

Whitehall Infant School

Cowley Road, Uxbridge, Middlesex, UB8 2LX

Inspection dates 17–18 March 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.

- The headteacher, senior staff and subject leaders, ensure that teaching is good and that pupils achieve well. Leaders and staff take effective action to bring about improvement where needed.
- Governors have a good understanding of the school's performance. They are supportive and hold leaders to account.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and behave well in lessons and around the school.
- Pupils are courteous, kind and show consideration and respect for others. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted effectively and pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Procedures to ensure that pupils are safe are good. As a result, pupils feel safe and well looked after by staff.
- A good range of clubs and visits enhance pupils' learning and their personal development.
- Good teaching enables all groups of pupils to make good progress.
- Teachers successfully engage pupils and expect them to do their best. Clear explanations and effective questioning promote learning well.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes have a good start to school life. They make good progress in most areas of learning.
- Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and attainment by the end of Year 2 is above average in reading and mathematics.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In a few lessons, work is not set at the right level of difficulty for pupils.
- Sometimes pupils do not have enough guidance to help them develop their writing skills.
- Attainment in writing by the end of Year 2 is lower than in reading and mathematics.
- Leaders do not always communicate effectively with staff and parents about the direction of the school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in all classes. Some lessons were seen jointly with the headteacher or the deputy headteacher.
- Pupils' work was scrutinised and the information about their attainment and progress was analysed.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, other staff, a representative from the local authority, governors and pupils.
- The inspectors took account of the 81 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View. The results of the school's own survey were also taken into account.
- Questionnaires from 60 staff were taken into account.
- The inspectors examined a range of documents, including school policies, safeguarding procedures, and the school's self-evaluation and improvement planning.

Inspection team

Derek Watts, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Michael Sutherland-Harper	Additional Inspector
Peter Thrussell	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized infant school.
- About a quarter of the pupil population are White British. Other pupils are from a wide range of ethnic heritages.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is broadly average.
- An average proportion of pupils are supported by the pupil premium. The pupil premium is additional funding for disadvantaged pupils.
- A well above average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language but only a few are at an early stage of learning English.
- Children in the Nursery attend in the morning or the afternoon. Children in Reception are full time.
- The school recently increased in pupil numbers from three to four form entry.
- There has been a higher than usual turnover of staff recently.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the good teaching in order to raise achievement further, particularly in writing, by:
 - ensuring that work set is always at the right level of difficulty for different groups of pupils, including children in the early years
 - making sure that pupils always have clear guidance and direction to help them improve their writing skills when needed.
- Improve communication to staff and parents in times of change so that all know the direction the school is moving in and why.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, key leaders and staff have ensured that teaching is good and that all groups of pupils make good progress and achieve well. Good teaching and pupils' good achievement have been maintained and built upon since the previous inspection.
- The headteacher and other leaders effectively review the school's performance and accurately identify the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Decisive action is taken to ensure that the necessary improvements are brought about.
- Good attention is given to the care, protection and safety of pupils. Safeguarding in the school is effective and meets requirements. Pupils are safe at school and they are well looked after.
- Leaders and staff establish good relationships with pupils and ensure that they behave well.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Leaders and staff successfully promote values such as courtesy, determination, friendship, respect and tolerance. Pupils show a good understanding of their own and different faiths. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The leadership of key areas such as English, mathematics, early years and special needs is effective. Leaders are fully engaged in checking pupils' progress and in improving their areas of responsibility.
- Leaders and external consultants check the quality of teaching on a regular basis. Arrangements for teachers' performance management contribute to the improvement of teaching, because targets for development are closely linked to pupils' progress and to the priorities in the school's improvement plan. Newly qualified teachers receive good mentoring and support from experienced colleagues.
- The headteacher has high ambitions and high expectations for the school. Staff work hard to ensure that pupils are well taught and interesting activities are provided so that they can achieve well.
- The headteacher is not always successful in communicating the school's direction to staff and parents, particularly in periods of changes to assessment and to the school's curriculum. Consequently, some staff have expressed concern about the lack of communication when change occurs and how well leaders and staff work together. A minority of parents do not believe the school deals well enough with concerns raised and question the turnover of staff. The findings of the inspection are that communication between leadership and staff and between leadership and parents requires improvement so that all know the direction that the school is moving in.
- The school provides a broad and interesting range of subjects which promote pupils' good achievement. A reading and writing programme has been successfully implemented and has had a positive impact on pupils' achievement, particularly in reading. Pupils enjoy the additional activities provided, such as clubs, sport and educational visits. The school has made a good start to introducing a new assessment system to reflect national changes. All pupils have full access to the learning opportunities provided and the school effectively tackles all forms of discrimination.
- Pupil premium funding is well used to provide disadvantaged pupils with additional support, particularly in literacy and numeracy. This support is effective and disadvantaged pupils are making faster progress.
- The primary sports grant is used effectively to develop pupils' physical and sporting skills. The school has used visiting specialist coaches and teachers well to improve sporting opportunities for the pupils. Good training has increased teachers' physical education skills. Pupils' participation in sport and competitions has increased. Fitness workshops and lunchtime sports clubs have proved to be popular.
- The local authority has a clear understanding of the school's performance. Because pupils are achieving well, the school has received 'light touch' support. The school also has a good partnership with a group of local schools.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is effective. Members of the governing body bring a good range of experience and skills to the role. They are supportive and have a clear vision and high aspirations for the school.
 - Governors have an accurate overview of the school's performance. They analyse the school's data effectively and therefore have a good understanding of pupils' attainment and progress.
 - Governors know about the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' progress. They understand requirements relating to the management of staff performance and ensure that promotion and pay increases are based on the progress that pupils make. They check that effective action is taken to improve teaching that is less than good.
 - Governors ensure that additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is used effectively and check the impact of spending on pupils' achievement.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils enjoy school and participate well in the interesting learning activities provided. They arrive at school eager and ready to learn. Their positive attitudes contribute well to their good progress. Pupils were keen to tell the inspectors, 'We are learning lots of things' and 'We find out interesting facts.'
- Most pupils are well behaved in lessons, in assemblies, the playground and around the school. In some classes, pupils show very positive attitudes to learning and their behaviour is impeccable. This is particularly so when pupils are engaged and motivated. Discussions with pupils and the school's clear records of incidents show that behaviour of most pupils is typically good over time. A few pupils display challenging and less positive behaviour but their conduct is well managed and supported by staff.
- Pupils are courteous, friendly and show consideration and respect for others. They know the importance of listening to others, being kind and helpful. Pupils are developing an appreciation and a clear understanding of different cultures and faiths.
- Pupils willingly take on additional responsibilities such as serving on the school council or the eco council, or being playground buddies or exercise ambassadors.
- Attendance is improving but it is lower than the national average. The school works well with families to promote good attendance and improve it.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Safeguarding is given good attention. Leaders, governors and staff take effective measures to ensure that all pupils, particularly the most vulnerable, are well cared for and are suitably protected.
- The systems for checking and recording safety matters help to ensure that any concerns are swiftly dealt with. Senior leaders and site staff carry out regular risk assessments and ensure that the school is a safe place for pupils. All staff have had recent training in child protection and safeguarding. All staff are appropriately vetted before being appointed to the school.
- Positive relationships are established with pupils, who know they can turn to adults if they are worried or upset. Pupils say that they feel safe and are well looked after by the staff.
- Pupils show a clear understanding of bullying and the different forms it can take, including name-calling and physical bullying. Discussions with them and the school's records of incidents confirm that bullying rarely happens. There are good procedures for dealing with unacceptable behaviour, including bullying.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching enables all groups of pupils to make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers effectively share the purpose of each lesson with the class. Pupils therefore know and understand what they are to learn.
- Teachers expect pupils to do their very best in terms of their learning and behaviour. Pupils respond well to these high expectations. Teachers and learning support assistants establish positive relationships with pupils and manage them well.
- In most lessons, teachers' planning is effective in helping to ensure that learning activities are suitably challenging for different groups of pupils. As a result, pupils are engaged and motivated, and their interest is sustained. They make good progress in acquiring new knowledge, deepening their understanding of new work and applying skills.
- Occasionally, work is not set at the right level of difficulty for pupils. When this happens, tasks can be too easy for some pupils and too difficult for others.
- Teachers use questioning well to challenge pupils' thinking and to check that they have understood. Pupils are keen to share their knowledge and express their ideas.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well taught and supported. Learning activities are well suited to pupils' specific needs and enable pupils to make good progress. Pupils receive effective guidance and support from learning support assistants.
- Pupils at an early stage of learning English receive good guidance and support so that they can make good progress in acquiring and using the language.
- The teaching of reading is effective, including the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make). Teachers ensure that pupils know the sounds that letters make by articulating them clearly to the pupils. Pupils are given good opportunities to apply their reading skills, particularly in topic work when finding

information.

- In most classes, pupils receive effective demonstration and guidance from teachers to improve their writing skills. Pupils have good opportunities to apply and develop their writing skills in different subjects. However, on occasions pupils do not receive enough guidance and structure to support their writing and this hinders their progress.
- In mathematics, teachers use explanations and demonstration successfully to promote pupils' understanding of calculation and mathematical operations. The pupils gain key knowledge and deepen their understanding of mathematical ideas. Pupils are given good opportunities to apply their numeracy skills to solve problems.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- All groups of pupils make good progress and achieve well. Since the previous inspection, attainment by the end of Year 2 has been consistently above average in reading, and mostly above average in mathematics. Pupils' attainment in writing is improving but has been broadly average and lower than in reading and mathematics.
- There is no significant difference in the progress made by pupils from different groups or from different ethnic heritages. Overall, pupils with English as an additional language achieve at least as well as other pupils. Pupils at an early stage of learning English make good progress.
- In 2014, Year 2 disadvantaged pupils, supported by the additional funding, attained lower standards than the others in the school in reading, writing and mathematics.
- When compared to other pupils nationally, disadvantaged pupils at Whitehall attained lower standards than other pupils nationally in all three areas but the attainment gap is narrowing. Many pupils entitled to the additional funding had numerous learning needs. Assessments provided by the school shows that disadvantaged pupils are making good progress and the school is closing gaps in attainment.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good. These pupils receive effective guidance and support from teachers and learning support assistants.
- The most able pupils make good progress and achieve well. In 2014, the proportion of Year 2 pupils who attained the higher levels was above average, especially in reading. The work set is usually suitably demanding to extend the thinking and learning of the most able.
- Pupils show enthusiasm for reading and make good progress. While a below average proportion of Year 1 pupils attained the expected standard in the phonics check in 2013 and 2014, by the end of Year 2, attainment is securely above average. Pupils apply their reading skills well to find useful information.
- In writing, pupils' achievement is improving. They write for different purposes and their grammar, punctuation and spelling are developing well. Handwriting is good and most pupils in Year 2 form their letters correctly and write with a fluent and joined style. Pupils apply their writing skills well to different subjects. For example, in a design and technology project, pupils in Year 2 used instructional writing well in describing how they designed and made a model vehicle.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics. They acquire essential calculation skills successfully and have a good understanding of mathematical operations. Pupils apply numeracy skills well in solving mathematical problems. For example, pupils in Year 1 made good progress in solving addition problems because challenging work was well suited to the abilities of different groups.

The early years provision

- The early years provision is well led and managed. Staff plan and provide interesting learning activities for children. There are effective systems for checking and recording children's attainment and progress. In Nursery and Reception, children are safe and are well cared for.
- Children enter the Nursery with knowledge, understanding and skills that are below those typically found for their age, particularly in their communication, language and social skills. Children make good progress in all areas of learning because they are well taught and are provided with interesting indoor and outdoor activities.
- The quality of teaching is good. The development of children's reading skills, particularly phonics, is well organised and structured and children make good progress in reading. They make good gains in working with number and solving basic problems. For example, they use different resources to solve simple subtraction problems. With clear guidance and direction from adults, they make good progress in early writing skills. Occasionally, activities are not suited to the needs of different groups, particularly the most

able, and learning can slow down.

- Children make good progress in different areas of learning. In the Nursery, they have gained a good knowledge and understanding of different mini beasts. They identified spiders, butterflies and a bee. In Reception, children gained new and interesting knowledge about Australia. Children in Nursery and Reception make good progress in their personal and social development. Adults establish strong relationships with the children, and this contributes to their good behaviour. The children share learning resources and take turns. They clearly enjoy their learning and are well prepared for 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	102411
Local authority	Hillingdon
Inspection number	453167

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	417
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Wade France
Headteacher	Manjit Bringan
Date of previous school inspection	23–24 May 2011
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