

Gateway Primary School

Netheravon Close, Carterton, Oxfordshire, OX18 3SF

Inspection dates 16–17 June 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	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 school is a welcoming and friendly place to be. Adults and pupils all play their part in ensuring an inclusive and positive atmosphere permeates all aspects of the school's work.
- Leaders have ensured that the quality of teaching is now consistently good and standards have risen.
- The headteacher has established a culture of high expectations, putting good learning at the centre of the school's work. Her vision is clearly understood by staff and there is a positive 'can do' culture.
- Pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. Achievement has risen rapidly since 2013 and most pupils now achieve the standards expected for their age.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve well. Previous gaps in their attainment compared with other pupils have closed completely in reading, writing and mathematics. All pupils have an equal chance of success.
- More-able pupils achieve high standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers cater for their needs well, setting challenging tasks.
- Transition arrangements are excellent. Pupils who are new to the school settle quickly, including those pupils from service backgrounds.
- Pupils display high levels of respect to visitors, their teachers, adults and each other. They are caring and considerate, forging strong friendships for life.
- In the early years, children enjoy high quality activities. They make good progress and are well prepared for Key Stage 1.
- Safeguarding arrangements are robust. The school's work to keep pupils safe is outstanding.
- Governors are highly effective. They offer appropriate challenge and helpful support in equal measure. They are passionate about the Carterton community and have contributed well to the school's improvement journey.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is very little teaching that is outstanding.
- Tasks for pupils who have special educational needs are not always well matched to their starting points and slow their progress.
- Average ability pupils have fewer opportunities to read as often as some other pupils. Consequently, a love of books and desire to read widely are not nurtured in all pupils.
- Very occasionally, activities hold little appeal for pupils so they lose interest and their productivity wanes.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection began as the fourth monitoring inspection of the school because it was judged to require special measures at its previous inspection. Inspectors deemed the monitoring inspection a full section 5 inspection at the end of the first day.
- Inspectors observed 23 lessons or parts of lessons, of which four were conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors heard pupils reading and discussed their reading progress with them. A meeting was held with a group of pupils in Year 5 and Year 6.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, assistant headteacher, other staff with significant responsibilities, class teachers and three representatives of the governing body, including the Chair of Governors and the headteacher of Carterton Community College.
- Inspectors took account of 28 responses to Parent View, Ofsted’s online questionnaire for parents.
- Inspectors looked at a number of documents, including the school’s own information on pupils’ current progress, teachers’ planning, records of leaders’ checks on the quality of teaching, records of behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to keeping pupils safe.

Inspection team

Elizabeth Farr, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Caroline Dulon

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

Information about this school

- Gateway Primary School is a larger-than-average-sized primary school. The school is situated in Carterton, which is close to RAF Brize Norton. The school draws about 70% of its pupils from service families. As a result, the proportion of pupils eligible for extra funding provided for children of service families is high.
- There are 12 classes in the school. Some pupils are taught in mixed-aged classes.
- The early years provision comprises of two Reception classes, which children attend on a full-time basis.
- The school has a high turnover of pupils due to the deployment of parents into the base and to other postings. Since September 2014, the school has gained 37 new pupils.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils in local authority care and pupils known to be eligible free school meals, is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is slightly above average.
- The governing body is federated with two other local schools, Carterton Primary School and Carterton Community College. The federated governing body is called Carterton Community Schools, Gateway to Excellence.
- The headteacher took up post in September 2013 and will leave at the end of the summer term 2015. Plans to strengthen the federation further are advanced and governors are finalising the leadership arrangements for September 2015.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The assistant headteacher and several class teachers will leave at the end of term. Many are moving on as a result of promotion. The governors have recruited and filled all vacancies successfully.
- St Swithun's C of E Primary School provides support in the early years. A local leader of education from RAF Benson Primary School provides leadership support.
- The school holds gold Sing Up and bronze eco awards.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, so more is outstanding, by ensuring that:
 - activities for pupils who have special educational needs are well matched to their starting points so they make more rapid progress
 - all pupils read widely and often, including middle attaining pupils
 - activities capture pupils' interests fully so that pupils complete tasks to the best of their ability.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides principled and highly focused leadership. In a short space of time, she has tackled weak teaching effectively, enriched opportunities across the curriculum, improved pupils' attendance and built positive relationships with parents. She understands clearly the needs of each individual pupil, showing an unwavering commitment to ensuring everyone is safe, happy and learning well. Well-judged changes have led to rapid improvement in the quality of teaching and higher achievement for pupils.
- Leaders' self-evaluation of the school is accurate. There are clear systems for checking the school's performance. The headteacher has successfully involved everyone in identifying what the school does well and what needs to improve. All leaders and staff are involved in planning changes that are needed. The recent improvements in the early years learning environment and the more rapid progress made by all pupils in mathematics are testament to leaders' relentless approach to improving outcomes for all pupils.
- Other leaders, staff and governors share the headteacher's ambition and high expectations for the school. The federated governing body has been a stabilising influence over the last year. The governors' plans to establish a new leadership structure for the next academic year are clear and progressing well.
- Middle leaders work well together to promote high quality teaching and good achievement for all pupils. Helpful training has enhanced middle leaders' skills. Middle leaders have gained leadership qualifications. They use their skills to good effect and the school is well placed to continue to improve.
- The school meets the needs of service children very well. Family events, such as 'camo' day, are popular with all pupils and well supported by other local schools, military and civilian families. Pupils new to the school settle quickly and receive proportionate, high quality support from the dedicated family support worker. Strong community links, positive engagement with families and excellent transition arrangements ensure service children are cared for expertly and learn well.
- Performance management procedures are rigorous. Teachers are set targets that link well with improving outcomes for pupils. Helpful coaching, particularly from the assistant headteacher, has improved teaching, which is now consistently good.
- Pupil premium funding is used very effectively. Disadvantaged pupils make good progress, benefiting from well-targeted support and the consistently good teaching they receive day to day. Leaders have eliminated previous gaps in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in the school in reading, writing and mathematics in all year groups.
- The school's curriculum is balanced and covers a wide range of subjects. Work in science is particularly strong. Older pupils competently plan and conduct their own exciting investigations. They explore their own scientific curiosities, such as 'Will a raisin sink or float in water?', and enjoy learning.
- The school provides extensive opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of modern British society. Values such as tolerance and respect are evident in all aspects of the school's work. For example, pupils are watchful and adept at noticing others who may be unsure, perhaps because they have recently joined the school. Settling new children in quickly is understood to be a shared responsibility, with pupils playing their part very effectively. They display high levels of social awareness and responsibility.
- Pupils readily relate to, and understand, the school's 'Olympic values', including determination and excellence. During the inspection, they listened attentively to Year 6 pupils explaining what excellence means in their lives and how everyone can achieve high standards, whether in drawing, trampolining or writing stories. Assemblies provide rich experiences that enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and appeal to their own interests. Pupils join in well, whether listening to aboriginal music, singing enthusiastically, reflecting quietly, or joining in with a prayer.
- School leaders listen and respond well to parents' views. For example, leaders recently revised the homework policy in response to parental feedback. Good communication is evident and parents regularly attend special events such as reading workshops. Parents speak highly of the school, feel listened to and fully engage in its work.
- All pupils have an equal chance to succeed and learn well. There is no discrimination. The school is highly inclusive and pupils are encouraged to get involved in all aspects of school life. For example, one child who was unable to participate in physical activity became the photographer, evaluating the athleticism of other pupils.
- Safeguarding procedures are robust. Work with external agencies is comprehensive and ensures that families who are experiencing difficult times are well supported by a wide range of appropriate professionals.
- The local authority has provided timely and regular support to the school. Useful visits have contributed

well to the school's rapid improvement. The school's improvement partner is knowledgeable about the school's strengths and weaknesses. Rightly, the local authority has reduced its support. A local leader of education from RAF Benson Primary and staff from Carterton Community College have also provided helpful support.

- Sport funding is used effectively. The coordinator has gauged staff expertise well and used the findings to establish a thorough training programme. Consequently, staff are increasingly confident and appropriately skilled to teach a variety of different sports. Pupils enjoy representing Team Gateway in sports events. This contributes well to their physical and emotional well-being.

■ The governance of the school:

- The interests of the Carterton community are firmly at the heart of governors' work. They recognise the needs of the locality and are passionate about the collaborative arrangements between Carterton Primary School, Carterton Community College and Gateway. Plans to strengthen the federation are advanced, with governors fully involved in the safe recruitment of staff. Over the course of the year, the federated governing body has provided a reassuring presence, making regular visits to the school, which are highly valued by leaders. Governors work particularly closely with senior and middle leaders, offering robust challenge and good levels of support. Governance has strengthened considerably since the previous inspection.
- Governors make good use of training to strengthen their skills and have recently conducted an audit of their own expertise. Training has helped them understand accurately the school's performance. They question the headteacher closely on pupils' achievement, based on a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors have an accurate overview of the quality of teaching and how well pupils are learning, including those receiving help from pupil premium funding.
- Governors understand the link between teachers' pay and performance. They have ensured that there are robust procedures for safeguarding.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils conduct themselves well in and around the school because firmly established routines are consistently followed by pupils and staff. Pupils respond quickly to instructions from any adult. Younger pupils even helped the inspectors follow the rules and keep to the paths.
- Pupils play well together on the playground. There is a range of activities that pupils enjoy, including games that are led by pupils who act as play leaders. Adults provide vigilant supervision and help pupils to remember what is expected, so playtimes are cheerful, sociable and enjoyable times.
- Mostly, pupils settle quickly to learning and show sustained concentration. Occasionally, when learning activities do not spark their imagination, pupils' work rate slows.
- Effective support is in place to help the few pupils who find it difficult to manage their behaviour. The 'explore project', led by Carterton Community College, is one example of this. The project has also helped some older pupils to move seamlessly from primary to secondary school. Parents and pupils support the view that behaviour at Gateway is good.
- Pupils forge strong, lasting friendships. On joining the school, they complete 'passports' to share their interests and talents with adults and classmates. Likewise, when pupils from service families move to new schools, they take a letter from classmates and a book of memories. Outgoing pupils' contributions to Gateway Primary School are celebrated regularly in special assemblies. Many pupils stay in touch, often with friends they have made while at school who now live overseas. This aspect of the school's work is outstanding.
- Pupils are caring towards one another, regularly offering useful help and support to each other. They take pride in ensuring the school is a happy place to be.
- Attendance has improved over the past three years and is similar to the national average. The school provides effective challenge and support for the families of pupils who have high levels of absence. Leaders work well with the local authority to improve attendance, as well as finding their own solutions.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Safeguarding processes fully meet statutory requirements. Leaders work extremely well with other professionals to ensure that pupils are safe. Everyone knows what to do if they have a concern about a child and they act promptly, checking that their concerns have been taken seriously.
- Pupils' safety is given a high priority and systems to safeguard pupils are highly effective. Thorough and

detailed risk assessments are used well to make improvements where necessary. For example, fencing has recently been installed to determine a clear boundary between a play area and the school's car park. Leaders make every effort to reduce risk for pupils.

- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe very effectively. They have a detailed knowledge of different types of bullying and know, in some detail, how to stay safe when using the internet.
- Bullying is rare and pupils are rightly confident that adults will help them if they have a problem. As a result, pupils feel very safe in school.

The quality of teaching is good

- Since the previous inspection, the quality of teaching has improved and is now consistently good. Teachers have high expectations and plan activities that build on pupils' previous learning which help pupils make good progress and achieve well in all subjects.
- Positive, nurturing relationships between teachers and pupils are commonplace. Pupils understand what is expected and try hard to improve their skills. They listen attentively to instructions and teachers check vigilantly that pupils have understood. Teachers spot misunderstandings or uncertainties quickly so that pupils learn well. Pupils' work is marked regularly so pupils have a clear understanding of how to improve their efforts.
- Teachers use their comprehensive subject knowledge effectively to pose helpful questions that move pupils' learning on. In a Year 1 and Year 2 mathematics lesson, pupils were describing the number 44. One pupil noted it was smaller than 48; immediately, the teacher responded, 'How much smaller?' As a result, pupils were able to reason well and deepen their understanding.
- The teaching of reading is effective, particularly for lower ability pupils or those who have experienced weaker teaching in the past. These pupils read often, are making rapid progress and catching up well. However, the teaching of reading for average ability children is not as prominent and they read less often. Consequently, some pupils do not have an intrinsic love of, or excitement for, reading.
- The teaching of writing is very effective. Teachers plan tasks carefully and activities are well matched to pupils' starting points, particularly for higher and middle attaining pupils. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 were enjoying describing characters' feelings in the story *Gigantosaurus*. They were able to use words like 'devastated' confidently as an alternative to 'sad'. However, in some classes, tasks for pupils who have special educational needs are not always at the right level. Occasionally, when work is too demanding, progress for these pupils slows.
- Teaching successfully develops pupils' conceptual understanding and mastery of mathematical skills. Teachers use a range of resources effectively so that pupils gain repeated hands-on visual experiences. In Key Stage 1, pupils quickly developed a full understanding of halving when they shared coins between two people. In a Year 6 class, mastery of mean, median and mode calculation strategies enabled pupils to solve problems confidently, calculating the mean weight of dinosaurs in a Jurassic park they had designed.
- Homework is planned well and pupils enjoy choosing the order in which they complete tasks. Spelling and multiplication tables are reinforced appropriately. Pupils are proud when work they have completed with their families is displayed in classrooms. Homework club is particularly popular, as pupils receive additional support from staff to complete tasks.
- Teaching assistants work very effectively with individuals or small groups of pupils who have special educational needs. They persistently encourage pupils to do their best, using skilled questioning to consolidate pupils' understanding. Adults plan a wide range of tailored activities that cater well for pupils' individual needs; in these personalised sessions, pupils make good progress. However, this is not always replicated in lessons with the whole class.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Since 2013, standards have risen in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2014, pupils in Year 6 achieved broadly average standards in reading and mathematics and above average standards in writing. The school's own information shows that standards are continuing to rise.
- Standards at the end of Year 2 in 2014 were above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The most-able pupils achieve particularly well. The proportion of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 who achieve the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics is above the national average. Teachers set challenging tasks in a range of subjects and many pupils are working at levels above those expected for their age. Some pupils are expected to achieve the higher Level 6 in reading, writing and mathematics for

the first time in Gateway's history.

- Standards in writing are above national averages at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Pupils regularly use their skills to write for a range of purposes in different subjects. High quality written work is on display throughout the school.
- Pupils' early reading skills are improving. Standards in the Year 1 phonic check are now broadly average. All Year 2 pupils who are retaking the check are on track to meet the standard this year.
- Pupils make good progress in all subjects, with many making more than expected progress from Key Stage 1 to the end of Key Stage 2.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make steady progress. Specialist intervention work meets their needs well. In these sessions, their progress accelerates but is not as good in some lessons.
- In 2014, disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 were approximately five terms behind other pupils in the school in reading and writing, and three terms behind in mathematics. They were five terms behind other pupils nationally in reading and mathematics, and four terms behind in writing. However, as the quality of teaching has improved, gaps have reduced rapidly over the course of the year and have now closed completely. Disadvantaged pupils achieve as well as their peers in all year groups and in all subjects. All pupils make good progress.

The early years provision

is good

- The large majority of children are well prepared for Year 1 and have the skills and knowledge they need. Teachers gradually involve the children in whole-school events throughout the year. They provide more opportunities for them to develop their concentration through the summer term so that they are ready for their next stage of learning.
- Children join the Reception class with skills that are just below those typical for their age. Most children make good progress from their starting points. Children make good progress across all areas of learning; however, children make better progress in reading and writing than in number.
- Children make good progress in reading and writing because teachers have high expectations of what they can achieve. Time is used well in dedicated individual teaching sessions to help children write their own reading books. Themed activities, such as the pizza shop, offer additional interest and encourage children to practise their skills by writing menus and taking orders without the help of adults.
- Teachers plan a range of interesting tasks to ensure that children make good progress. They use information about children's learning well to identify their next steps. All adults are actively involved in asking children challenging questions and deepening their understanding.
- The early years leader is reflective and thinks carefully about how to further improve teaching and learning. She has an accurate understanding of the effectiveness of early years teaching and uses information about children's learning to decide what to do next. Consequently, children's learning and development have improved.
- Staff establish a strong partnership between home and school from the outset. Relationships are forged and sustained through events such as stay-and-play days and the popular Chinese New Year evening. Parents regularly provide information to teachers about their child that teachers use to enhance learning experiences.
- Right from the start, children are taught to play safely and respect each other. They use spades carefully to dig in their pretend 'quarry' and cooperate well to move the mud in their digger. Children are thoughtful and show care, exemplified when one child told others not to step on a bug, saying, 'He is special.'

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	123016
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	461467

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	281
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Nadine Vaillant-Hill
Headteacher	Mrs Sharon Mullins
Date of previous school inspection	28–29 November 2013
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