

Overstone Combined School

Church Street, Wing, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire LU7 0NY

Inspection dates 17–18 May 2016

Overall effectiveness **Good**

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| 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 | Good |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders and governors have made sure the school is a happy, welcoming and purposeful place. Children enjoy coming to school and learn well.
- Pupils make good progress throughout the school and develop into thoughtful responsible people well prepared for secondary education.
- Over time, pupils' achievement in English and mathematics by the end of each key stage has been in line with the national figure. Current pupils' achievement is equally strong.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs are taught and supported effectively so they make good progress.
- Teachers foster positive relationships with their pupils. They set interesting tasks that engage pupils' attention and support learning.
- Typically, teachers provide suitable levels of challenge for pupils of varying abilities. They encourage and enable pupils to make good, and at times outstanding, progress.
- Pupils conduct themselves well around the school; they play and socialise happily together.
- Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain. They have a good understanding of the need to show respect and treat people equally, regardless of differences.
- Pupils feel safe and are safe at school. Bullying is rare.
- Provision in the early years, and the Nursery in particular, provides children with a strong start. They benefit from a rich and stimulating indoor and outdoor environment and skilful teaching.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Leaders do not have a consistently incisive understanding of the impact of their work. Improvement work does not have a routinely sharp focus.
- Governors do not receive the information necessary to gain a deep insight into some aspects of the school's performance.
- Some teaching does not consistently enable pupils to deepen their knowledge and hone their skills to an extent where they can make rapid progress.
- The school's work on assessing subjects other than English and mathematics is at an early stage.
- Children in Reception who join with high starting points do not routinely make strong progress.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure that leaders sharpen their approach to evaluating the curriculum, teaching and achievement so they and governors gain a deep and incisive understanding of the school's performance.
- Ensure improvement work is sharply focused on tackling any areas of relative weakness.
- Further embed the new curriculum and assessment system so it promotes strong achievement in all subjects.
- Identify and tackle areas of relative weakness in teaching so that pupils – in particular, the most able and least able – make consistently strong and increasingly rapid progress in all subjects.
- Make sure the children who join Reception with high starting points consistently make strong progress.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher has worked effectively with other leaders and staff to ensure a welcoming, friendly environment and caring community, where pupils can learn and thrive. Pupils enjoy school, make good progress and behave well.
- Leaders make good use of pupil premium funding to support the small group of disadvantaged pupils in the school. Funding is used to provide individualised support for these pupils so they can catch up from any prior underachievement. These pupils value this support and this, together with good teaching in class, enables them to make good progress in line with their peers.
- The leader of the provision for pupils who have special education needs or disability knows these pupils well and makes sure there is suitable support in place for them related to their individual needs. He maintains frequent contact with teachers to ensure suitable teaching and support is in place. Helpful, specialist support sessions in literacy and numeracy take place before school so lessons are not missed.
- Leaders work effectively to tackle any poor attendance. Regular contact with home and, where necessary, robust discussion with parents means very few pupils now have poor attendance and attendance overall is in line with that seen nationally.
- Leadership of behaviour is strong. High expectations coupled with a rich range of rewards encourage and motivate pupils to behave well. Clear sanctions deter contravention of school rules. Pupils who find it hard to comply are suitably supported by the school.
- Leaders engage well with parents. The headteacher makes it her business to greet pupils and parents at the school door and make sure any issues or concerns parents raise are noted and followed up. Parents are eager to praise the school. One parent summed it up well stating, 'I cannot fault it'.
- Leaders have rightly devoted considerable time to planning the curriculum to meet new national requirements. The curriculum is broad and balanced, providing opportunities for pupils to make good progress across subjects. The subject-specific learning that pupils should undertake in each term is suitably defined in the school's curriculum plans which teachers use to plan interesting, engaging lessons.
- Leaders' commitment to ensuring that pupils develop into fully rounded individuals well prepared for modern Britain is clearly evident. Pupils learn to respect people of faith and no faith in religious education. Projects such as the fair trade project help pupils to consider rights and responsibilities. Forest school activities, that take place in the school's wooded area, develop pupils' social skills and appreciation of the environment. Science and design and technology lessons include exploration of implications of technological advance. Pupils also benefit from visits nearby and further afield; examples include visits to Bletchley Park and a Years 5 and 6 visit to Normandy.
- Leaders have set up a suitable approach for assessing pupils' achievement in the new curriculum. Helpful grids define the knowledge and skills that pupils should grasp in English and mathematics to meet or exceed the expectations for their age. Teachers regularly use these grids to assess what pupils have and haven't learned, so they can see where further teaching or support is needed. Subject leaders are developing and adapting this approach to assess progress in other subjects.
- Leaders regularly collect information about pupils' achievement in English and mathematics. They use this to see the proportion of different pupil groups on track to meet or exceed overall expectations for the year. However, leaders' evaluation of pupils' achievement does not consider the more detailed assessment information which teachers provide. As a result, leaders do not know exactly which English and mathematics skills and knowledge pupils have grasped well or where further work is needed.
- Leaders keep watch on the quality of teaching. Visits to lessons enable them to evaluate how well pupils engage and behave. Scrutiny of pupils' work helps leaders check the curriculum is covered. They also check that teachers are consistently applying the school's assessment policy. Leaders identify and support any teachers who are not meeting expectations or find aspects of teaching such as behaviour management need attention. Opportunities for teachers to observe the strongest teaching in the school help ensure that pupils engage and behave consistently well.
- Leaders' analysis of the quality of teaching, although broadly accurate, is not truly incisive. Checks on teaching quality do not routinely consider which aspects of teaching in each subject are supporting pupils to make strong progress or where practice is comparatively weak and needs attention. As a result, leaders do not have a deep insight into the impact of their work to improve teaching and raise achievement. Consequently, work to improve teaching is not always sharply focused.

- Leaders make well-considered use of the physical education and sports premium funding. Staff have been trained to teach specific sports. All have undertaken swimming training so better use is made of the school swimming pool. Pupils benefit from increased opportunities to attend sports clubs as well as expert sports coaching. However, leaders do not have a precise understanding of the impact of this work on pupils' participation and enjoyment of sport. It is also not clear whether staff training has ensured that the school can deliver consistently high-quality sports education without extra funding.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors are typically well informed about the school's performance. They regularly consider all aspects, including teaching, achievement, behaviour and leadership. They use the information they receive to ask challenging questions and seek further information. Governors' visits to the school enable them to see the school at work first-hand. However, governors do not have a deep and precise understanding of the quality of teaching as it impacts on pupils' progress in different subjects. They know it is typically good but not where there are relative weaknesses. As a result, they are not as well placed as they need to be to sharply challenge leaders to secure consistently outstanding teaching.
 - Governors have made sure the school's curriculum includes opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, social, cultural and moral development. However, governors are not clear how leaders will evaluate the impact of this work, or how they will hold leaders to account for it.
 - Governors have been working to ensure the school website meets government requirements. This work is yet to be completed. The website does not include an evaluation of the impact of pupil premium and sports funding or information on how to apply for a place at the school through the local authority. The contact details of support services for the parents of pupils with special educational needs are also not provided.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Records are detailed and of high quality and the school works well with other agencies when needed to ensure any pupil at risk is protected and supported. Checks on the identity and suitability of staff are robust, well managed and recorded. Staff and governors receive regular suitable training and are fully aware of their responsibilities and who to report any concerns to. Governors make sure that regular thorough checks are carried out on the school's work to keep pupils safe, so they can be sure it is sound. Parents are informed about what to do if they have any concerns about safeguarding.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment **is good**

- Teachers typically have high expectations and plan and teach lessons that enable pupils of varying abilities to make good progress over time. Pupils have good relationships with teachers, enjoy lessons and engage well.
- Teaching is well structured so pupils can build their skills and knowledge step by step. Teachers make sure pupils understand what is required by the task. They ask questions to check pupils' grasp of concepts and give helpful feedback and guidance. As a result, pupils are able to overcome misconceptions, improve their work and make good progress.
- Support staff work effectively alongside teachers to provide extra support for pupils who have special educational needs or disability and others who need it. Pupils value this support and typically make good progress.
- Pupils are increasingly given opportunities to develop their writing in other subjects. This has helped them increase their stamina for writing. Pupils' writing is typically well structured and deploys increasingly sophisticated vocabulary as they progress through the school. However, the quality of writing in subjects other than English is not always as high as that produced in English lessons.
- A few teachers do not always plan well enough to ensure that all groups in the class make consistently strong progress. Sometimes the needs of the most able are focused on at the expense of some less able pupils in the class. Additionally, teachers do not always make sure pupils are routinely equipped with useful strategies for tackling their work, for example expecting pupils to write poems about historical events without teaching or reminding them of useful approaches for negotiating the task.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils develop in self-confidence and awareness as they progress through the school.
- Pupils say they are happy and well cared for at school; parents agree. Pupils know whom to turn to if they need support and are clear that school is a safe place. Personal, social and health education lessons and assemblies help pupils to know how to keep themselves safe, including when using the road, the internet and social media.
- Pupils learn about their rights and responsibilities and to understand and respect others. Pupils spoken to during the inspection were reflective and thoughtful. Year 6 boys spoke of how learning about Alan Turing had helped them understand the importance of not using homophobic language. Younger pupils spoke of learning about cultures from around the world and knew that whatever a person's religion, cultural background or family circumstance they should treat them with equal respect.
- The school's curriculum promotes pupils' awareness of the wider world and how they can become responsible citizens. Forest school activities help the younger pupils and children in early years develop good personal and social skills.
- Bullying is rare. When it does occur it is well tackled by adults. Leaders keep detailed records of any incidents or concerns and make sure these are followed up so they can be sure any bullying has stopped.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils' conduct is exemplary around the school site. Pupils socialise happily together. They are polite and welcoming.
- Pupils behave very well in lessons. They forge excellent relationships with teachers, pay attention, engage well in their learning and take pride in their work. They listen to each other and work well together on collaborative tasks. Disruption to learning is rare.
- Pupils' attendance has improved over the last three years and in 2015 was a little above the national figure. Overall attendance continues to be good. The proportion of pupils with low attendance was a little higher than the national figure in 2015. These pupils' attendance is improving because of leaders' increased engagement with parents.

Outcomes for pupils are good

- Pupils across the school typically make good progress from their starting points. Over time, pupils have attained well by the end of key stage 1. The proportion of pupils making expected and better progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2 has been in line with the national figure for the last three years. Pupils currently in the school make similarly strong progress.
- The proportion of pupils reaching a good level of development by the end of Reception is high and this is built on well in Year 1. Phonics (the sounds that letters make) is taught well and a high proportion of pupils reached the expected standard in the 2015 national phonics test. Pupils make good progress in and enjoy reading. Pupils use their knowledge of phonics well as they develop their writing.
- The small number of disadvantaged pupils in the school make the same good progress as their peers. School information shows that almost all disadvantaged pupils are meeting the standards expected for their age. Those who aren't are catching up due to helpful, personalised support.
- The most able pupils make good progress. Typically they tackle suitably challenging work that encourages them to further their skills and knowledge. When this is done effectively, these pupils make rapid progress. However, levels of challenge are not consistently high enough to ensure these pupils make outstanding progress over time. For example, although they make good progress in mathematics, there are not routine opportunities for the most able pupils to engage in reasoning and problem-solving activities that would enable them to deepen their mathematical understanding to an outstanding degree.
- Pupils with special educational needs typically make good progress. Teachers understand the needs of these pupils well and make sure suitable teaching and support is in place. Where needed, additional individual sessions before school help pupils to develop specific literacy and numeracy skills.
- Lessons in subjects other than English and mathematics enable pupils to develop an insight into and understanding of the world and to develop creative and technical skills. However, leaders recognise that

assessment of these subjects needs further development in order to gain an exact understanding of how well pupils are achieving in each.

- Pupils reaching the end of Year 6 have a good level of maturity. Typically, they are confident and self-assured and have the skills and knowledge necessary for them to flourish at the next stage of education.

Early years provision

is good

- Leaders have made sure that children benefit from a rich and stimulating indoor and outdoor environment. This supports children in early years to make good progress.
- Leaders make sure that any children with special educational needs or eligible for support through pupil premium funding are well known by staff and that their needs are met well.
- Teaching is effective. Children learn well through activities they initiate themselves and others led by adults. Good use of questioning by adults helps children develop their thinking and understanding.
- The weekly forest school is a key strength, providing rich opportunities for physical development and the development of language skills and early writing.
- Parents are entirely positive about the experience their children have in early years. 'My child is thriving' is typical of parents' comments on the provision. Staff work well with parents to develop strategies for supporting children's development at home.
- Leaders and teachers take great care to ensure children are kept safe. Children behave very well. They listen intently and pay attention when required.
- In 2015, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development in the early years was high. Children currently in early years are making good progress in all areas of development. Almost all children in Reception make good progress and are well equipped for Year 1.
- Children make excellent progress in Nursery. However, leaders have not considered well enough how to ensure that children who join Reception with high starting points always build on this and make further rapid progress.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 110519 |
| Local authority | Buckinghamshire |
| Inspection number | 10008779 |

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.

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Foundation |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 281 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Michelle Sutton |
| Headteacher | Naima France |
| Telephone number | 01296 688799 |
| Website | www.overstone-wing.bucks.sch.uk |
| Email address | admin@overstone-wing.bucks.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 16–17 May 2012 |

Information about this school

- The school is a larger-than-average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are White British. A very small proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium (additional government funding for children who are looked after by the local authority and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals) is much lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is low.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school works closely in partnership with two other local schools, High Ash Church of England School and St Michael's Church of England School.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 16 part lessons. Inspectors also undertook a series of shorter visits to 11 lessons, to look at teaching of foundation subjects and writing at key stage 2, the latter jointly with the headteacher. In addition, inspectors looked at samples of pupils' English, mathematics and topic work and listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors held discussions with senior and middle leaders, representatives from the local authority, members of the governing body, teachers, pupils and parents.
- Inspectors reviewed documents including safeguarding policies, behaviour and attendance records, self-evaluation and planning documents and the school's records on performance management and teaching and learning.
- Inspectors took into account 18 staff survey responses and 58 responses by parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. There were no responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

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| Gillian Peck | Ofsted Inspector |
| Anthony Linnet | Ofsted Inspector |
| Simon Francis | Ofsted Inspector |

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