

Tickford Park Primary School

Avon Close, Newport Pagnell, Buckinghamshire MK16 9DH

Inspection dates

29–30 November 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment are too variable. Some teachers do not challenge pupils to achieve higher standards, especially the most able pupils.
- The quality of teachers' questioning varies between classes. Questions often lack challenge and pupils' answers are not probed to develop their ideas in enough detail. Learning slows as a result.
- Teachers do not consistently pick up and deal effectively with pupils' misconceptions.
- Pupils in key stages 1 and 2 do not make consistently good progress and do not achieve the standards of which they are capable.
- Leaders have not monitored the quality of teaching robustly enough. This has limited the pace of improvement to secure consistently good teaching.
- Leaders' development plans are not sufficiently precise. Consequently, it is difficult for leaders to identify how successful their actions have been in improving pupils' outcomes.
- The priorities for teachers' performance management have not been sufficiently focused. Expectations for pupils' progress are not specific.

The school has the following strengths

- The personal development of pupils is effective and given high priority.
- Most pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make good progress.
- Leaders ensure that pupils are kept safe. Partnerships with agencies to support vulnerable families are strong.
- Early years provision ensures that children make good progress. The early years leader provides strong leadership.
- Pupils behave well in class and around school. They are polite and well mannered.
- The school's work to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' outcomes by ensuring that:
 - teachers use assessment to plan learning tasks that stretch and challenge pupils, particularly the most able
 - skilful questioning is used to deepen pupils' understanding and develop their thinking
 - any misconceptions pupils have are picked up and dealt with effectively.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - leaders rigorously monitor the impact of teaching on pupils' progress
 - strategies to improve the performance of teachers focus on pupils' progress
 - development plans are precise about how actions are intended to improve pupils' progress in order to evaluate their success.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders are ambitious for all pupils to achieve well. To this end, they have produced a thorough evaluation of the strengths and weaker aspects of the school's effectiveness and this has led to well-thought-out priorities to improve pupils' outcomes. However, improvement plans are not sharply focused on pupils' attainment and progress. It is therefore difficult for leaders to evaluate whether the actions taken, to improve achievement and the quality of teaching, have had a positive impact.
- The management of teachers' performance has not been rigorous enough. Teachers have been given training and support to develop the skills to do their jobs. However, processes for managing teachers' performance are not related strongly enough to pupils' outcomes. As a result, staff cannot be held fully to account for the impact of their teaching.
- Leaders, including subject leaders, do not check on the quality of teaching with sufficient precision or provide teachers with clear information about how to improve their practice. Feedback to staff has been focused on teachers' actions rather than on the impact of their teaching on pupils' learning.
- Senior leaders' chosen strategy to carefully select staff to be responsible for different groups of pupils is encouraging more purposeful use of information about pupils' performance. For example, the leader responsible for children looked after closely checks on the academic progress of these pupils as well as their personal development and well-being.
- Staff morale is high, and staff are willing to take on new tasks and responsibilities to provide the best for pupils. There is a learning culture among staff, who are keen to discuss their own experiences and to support each other. These discussions add to the formal training that is provided to address the priorities that senior leaders have identified. Both formal and informal training have made helpful contributions to the strong progress made by pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- The use of the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils has been focused on increasing pupils' progress in English and mathematics. As a result of extra support, some disadvantaged pupils make good progress. This is helping them to attain higher standards. For example, small group work focused on improving writing skills has ensured that pupils have a more detailed knowledge of punctuation, and know how to use this accurately in their work.
- Leaders use the physical education and sport premium well. Pupils are encouraged to keep fit and healthy through the wealth of before- and after-school clubs and the active start to the day with 'wake and shake'. Pupils have the opportunity to engage in a wide range of competitive sports at tournaments at the local secondary school. A parent commenting on Parent View free-text said: 'My daughter is very happy in the school. She gets included in many activities such as badminton, netball, and cross-country festivals.'
- The funding for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities makes a positive difference to these pupils. The leader responsible for meeting the needs of this group makes sure

that they receive tailored additional support. The leader keeps a close eye on the performance of these pupils to ensure that they achieve as well as they should.

- The curriculum is broad and balanced and pupils enjoy their learning. Plans set out the essential knowledge, skills and understanding that pupils should develop in the different subjects, as they move up through the school. Leaders aim to provide pupils with the literacy and numeracy skills that they need, balanced by a wide range of experiences. The school extends pupils' experiences through trips and visits. For example, pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 take part in residential trips. There is also a broad range of activities after school, including yoga and dance.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. They develop respect and tolerance for people who come from different backgrounds to their own, and have a clear understanding of the principles of democracy. A wide range of visits and visitors support pupils' knowledge of different cultures and religions.
- Parents are positive about the school's work. Leaders work extremely hard to involve parents in supporting their children's learning. Parents, staff and governors, spoke with great enthusiasm about leaders' work to keep their children safe, and enjoying school. One parent told inspectors: 'We are moving house but don't want to move too far, so the children can still come here.'

Governance of the school

- Governors are ambitious for the school and its pupils. They work hard and contribute actively to the life of the school. Governors understand their roles and provide strategic leadership, while allowing leaders to get on with their day-to-day work. Governors are well informed about the school, and build on this through their visits.
- Governors know the school well because leaders provide governors with detailed information about pupils' performance, including the achievement of different groups of pupils. Governors hold leaders to account for their actions, and challenge leaders about any weaknesses in provision. However, there are times when governors do not challenge leaders about pupils' outcomes rigorously enough.
- Governors know in detail how additional funding is used for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, and for disadvantaged pupils, as well as how the premium for enhancing primary sports provision is spent. They have the information they need to understand whether the funding is used effectively, and is having the expected impact.
- Governors make appropriate arrangements for the headteacher's performance management, including the effective use of an external adviser.
- The governing body fulfils its role in helping to keep pupils safe. It has a thorough understanding of the potential risks faced by pupils, including those associated with radicalisation. It has a good knowledge of what is necessary to ensure online safety for pupils, and the role of the school's curriculum in teaching pupils how to keep safe in a variety of circumstances.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. There is a strong culture of safeguarding throughout the school, and all necessary records are detailed and of high quality.
- Leaders, governors and staff implement safeguarding policies and procedures which meet statutory requirements. Staff are well informed and have received training on safeguarding which follows the most recent national guidance. Staff are fully aware of the procedures should they have any concerns about the safety and care of pupils.
- Governors discharge their safeguarding duties diligently, and have attended additional training. Governors oversee the work of leaders and ensure that it meets statutory requirements. For example, a representative from the governing body scrutinises the single central record, to ensure that all new staff and volunteers have had thorough suitability checks before working with pupils.
- Leaders work effectively with outside agencies. Communication with appropriate agencies is effective and timely, and referrals take place promptly, when needed. This supports improved outcomes for vulnerable pupils and their families. Leaders engage well with families to make sure that all pupils are supported and safe. Leaders review what has worked well and constantly refine what they do to ensure best practice.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching over time has not been effective enough to ensure good outcomes for pupils. There have been some recent improvements and, currently, teaching is moving in the right direction. However, pupils' work shows that progress is not at the pace that should be expected of them.
- Some teachers do not set tasks that challenge pupils to reach their potential. As a result, lessons do not consistently stretch pupils' thinking, especially for the most able pupils. At times, the most able pupils complete tasks that they have already mastered. However, where teachers use assessment information well to provide tasks that appropriately challenge pupils and sustain their interest, progress is stronger.
- The effectiveness of adults' questioning varies throughout the school. Some teachers and teaching assistants ask questions that are too simple, meaning pupils can answer quickly and easily without really having to think. Some teachers' questioning skills are effective and as a result, pupils consolidate and deepen their understanding.
- Pupils' misconceptions are sometimes not picked up well enough to match future learning to their knowledge and understanding. Pupils are not always clear as to how they can improve their work. This is evident, for example, in pupils' writing, where common errors in punctuation persist and is because the school's policy on marking is not consistently applied by teachers. Effective assessment from teachers was seen in some lessons and pupils' work, providing useful feedback to pupils on how to improve their skills.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are supported effectively. Teachers and teaching assistants offer prompt and effective help as pupils are working, to correct misunderstandings and direct new learning. Teachers use appropriate strategies and

resources to help pupils to make rapid gains in their knowledge and skills. As a result, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities learn well and typically make good progress.

- Teaching assistants build good relationships with pupils. They are trained well and work closely with teachers to provide effective support in the classroom. Teaching assistants are familiar with teachers' planning and are deployed to work with small groups of pupils of all abilities.
- There is a structured approach to the teaching of phonics from early years through key stage 1. It is successful in equipping pupils with strategies to read and write unfamiliar words. Pupils who read to inspectors, including those who find reading difficult, enjoy reading a variety of books. Their reading records indicate that they read often and are well supported by staff, in partnership with parents. The most able pupils read with increasing fluency as they move through the school.
- Teachers are putting into practice the training they have received on the teaching of mathematics. Consequently, pupils reason increasingly well in mathematics. This was evident through lesson observations, looking at pupils' work and in discussions with them. Pupils are more confident in mathematics and generally enthusiastic about their work.
- A very large majority of parents are very happy with the school. They value the opportunities that they have to approach staff if they have a concern, and to find out how they can support their child at home. A parent said: 'I enjoy all of the information events provided by the school, for example, internet safety, grammar and maths workshops.'

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Leaders and all staff give high priority to ensuring that individual pupils receive appropriate support when they need it.
- Pupils say that they feel safe, and staff and parents agree. Pupils have a good understanding of the actions leaders take to keep them safe. The curriculum promotes pupils' healthy lifestyles well and supports their emotional and social development.
- Pupils said that bullying is not an issue in the school, and they are confident that adults would deal with any rare occurrence effectively. When asked whether there is any bullying, one pupil said, 'If there is, it's a tiny bit, but it's really quickly dealt with.' Pupils are adamant that everyone is treated fairly regardless of ethnicity, faith or disability.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They are inquisitive and interested in lessons, and confident and resilient when tackling work that they find difficult. One parent said, 'My child is happy, motivated and his confidence has bloomed.'
- Pupils speak enthusiastically about the positive relationships they enjoy in school. Pupils cooperate and work happily together, listening carefully to instructions and

sharing their ideas with peers. In lessons, pupils provide feedback to each other about their work, and this is done thoughtfully and with consideration.

- Pupils have a broad awareness of other religions and cultures. They have a good understanding of right and wrong because of the careful thinking and planning that leaders have invested in pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils conduct themselves in an orderly manner in and around school, at all times of the day. They are polite and friendly to everyone. Pupils are respectful to each other, to staff and to visitors.
- Pupils are quick to settle in class and are keen and enthusiastic learners. Lessons proceed without interruption. The school is an orderly, calm environment. Pupils know how to move quietly around the school, and when they move to work in classrooms other than their own.
- During playtimes, pupils are active and demonstrate caring relationships with each other. There are appropriate levels of supervision from staff, and playground routines are well established.
- Pupils who have difficulty managing their own behaviour are supported sensitively by staff, in accordance with pupils' individual behaviour plans. Teachers ensure that there is a consistent approach to managing behaviour, and pupils respond well.
- Attendance is in line with the national average and is closely monitored by staff. Pupils enjoy coming to school, respect their teachers and enjoy learning. There has been an improvement in the attendance of different groups of pupils. For example, disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities now attend in line with their peers.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes for pupils require improvement because there is too much variability in pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Provisional results for Year 6 pupils in 2017, pupils' outcomes in the end of key stage 2 national assessments in 2016, and current pupils' work demonstrate variations in the rate of progress for different groups of pupils. While improving, not enough pupils develop the knowledge, understanding and skills they are capable of. Pupils are not, therefore, sufficiently well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
- Pupils' attainment in key stage 1 and key stage 2 is generally at the expected standards. However, pupils' weaker progress scores highlight that pupils could achieve higher standards, regardless of what their starting points are. Stronger teaching is beginning to help pupils to make more rapid progress and enable more to reach the higher standards.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress. This is because teachers and teaching assistants meet their specific needs and support pupils effectively.

- Overall, differences between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in school are diminishing because of the targeted use of the pupil premium to support their needs. However, while some disadvantaged pupils make good progress, this is not consistent across the school. As a result, there are gaps in the attainment of these pupils when compared to other pupils nationally. The progress of the most able disadvantaged pupils is steadily improving.
- Pupils in Year 1 achieve well in the phonics screening check. Since the last inspection the number of pupils achieving the expected standard has been in line with, or above, the national figure. Teachers plan pupils' learning well so that they acquire the phonic skills needed to tackle a wide range of texts and unfamiliar words.
- The quality of pupils' writing varies from class to class. Teachers' assessments indicate that there have been improvements to pupils' writing skills and that standards are typically in line, or above, the age-related national average, especially by the end of key stage 1. However, pupils' work and the learning observed in lessons show that the progress of pupils is inconsistent.
- Work in pupils' mathematics books and discussions with pupils about their learning show that pupils are acquiring the knowledge, skills and understanding expected for their age. However, the progress they make is not rapid enough. Teachers' questioning and planned learning opportunities do not provide strong enough challenge to deepen pupils' understanding.
- The most able pupils make steady progress, but the lack of challenge prevents them from making more rapid progress. Some teachers adapt learning for the most able pupils during lessons and this deepens their understanding. However, this group of pupils is typically not stretched sufficiently.

Early years provision

Good

- Children join the Reception classes with skills and knowledge which are typical for their ages. In 2017, the proportion of children who reached a good level of development by the end of early years was above the national average. As a result, children are well prepared for Year 1. There has been an improving trend in the early years outcomes over the past three years.
- Children make good progress because of strong leadership and effective teamwork within the early years staff. The leader of the early years has a clear understanding of the different learning needs of the children, and the priorities to further improve the early years provision. She makes effective use of assessment to ensure that teaching meets children's individual needs.
- The early years pupil premium is used effectively to support children's early language development. Disadvantaged children make good progress. This is because staff think carefully about how best to support children in their learning.
- Indoor and outdoor areas provide a wide range of opportunities for children to play and participate in practical role play, for example, in the 'coffee shop'. A variety of imaginative methods encourage children to record their thinking and ideas on paper. Children regularly engage in construction activities, sand and water play, drawing and

painting. There are also numerous creative opportunities for children to develop their writing skills.

- Children behave very well and are keen to learn new things. They work well together and activities engage girls and boys equally, so that they interact positively together with sustained interest.
- The teaching of phonics is well planned and enables children to build a secure knowledge of letters and sounds. This has proved effective in improving the level of children's skills in reading and writing over the last two years.
- Adults ask open-ended questions so that children have opportunities to think for themselves. This means that children develop their own ideas, deepen their thinking and are able to pursue their own interests.
- Comprehensive transition arrangements help children to settle into school quickly. Well-established routines make ensure that children know what is expected of them. Staff respond quickly to any parental concerns. Consequently, children enjoy coming to school and are happy. One parent said that her child, 'Absolutely loves going to school!'

School details

Unique reference number	135107
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	10037821

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	393
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Emma Whyte
Headteacher	Sally Ahmad
Telephone number	01908 610 431
Website	www.tickfordpark.org.uk/
Email address	office@tickfordpark.milton-keynes.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	17–18 January 2013

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The headteacher is currently on long-term absence. The deputy headteacher is the acting headteacher.
- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
 - The majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average.
- The school does not meet the government's floor standards for 2017. These set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning throughout the school. Some observations were carried out jointly with the acting headteacher. In addition, inspectors scrutinised pupils' work.
- The inspectors listened to pupils read and met with pupils, formally and informally, to listen to their views.
- Meetings were held with the acting headteacher, other leaders and teachers, members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body, and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection team scrutinised a wide range of documentation that covered: information about pupils' attainment and progress; the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan; minutes of meetings; evaluations of teaching and learning; records related to pupils' attendance, behaviour and safeguarding; and records of visits from improvement partners and governors.
- Inspectors considered the views expressed by parents through informal meetings as well as the 148 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and 125 free-text comments. Inspectors also considered the views of staff through 21 responses to Ofsted's online staff survey.

Inspection team

Richard Blackmore, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Mary Ellen McCarthy	Ofsted Inspector
Christopher Crouch	Ofsted Inspector

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