

Queen Emma's Primary School

Burwell Drive, Witney, OX28 5JW

Inspection dates

15–16 January 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Some pupils make less progress than they should in relation to their starting points.
- Too few pupils make consistently good progress in reading, writing and mathematics because of some poor teaching in the past and significant changes of staff.
- Disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs did not achieve as well as other pupils in 2014.
- Teaching is not yet good enough to eradicate fully the legacy of underachievement in the school.
- Some teachers' marking in mathematics does not always help pupils to improve their work.
- The work set by some teachers in mathematics lacks challenge, particularly for the most able pupils.
- Homework is not always used effectively to promote pupils' achievement.

The school has the following strengths:

- The headteacher has drive, determination and high expectations. She has developed a committed staff who work effectively together to secure key improvements.
- Governors are fully involved in the life of the school and hold leaders to account for their performance.
- Pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching have improved since the last inspection as a result of strong leadership and management at all levels.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and is given a high profile, particularly in assemblies.
- Pupils' behaviour and safety are good. Pupils have very positive attitudes towards their learning. Parents and carers are full of praise for the current leadership team.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and sometimes better. Teachers have good relationships with pupils and high expectations of their social and academic achievement.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes and visited 17 lessons, of which seven were seen jointly with members of the school's leadership team.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, the headteacher, subject leaders and staff. Inspectors also spoke to representatives of the local authority.
- Inspectors held meetings with two groups of pupils, talked informally to pupils at breaks and lunchtimes and listened to pupils read.
- The 25 responses to Ofsted's on-line survey, Parent View, were considered. Account was also taken of the findings of recent school surveys of the views of 64 parents and carers. Inspectors spoke to parents and carers and considered their written comments. Inspectors noted the 59 responses to the staff survey.
- Inspectors looked at several documents, including the school's evaluation of its own performance, plans for improvement, policies, and records of pupils' behaviour and attendance. Safeguarding documents were also scrutinised.

Inspection team

Robert Ridout, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Alison Tugwell

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school.
- About one third of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium. This is above the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils who, in this school, are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- Around one in 10 pupils are disabled or have special educational needs. This is below the national average.
- Almost all the school's pupils come from a White British background. A little over one in 10 of the pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and a similar proportion speak English as an additional language. This is below the national average.
- Following the last inspection, a high number of staff left the school and were replaced. Many subject leaders are new to their posts.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2013 and the deputy headteacher and the phase leaders for Key Stage 2 took up their posts in September 2014.
- A review of governance was completed by the local authority in May 2014.
- Within the local authority, the school leads on approaches to good behavioural management.
- The school has two full-time Reception classes.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement by ensuring that teachers:
 - use their assessment of what pupils know and can do to plan activities
 - set work which challenges all pupils, especially in mathematics
 - continue to reduce the differences in the progress of different groups of pupils
 - use homework more effectively to accelerate pupils progress
 - mark pupils' mathematics work in a way that shows them clearly what they need to do to improve.
- Ensure the achievement gap between disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and other pupils continues to close so they achieve at least as well as other pupils.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has high expectations of pupils and staff and has significantly improved the school since the last inspection. Leaders and managers at all levels, including subject leaders, are determined to raise standards. They have developed a committed and effective staff who work effectively together to improve teaching and raise pupils' achievement since the last inspection.
- Senior and subject leaders have an accurate view of the school's performance. They have succeeded in improving pupils' behaviour and pupils' achievement in writing, which continues to rise. However, further work is needed to continue to raise standards in mathematics, especially the performance of the most able pupils.
- The legacy of poor teaching and pupils' underachievement is gradually being eradicated. Thorough monitoring of the quality of teaching and the achievement of pupils is now linked closely to the rigorous management of teachers' performance and extensive, well-planned professional development. As a result, pupils' standards in literacy and numeracy are improving and staff morale is high.
- Newly qualified teachers are pleased and proud to work in the school and feel very well supported by their subject mentors and the senior team. They are aware of the school's priorities and are effectively developing and improving their own teaching.
- The new curriculum contributes positively to pupils' learning and achievement. Enjoyable and interesting experiences meet the needs of pupils and prepare them for a life in modern Britain. New topics and approaches provide a greater choice for pupils and are beginning to provide the most able pupils with suitable, additional challenge.
- Pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is promoted effectively and is a central feature of assemblies. Pupils learn to respect and value each other's differences, treat each other with respect and understand different points of view.
- The primary school sports funding is used well to help pupils to lead healthier lifestyles and to work together. The funding provides regular sports coaching and opportunities to develop the skills of class teachers. Sporting resources have been improved and pupils can now play in an excellent outdoor space. Pupils participate in a wide range of sporting activities and are keen to celebrate their successes in netball and on the football pitch.
- The school's leaders have become increasingly effective in using the pupil premium to narrow the gap between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and that of others.
- The school has a strong relationship with the local authority which has provided highly effective support. Following the last inspection, local authority officers worked alongside school leaders to challenge poor teaching and raise standards. The local authority now regards the school as improving so provides less support and only when it is requested.
- The school now has a good and improving partnership with parents and carers, including some who have been hard to reach in the past. Parents' and carers' responses to surveys and their discussions with inspectors were nearly all positive. Many acknowledged the rapid improvements they have seen over the past 18 months.
- Safeguarding procedures meet current requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is effective. Governors receive regular reports from school leaders on the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement and routinely visit the school to discuss pupils' progress. They talk to parents and carers, pupils and staff about their school experiences and the local authority supports them to keep abreast of how well the school is doing compared with other schools.
 - In 2014, the governing body took effective action to deal with the underperformance of teaching staff and restructured the leadership of the school. Governors received training on many aspects of governance, including the interpretation of information on pupils' progress, setting targets for teachers and safeguarding. They know how teachers' pay is linked to pupils' achievement. All are now appropriately qualified and bring a good level of expertise that enables them to execute their duties well.
 - Governors understand the school's finances and know how funds are spent. They monitor closely the use of the pupil premium to improve the performance of eligible pupils. Governors have a good working knowledge of how the primary school sports funding is being used and the outcomes for pupils.
 - Governors ensure that safeguarding requirements are met and regularly review the effectiveness of the school's policies.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are friendly and welcoming to visitors and show each other respect. They have pride in themselves and their work and are proud of their school and their new school uniform.
- Pupils are keen to learn and welcome the numerous changes that have been introduced over the last year. They have positive attitudes towards their learning.
- The school's behaviour policy is implemented consistently by all staff. As a result, pupils rarely waste time or behave badly during lessons or around the school. Pupils generally respond promptly to staff instructions. Exclusion rates have fallen significantly and there are no recent instances of pupils being excluded for serious misbehaviour.
- Attendance has risen and is now above the national average. Pupils want to come to school because they have good relationships with their teachers and enjoy their learning. They also relish the chance to be involved in the many additional activities available to them before, during and after school.
- The school is tidy and well cared for. There is no litter. Attractive, informative displays celebrate good work and are valued by pupils.
- Parents and carers, staff and pupils believe that pupils' behaviour has improved significantly during the last 12 months and most say it is good.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The majority of pupils say that they feel safe at school.
- Pupils know what bullying is and could describe examples that are commonly known to them. They strongly believe that it is wrong to make fun of someone else repeatedly.
- Pupils said that bullying has reduced a lot since the new headteacher came. No real concerns were raised by pupils about bullying. The vast majority were confident that any worries they had would be dealt with effectively by teachers. One child proudly announced to inspectors, 'There is no racism; the school does not stand for it.'
- Pupils know about the potential dangers of social media sites and of the internet in general. Risk assessments for all trips and activities are carried out thoroughly and the outcomes acted upon.
- The parents and carers, who responded to Parent View, and those spoken to during the inspection, said that the school is a safe, secure and well-managed environment for their children.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Poor teaching in the past and the high turnover of staff following the last inspection have slowed the progress of some pupils. There is no inadequate teaching, but teaching is not yet consistently good or better.
- As yet, not all teachers make the fullest use of the information they collect about what pupils know and are able to do. As a result, some of the work they set is not challenging enough. This is particularly the case in mathematics, where the most able pupils are not making the progress they should.
- Homework is not used effectively by all teachers. Some parents and carers raised the setting of homework as a concern.
- Pupils said that they like the feedback they receive from teachers when their books are marked properly and particularly like the chance to check and correct work they have not understood. However, teachers' feedback to pupils is not always very helpful, particularly in mathematics. Pupils are not always clear about what they need to do to improve.
- The determination of the leadership team and the commitment of the many new teachers have meant that the quality of teaching is improving rapidly. Teachers now consistently ask searching questions to check how well pupils are learning and to develop their thinking further. Pupils respond well to these approaches.
- The teaching of writing is good. Pupils are given a broad range of opportunities to develop their writing in different contexts and for different purposes. Teachers respond to what the pupils can do, help them to adapt the style of their writing across a range of topics, and provide them with clear guidance about how

to improve their work.

- The teaching of reading is improving with pupils confidently using their knowledge of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) to read and understand. The essential basic skills of literacy and numeracy are being taught to increasingly good effect.
- Teaching assistants are deployed well and make a valuable contribution to the progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. They provide good support for pupils and their learning.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Given their starting points, some pupils have not made the progress they should have by the end of Year 6 because of a legacy of poor teaching. Too few pupils make consistently good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2014, pupils' attainment overall was broadly average.
- The most able pupils do not reach the levels they are capable of, especially in mathematics.
- In 2014, disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 achieved less well than other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Year 6 pupils eligible for the pupil premium were between two and three terms behind the average for all pupils nationally, which is a gap in national tests that has not narrowed since the last inspection. This same group was about one and a half terms behind others in the school.
- Improvements in teaching are gradually eradicating the legacy of past underachievement. Pupils are making faster progress than they did previously, especially in writing and reading. This is most evident in the work of pupils in Key Stage 1.
- Results in national tests for Year 6 in 2014 were better than in the year following the last inspection. The school's own data, backed up by inspectors' scrutiny of pupils' workbooks and the observations of lessons, show that the achievement of pupils currently in school is continuing to improve. On the basis of this evidence, the school is also reducing the gap between the attainment pupils eligible for the pupil premium and others.
- The Year 1 phonics screening check shows that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels has been higher than the national average for two years.
- Pupils with special educational needs did less well than their peers in 2014. However, evidence from lesson observations, workbooks and learning journals, combined with the school's own data, indicates that the gap between their overall achievement and that of other pupils is narrowing.
- Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and the few who speak English as an additional language make similar progress to their peers.

The early years provision

is good

- Children have a good introduction to learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They make good progress from their different starting points due to the range of well-planned, indoor and outdoor activities available to them. These help to ensure that children are equipped with the good attitudes and skills needed for Year 1.
- Warm relationships and clear expectations help children to feel very secure. Adults skilfully identify when to provide help for children and when to allow them space to make decisions for themselves. This means that children grow in confidence and are increasingly able to work on their own.
- Children enjoy playing and learning with their classmates and all behave well. They willingly welcome other children to share in their activities. This is a credit to them and the adults who work alongside them. Teachers and teaching assistants have successfully nurtured these values and qualities in the children in their care.
- Adults work extremely effectively as a team. They are knowledgeable, enthusiastic and evidently enjoy working with the children. Good leadership provides strong direction to both teachers and teaching assistants who support good learning in and out of the classroom. The new outside learning space contributes strongly to this.
- Good leadership has ensured that the provision has improved significantly over the last two years, and standards rise to the national average by the start of Year 1. The team works closely with the school's senior leaders to review the quality of provision on a regular basis. Staff have high expectations and constantly look for ways to improve the provision. They make visits to outstanding settings to learn from the best practice and then apply new methods in the school.
- The early years team has strengthened its planning and the accuracy of its assessments. This means that staff have a more accurate view of children's needs when they join the school. No time is lost building

quickly and effectively on what children already know, understand and can do.

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	123020
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	453545

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	223
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Matthew Johnson
Headteacher	Helen Bartlett
Date of previous school inspection	17–18 January 2013
Telephone number	01993 704770
Fax number	01993 706423
Email address	office.2304@queen-emmas.oxon.sch.uk

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