

Bushy Hill Junior School

Sheeplands Avenue, Merrow, Guildford, GU1 2SG

Inspection dates 19–20 May 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Teaching is not yet consistently good.
- Leadership and management require improvement because changes in senior and middle leadership since the previous inspection have delayed the implementation of improvement plans.
- Standards in writing and mathematics declined in 2014 to below national averages.
- The pupil premium funding for disadvantaged pupils is not effectively targeted.
- Changes in the curriculum have not been entirely successful.
- Pupils have too few opportunities to think critically and solve challenging problems in their science and topic work.
- The assessment of pupils carried out by teachers is sometimes inaccurate.
- Pupils, including the most able, are not always given work that is appropriately challenging or that requires them to think for themselves.
- Class teachers do not spend enough time helping the least able pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- Plans to improve teaching are not precise enough and do not take account of teachers' existing strengths and weaknesses.
- Some learning support assistants do not have the necessary skills or training to help in the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make).

The school has the following strengths

- Governors are now much more effective at holding the school to account. They have a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are determined to make the necessary improvements.
- Pupils are well behaved, polite and often articulate in their views about the school. They feel safe in the very pleasant school environment.
- New systems for marking pupils' work and giving pupils feedback are robust and consistently applied throughout the school.
- Pupils are now making better progress than in previous years, particularly in Year 6.
- Current pupils are making good progress in reading and enjoy the very well-resourced school library.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils’ learning in 14 lessons. Some of these lessons were observed together with the headteacher or deputy headteacher. Additionally, inspectors observed an assembly and made short visits to a physical education coaching session, two phonics groups and the after-school club.
- Inspectors held meetings and discussions with the headteacher and other school leaders. The lead inspector also met with the Chair of the Governing Body and three other governors, and had a meeting with the school’s leadership partner from the local authority.
- Inspectors held informal discussions with pupils and also met formally with a group of pupils to discuss their views of the school. Inspectors heard pupils in Year 3 and Year 6 read.
- Inspectors scrutinised documentation relating to governance, including visit reports and the minutes of meetings. They also examined school documents relating to performance management, pupils’ achievement, the quality of teaching, safeguarding and behaviour.
- Inspectors considered the responses of 92 parents to the Parent View questionnaire, as well as two letters and a telephone message from parents. They also spoke to some parents at the school gate at the beginning of the inspection.
- Inspectors analysed the 24 questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

Lee Selby, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Bridgette Gough

Additional Inspector

Bruce Waelend

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection the school has reduced the number of classes from nine to eight; there are now two classes in each year group. This makes the school slightly smaller than the average junior school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. About one in five pupils are from a range of different ethnic groups.
- About one tenth of the pupils speak English as an additional language, although very few of them are at the early stages of language acquisition. This is just over half of the proportion found in schools nationally.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for the pupil premium is lower than the national average. However, the proportion varies between year groups. In this school all the pupils in receipt of this funding are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below the national average. However, in 2013/14, nearly a quarter of the Year 6 cohort had special educational needs.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There is a breakfast club on site that was separately inspected by Ofsted recently. The after-school club is operated by the school and formed part of this inspection.
- The headteacher has recently returned from a year's family leave. In her absence, the school was led by two successive interim headteachers.
- The deputy headteacher joined the school in April 2014 and key middle leadership appointments, such as the subject leaders for English and mathematics, have changed at least once since the previous inspection. The special educational needs coordinator is a new addition to the leadership team and seven of the current class teachers have joined the school in the past 12 months.
- Only three members of the current governing body were in post at the time of the previous inspection.
- The local authority and the governing body have commissioned a national leader of education (NLE) from the Guildford Education Partnership to support the headteacher.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, so that it enables pupils to make consistently good progress in all year groups and subjects, by ensuring that teachers:
 - assess pupils accurately and have their judgements routinely moderated
 - always match the work they set to the needs of different groups of pupils, including the most able and those eligible for the pupil premium
 - work more frequently with less-able pupils and those who are disabled or have special educational needs
 - set more challenging, open-ended tasks so that pupils can apply their reasoning and problem-solving skills.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - maintaining the rigour of the current checks on the quality of teaching and taking swift action when teaching requires improvement
 - ensuring that each teacher has a personal action plan for improvement so that the best teachers have opportunities for further development and that the weaker teachers improve quickly
 - rigorously tracking and evaluating the impact of pupil premium funding
 - ensuring that the curriculum gives scope for pupils to make rapid progress in all subject areas
 - giving middle leaders the opportunity to disseminate their good teaching practice throughout the school
 - providing further training in the teaching of phonics for relevant staff.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

require improvement

- Changes in leadership since the previous inspection have slowed improvements. Many training and other initiatives have had to be repeated for new members of staff. A significant number of parents expressed concerns about the quality of leadership and management due to the recent changes.
- Although leaders regularly check teaching and hold teachers to account for their performance, they do not take sufficient note of the strengths and weaknesses of individual teachers in order to tailor-make improvement programmes. There are too few opportunities for the most skilled teachers to share their good practice with others.
- While the wide gaps between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and others appear to be narrowing, it is not clear what impact the pupil premium funding is having as it is not tracked thoroughly enough.
- There have been frequent changes to the curriculum in recent years which have not all been successful. This has had an adverse effect on pupils' progress. For example, a published scheme for mathematics was introduced and then soon found not to be challenging enough for the pupils and was rightly withdrawn. Although pupils write in most subjects, there are not enough opportunities for them to think for themselves and solve problems independently in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Now the headteacher has returned to her post, she is determined to make the rapid improvements needed. She is building a strong team to support her in doing this.
- The new subject leaders for mathematics and English have been well chosen because of their skills as teachers in these areas. The subject leader for mathematics has begun to share her expertise and show class teachers what they need to do to improve pupils' attainment in mathematics. The new English subject leader is being ably supported by the deputy headteacher as she begins to take responsibility for her subject. These new appointments are already having a discernible impact on classroom practice.
- For all its past weaknesses, the current curriculum is interesting and enjoyable, makes relevant links between subjects, and prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education. It covers British values and makes pupils aware of the diversity of life in modern Britain.
- The school is aware that some groups of pupils, such as those eligible for the pupil premium, are not doing as well as they should. Otherwise, the school promotes equality of opportunity well. There are positive relations between different groups of pupils and discrimination of any kind is rare and not tolerated.
- The primary sport and physical education premium has been used to provide pupils with professional sports coaching. Pupils' participation and performance and their general well-being have improved as a result. The school recognises that the funding needs to be redirected to improve the skills of teachers in leading physical education so that improvements can be sustained.
- The local authority has provided extensive and effective support to the school since the previous inspection. This has included training in mathematics and English for all staff, and targeted support to help new subject leaders carry out their roles effectively. The local authority rigorously checks on the progress the school is making each term and sets suitable targets for further improvement. The headteacher is now beginning to deploy the support available more strategically to focus on the most important weaknesses.
- The school's safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements and are effective in keeping pupils safe.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is now very much more effective and governors are determined that the school should improve. They recognise the strengths of the school, but are clear about where improvements are needed. They understand data on pupils' performance and know how Bushy Hill compares with other schools. Since the previous inspection they have re-evaluated and reconstituted their membership to ensure that the governing body has the balance of skills necessary to challenge and support the school appropriately. Governors have intensified their monitoring and increased the number of visits they pay to the school. This means that they have an accurate, first-hand view of the quality of teaching and the school's overall performance.
 - Governors use performance management procedures well and recognise they need to reward the best teachers appropriately to retain them. However, they are not afraid to withhold salary increases when the performance of individuals falls below the expected level. They are keen to see that the curriculum meets the needs of all pupils and prepares them well for life in modern Britain. They have asked school leaders to review the current impact of both the pupil premium and primary sport and physical education funding.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils have a positive attitude to learning that ensures that they behave well, even when the teaching is not as interesting or challenging as it could be. They behave well around the school and in assemblies. Their behaviour at playtime, although energetic, is thoughtful and considerate of others.
- Bad behaviour is uncommon, but incidents are recorded carefully and followed through so that issues are resolved and behaviour improved.
- Pupils have good manners and contribute to the positive culture around the school. They have opportunities to take on responsibilities such as house captains, school councillors, peer mentors, librarians and Eco-monitors.
- Attendance is above the national average, demonstrating that pupils enjoy coming to school. The school works well with families who need support to improve their attendance.
- Parents agree that behaviour is well managed by the school.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- School leaders are aware of the potential risks to pupils in and out of school and ensure that staff receive the correct training in managing these risks. There have been no significant safeguarding concerns in the school.
- Pupils feel entirely safe and are well looked after by adults whom they trust to care for them.
- Bullying is a rarity. This is confirmed by pupils and parents. Pupils are acutely aware of what constitutes bullying, including cyber bullying. They use the acronym 'STOP - Several Times On Purpose' to remind themselves of this. Any incidents of bullying are swiftly dealt with by the school.
- Safeguarding procedures at the after-school club are robust, ensuring that pupils can enjoy a range of activities safely.
- Parents who completed the Parent View survey almost unanimously agree that their children feel safe at school. They are confident that the school is a safe and happy place where their children make progress.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Consistent improvement in the quality of teaching has been held back by the many changes in teaching staff since the previous inspection. As a result, continuing weaknesses meant that pupils made less progress than they should have in reading, writing and mathematics in the last academic year.
- Teachers' assessments of pupils are sometimes inaccurate. This means that they cannot use information about pupils' existing levels of knowledge and skill to plan appropriate activities for pupils.
- Teachers do not spend enough time with less able pupils, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Although pupils often work instead with the dedicated support team, these learning support assistants do not always have the necessary subject expertise, for example in phonics. As a result, these groups generally make less progress than other pupils.
- Teachers do not always notice when tasks are not challenging pupils sufficiently in lessons. For example, sometimes the most-able pupils are required to complete the same simple starter activities as their less able peers. Similarly, teachers do not plan specific activities for disadvantaged pupils, or use pupil premium funding to help them close the gaps between their attainment and that of others.
- Older, more-able pupils said that they are not always given the chance to think deeply and explore things for themselves. Evidence from pupils' work books supported this opinion.
- Teaching is gradually improving. There are examples of excellent teaching in the school, which are not yet widely enough shared. Inspectors saw lessons where pupils had challenging tasks to complete that required them to think deeply, notably in reading and mathematics. For example, in a Year 5 mathematics lesson, pupils were solving word problems and using their reasoning skills extremely well when applying their fluency in both short and long division. Less-able pupils were well supported by a learning support assistant in their use of practical equipment to practise division skills. One group of boys was so keen to get to the end of a tricky problem that they were reluctant to finish work when the lesson ended and exclaimed that they would take the problem home to solve.
- The school's work on improving teachers' marking and feedback is having a positive impact. The agreed policy and protocols are consistently applied across the school and pupils can explain how the marking

helps them to improve. Pupils' work books show that, as the system has become embedded through the year, their progress has speeded up. Similarly initiatives to improve the checks on pupils' spelling are also showing signs of success.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils generally enter the school with levels of attainment that are above the national average. The school has developed moderation processes with the local infant school to ensure that assessments on entry are accurate.
- Residual problems with teaching meant that results in 2014 were poor. Pupils' attainment in writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 declined, and the proportion attaining the expected levels in national tests was below the national average. The proportions of pupils making the expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics throughout the school were also below national expectations.
- Latest published data from 2014 shows that disadvantaged pupils were approximately half a year behind other pupils in the school in reading, four terms behind in writing and two terms behind in mathematics. Attainment gaps between disadvantaged pupils and pupils nationally are narrowing. In 2014 these pupils were two terms behind in reading, five terms behind in writing and one year behind in mathematics.
- The most-able pupils did less well than they should have at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2014. Now, however, school data and evidence from inspectors' observations indicate that the most-able pupils in each year group are doing as well as, or better than, expectations.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs have made slower progress than might be expected in the past. However, the progress of this group is now also improving as the result of targeted interventions in reading and mathematics.
- Current school data and the work seen by inspectors in pupils' work books show a marked overall improvement in pupils' achievement since the 2014 national tests. For example, pupils throughout the school are now doing much better in reading, where they make good progress and enjoy the books in the very well-resourced school library. There are still differences in attainment and progress between subjects and year groups. Pupils in Year 6, for example, are making better progress than those in other year groups.

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	125009
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	462365

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	244
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Roger Meadowcroft
Headteacher	Mrs Louisa Dormer
Date of previous school inspection	3–4 July 2013
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