

# Thameside Primary School

Harley Road, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire RG4 8DB

<b>Inspection dates</b>	2–3 March 2016
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- This is a good school. Its effectiveness has improved quickly since the last inspection due to strong and effective leadership.
- Pupils' outcomes are good. From starting points which are below those that are typical for their age, pupils make good progress.
- Children in the early years make good progress and achieve well.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. The broad and balanced curriculum provides a wide range of opportunities, which motivate pupils to try their best.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability achieve well. Those who speak English as an additional language make good progress from their starting points.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school's work. Parents are actively involved in their children's education.
- Staff have responded to the higher expectations set by leaders. Teamwork is strong and morale is high.
- Governors challenge and support leaders effectively. They know the school well and check that actions bring improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Pupils feel safe because adults provide effective guidance and support.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and work well together on tasks in lessons. They behave well and are courteous and polite.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strong feature of the school, which results in well-behaved, courteous, hard-working pupils. Pupils have a good understanding of different religions, cultures and British values.
- The school's work to support pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. The headteacher has established an environment where very child, parent and member of staff is valued and their needs considered carefully.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' progress in reading is not yet as rapid as it is in writing and mathematics.
- Not all middle leaders have the monitoring and evaluation skills required to drive up the quality of teaching in their area of responsibility.
- Teaching is not yet outstanding. Some teachers are not fully confident in using new systems to gauge pupils' progress, particularly in reading.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure that middle leaders play a full part in improving teaching and pupils' learning in the areas for which they are responsible.
- Improve teaching to outstanding levels in order that more pupils, including the most able, make better than expected progress in reading, by:
  - ensuring that teachers become adept at using the new reading system to identify more accurately what pupils still need to do to improve
  - giving pupils, particularly those in the older year groups, more opportunities to practise and develop their reading skills and accelerate their learning.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher and other school leaders, including governors, have set a clear direction for the school since the last inspection. Expectations and aspirations are higher and all leaders are determined that the school continues to improve. They have been effective in remedying previous weaknesses and uniting the staff in support of the drive for improvement.
- Staff are very committed to improving the pupils' achievement. A typical comment from staff was, 'All staff work very hard and are dedicated to ensuring all children are happy, confident and learning well.'
- Parents express strong support for the school's leadership and all aspects of the school's work. A very large majority would recommend the school to other parents. One parent's view summed up views of many others by saying, 'Leaders and teachers have a strong ethos that every child is important, and every child can learn.'
- Leaders have led improvements to the quality of teaching. Inspectors' joint observations with senior leaders showed that their judgements are accurate. The school's self-evaluation shows that leaders accurately identify the areas requiring development.
- Training and checks on staff are effective. Staff have clear guidance and frequent training on how to carry out key aspects of their work, such as how to manage behaviour and mark pupils' work. Leaders' follow-up checks of lessons and pupils' books ensure that each member of staff understands and implements school policies in these areas.
- The curriculum is well organised and provides interesting activities, which pupils enjoy. A range of extra-curricular activities enhance pupils' social, physical and music skills. Effective use of primary sports funding leads to increased participation for all pupils and the development of staff expertise in the teaching of physical education.
- Leaders make effective use of pupil premium funding to provide additional support where needed, both in classrooms and in developing pupils' emotional and social skills. Consequently, these pupils grow in confidence and make good progress.
- There is a strong emphasis on encouraging pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate and value diversity and to respect others. For example, the school takes positive steps to widen pupils' understanding of different cultures and helps to prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- There is a clear commitment to ensure equality of opportunity. All pupils, whatever their ability or background, have the chance to take part in all the school's activities and to achieve well.
- There have been a number of changes in leadership roles. Recently appointed subject leaders and other middle leaders have considerable expertise in, and enthusiasm for, the areas for which they are responsible. They are not all, as yet, wholly effective in identifying ways that teaching can be improved to the very best levels.
- The school's after-school club is well led and managed.
- The support from the local authority has been too variable. The consultants working with leaders do not have a comprehensive knowledge of the school's performance information and the quality of teaching, which has limited their ability to influence greater improvement.
- **The governance of the school**
  - The governing body is led very effectively. Governors fulfil their responsibilities and take advantage of training opportunities to ensure that they understand and complete their statutory duties. They have an accurate view of how well the school is doing compared with others locally and nationally. They know how salary progression is used to reward and support teachers' practice, and use the information about the quality of teaching well to inform their decisions.
  - Governors know about the quality of teaching because the headteacher keeps them well informed. They visit the school regularly and know what the school is doing to improve the teaching and eradicate any weaker practice. They are ambitious for the school's future success.
  - Governors carefully monitor the use of additional funding, both for the pupil premium and sports grant to make sure that they are improving outcomes for pupils. They are committed to promoting equality of opportunity and ensuring that there are no barriers to learning for disadvantaged pupils.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. They are well managed, fully meet statutory requirements and keep pupils safe. All staff have been trained to protect pupils from all forms of radicalisation and extremism, and senior leaders are well prepared to act on any incidents should they occur. Governors have undertaken a recent audit to confirm that all aspects of safeguarding are fit for purpose.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Training has enhanced teachers' skills. Literacy and numeracy skills are now taught well.
- Many teachers ask questions that encourage pupils to think and deepen their understanding. Pupils respond eagerly to these questions and are keen to contribute to class discussions. They work well in lots of different and effective ways.
- Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning, particularly pupils who have special educational needs or disability and those at the early stages of learning English. For example, individuals and groups of pupils receive support that focuses on their needs. In addition, for those at an early stage of learning English, there are opportunities to understand their learning using pictures and symbols.
- Teachers are confident to teach mathematics well, especially in enabling pupils to use a range of methods to solve problems. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils developed their reasoning skills and applied their knowledge of fractions and percentages to group different charts and pie graphs. Consequently, pupils are making faster progress than previously.
- The teaching of writing is good and teachers develop pupils' writing skills well: for example, in a Year 4 lesson, when pupils wrote an imaginative alternative ending to *Charlotte's Web*. All pupils made good progress because the teacher provided them with effective ways of developing their vocabulary and styles of writing.
- Teachers mark pupils' work effectively and provide useful guidance for them. Teachers' comments offer clear advice so that they know what they need to do to improve. Pupils' responses show that they act on teachers' comments.
- Although the progress of the majority of pupils is good in reading, too few of the most-able pupils reach the same levels that they reach in writing and mathematics. Teachers are not always as confident about how to develop pupils' comprehension skills. Leaders have introduced additional ways for teachers to evaluate pupils' progress in reading. This is having positive effects on identifying what pupils need to do to make better than expected progress in reading. However, these routines are relatively new and have not yet accelerated some pupils' rate of progress, including the most able.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. The pupils are friendly and confident towards visitors, welcoming them warmly and opening doors for them. Pupils are clearly very proud of their school and talk happily with each other.
- The school makes everyone feel valued and equality of opportunity is clearly in the culture which is intrinsic to the school. Pupils are confident when they mix with other pupils and adults. They take responsibility seriously. Pupils work very well together; they play enthusiastically and they help support one another so that they all make good progress.
- Pupils share the school's strong sense of community. Leaders have developed a climate that encourages pupils to have an appreciation about different cultures and beliefs. Pupils have a strong sense of belonging and impressed inspectors with their good manners.
- Staff training in child protection is highly effective. Pupils say confidently that they are exceptionally well looked after and there is always someone with whom to share a problem. One pupil said, 'The teachers care for us and help sort out our problems.'
- The majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, confirmed that their children feel safe, and are well looked after and happy at school. One parent said, 'I am confident that they are safe, happy and well cared for as well as pushed to achieve their best.'

- Pupils have an excellent understanding of the different types of bullying, including cyber bullying. Through assemblies and personal, social and health education, pupils know how to keep safe in a range of situations. This includes when using the road and when exposed to potential hazards. Pupils also have an excellent appreciation of e-safety. They apply their understanding to everyday situations when they arise.
- School staff work highly effectively with external agencies to support pupils and their families.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The school manages behaviour well. Pupils understand the consequences of poor behaviour and why it is important to behave well. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors have a good understanding of right and wrong. They also said that behaviour is typically good in the school.
- Pupils enjoy taking on additional responsibilities. For example, the 'peer mediators' help pupils resolve any issues during breaktimes, and promote respect and equality within their community.
- Pupils show respect and work collaboratively with each other in lessons. They accept and embrace all of the different cultures within the school.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and teachers use these positive attitudes to help drive progress within their learning. On very rare occasions where the teacher has not pitched the learning at the right level for some pupils, a few lose concentration and become distracted, which gets in the way of their learning.
- Attendance levels are above the national average. Pupils enjoy going to school, with pupils saying the school is 'fun, amazing and exciting'. The school has good procedures in place to check attendance and to challenge and reduce persistent absence.
- The majority of parents, staff and pupils talk positively about behaviour in the school. Most parents who responded to Parent View feel that pupils behave well.

### **Outcomes for pupils**

**are good**

- Outcomes for pupils have improved to a good level since the last inspection.
- Children make good progress in the early years provision and by the end of the Reception Year the percentage of children who achieve a good level of development is above average.
- At the end of Key Stage 1 in 2015, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level for mathematics, reading and writing was in line with national figures. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 in mathematics and reading was above national figures. The proportion of pupils achieving Level 3 in writing was below national figures but the school has taken effective action and current pupils' work indicates that they are set to achieve above national figures for Level 3.
- Children make good progress in Years 1 and 2. The phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 shows that early reading skills are taught well and that the teaching of phonics is good. In the phonics screening check in 2015, the proportion reaching the expected standard was broadly average. Currently, a greater proportion of Year 1 pupils are meeting the standard. This has a positive impact on pupils' reading skills in Years 1 and 2.
- At the end of Key Stage 2 in 2015, the proportions of pupils who achieved the expected level in writing, reading and mathematics was in line with national figures. The proportions of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 in maths and writing were also similar to national figures. The most-able pupils do not always reach the standards of which they are capable, especially in reading at the end of Key Stage 2. Not enough of the most-able pupils make more progress than expected in reading.
- Pupils' work completed since September, and observations of teaching, indicate that pupils in Key Stage 2 currently make good progress. However, teaching and planning does not consistently ensure that the most-able pupils make better than expected progress in reading.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability benefit from good teaching and achieve well. Teachers work closely with teaching assistants to make sure that these pupils benefit from all the activities provided for them which are specifically adapted to their needs when appropriate.
- Pupils from minority ethnic groups achieve well. Those who speak English as an additional language, particularly those at an early stage of English, also achieve well as they have effective support from teachers and bilingual staff.

- In 2015, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 was one-and-a-half terms behind that of other pupils in mathematics, reading and writing. The results also showed that they were just over one term behind other pupils in the school. Current checks on these pupils' progress show that these gaps are closing quickly. This shows the school's success in narrowing significantly the gaps between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and their peers, both in school and nationally.

## **Early years provision**

**is good**

- The early years is led and managed well. The early years leaders have a good understanding of how children learn and develop. The staff know the individual children well through thoroughly observing their activities. The children have a good balance between activities led by the teacher and those they choose themselves.
- At the time of the last inspection, children's skills on entry to Reception were broadly typical for their age. The early years leader and headteacher have established rigorous new assessment systems which show that now children enter the school with skills and abilities below those typical for their age.
- The quality of teaching is good. Children make good progress from their starting points and achieve a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year. Teachers plan learning that interests children and systematically promotes basic skills.
- Staff assess children's progress regularly and the learning journals show evidence of good progress made by children of all abilities. Children are well prepared for Year 1.
- There are positive relationships between children and staff. The children behave well and get on with each other, learning to develop their social skills through sharing and taking turns.
- Children who have special educational needs or disability and disadvantaged children are included fully. They are well supported in their learning and so they do well.
- Adults question children well in order to encourage them to think more deeply. They explain things clearly.
- Children behave well because they know what is expected of them. They take turns, share toys and form trusting relationships with adults.
- The provision meets all statutory requirements for ensuring children's health, safety and well-being.
- Parents told inspectors that they find it easy to communicate with the adults, and that their children are happy and safe.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	109800
<b>Local authority</b>	Reading
<b>Inspection number</b>	10002324

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	399
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mark Harper
<b>Headteacher</b>	Helen Wallace
<b>Telephone number</b>	0118 937 5551
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.thamesideprimary.co.uk">www.thamesideprimary.co.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:admin@thameside.reading.sch.uk">admin@thameside.reading.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	20–21 November 2013

## Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school and numbers on roll have increased over the last three years.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is below average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the additional pupil premium is average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are eligible for free school meals, those who have been eligible for free school meals at any time in the last six years and children in care of the local authority.
- Children in the early years attend full time in the Reception classes.
- There have been extensive staff changes since the previous inspection.
- The school runs an after-school club for its pupils.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 28 lessons; 18 of these were joint observations with the headteacher and acting deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors held meetings with school staff, members of the governing body, parents and carers.
- The inspectors observed the school's work. They looked at a wide range of documentation including safeguarding documents, the school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its own performance and pupils' work in books.
- Inspectors held discussions with several groups of pupils, as well as informal conversations with other pupils during lessons and at breaktimes. In addition, the inspectors listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors took account of 109 responses from parents to Ofsted's questionnaire, Parent View, and the school's own surveys.
- Inspectors took into consideration 35 responses to the staff questionnaire and 66 responses to the pupil questionnaire.

## Inspection team

David Harris, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Karen Metcalfe	Ofsted Inspector
Katherine Powell	Ofsted Inspector



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