lessons. In both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 statutory assessments last year, the proportion reaching higher levels was close to that seen for similar pupils nationally.
- The early identification and good support for pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs enable them to make good and sometimes rapid progress. Pupils for whom English is an additional language, including the large proportion of pupils from Pakistani families, make similarly good progress to other pupils. This shows the school is successful in providing equality of opportunity for learning for all.

The early years provision is good

- The progress in early years is good. Many children enter Nursery and Reception with very limited ability to communicate in English. The school works hard to develop their communication skills so that they are ready for Year 1. Despite the good progress they make, the proportion achieving a good level of development is below average at the end of Reception.
- The children's behaviour is good. Routines are well established and adults have high expectations of how children behave. Children concentrate on activities and generally work together well. When asked to tidy up, all children look to do something to help.
- Teaching is typically good. The large Reception area, spread over four classrooms and a large outdoor

space, is very well used to plan many interesting activities. Adults work well with children. Careful note is taken of children's abilities and interests when planning activities. Adults are aware of what the children they are working with are expected to learn. Sometimes, when talking to children, opportunities are missed to get children to speak in sentences and say new words. At the time of the inspection, a new Nursery building was under construction. The current accommodation is being used well to ensure children have every opportunity to learn well.

- Good leadership of the area has identified the training needs of adults working in both Nursery and Reception. Progress of children is checked regularly and provision is adjusted to meet their needs. Visits to children's homes before they start school provide very helpful information about their backgrounds and interests.
- Parents are very positive about how their children are kept safe and the progress they are making. Parents value the booklet giving them advice about Nursery and Reception before their children start school. It includes information on how pupils should write their letters and numbers.
- The Nursery and Reception meet all statutory welfare 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

Unique reference number	110522
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	448741

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	523
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Edward Collins
Acting Headteacher	Andrew Kann
Date of previous school inspection	10–11 February 2010
Telephone number	01494 436018
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