

Oldbrook First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110240
Local Authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	356709
Inspection dates	21–22 September 2010
Reporting inspector	Arnalena (Nina) Bee

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	114
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Colleen Kirkbride
Headteacher	Kirk Hopkins
Date of previous school inspection	5 February 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited eight lessons and observed six teachers. Discussions were held with the headteacher, the assistant headteacher, and two representatives from the governing body, staff, children and parents and carers. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at school documentation, including evidence from the school's self-evaluation process as well as 54 questionnaires from parents and carers and 23 from staff

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. They looked in detail at the following:

- the progress of individuals and different groups of children as they move through Reception and Years 1 and 2
- the accuracy of the school's very positive judgements on the curriculum and care, guidance and support how effectively the subject leaders are involved in improving children's performance, particularly in English, mathematics and science.

Information about the school

This is a small infant school. Just under a third of the children come from White British families. The remainder come from a wide range of other ethnic groups, the main ones being from Indian, Asian or Asian British backgrounds. The proportion of children who speak English as an additional language is above average, as is the number who are at the early stages of learning English. The number of children identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of two Reception classes. At the time of the inspection, the children in Reception were part-time. At the time of inspection the headteacher has been in post for three weeks.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This is a welcoming and caring school that provides a satisfactory education for its children. What it does particularly well is to provide good quality care, guidance and support which enables children to develop good personal and social skills. In addition, the curriculum allows children to have numerous opportunities to take part in many additional activities that are arranged to enrich most subject areas. These include visits out to interesting places, such as art galleries and museums. Effective partnerships with parents and carers and people in the local community enable many interesting visitors to be invited into school. For example, parents and carers come in to share their many different traditions and cultures with the children, and representatives from the fire service come in to enable pupils to become aware of fire safety. The need for pupils to keep themselves safe is very effectively addressed. This results in children having an outstanding awareness of safety issues. Children talk very knowledgeably about why they have fire doors and fire drills and the need to tell an adult if they have a problem. Children say they feel safe in school because 'teachers look after us and there are big gates to stop strangers getting in'. There is a wide range of extra-curricular clubs offered and these are well attended. The way the curriculum promotes the need to develop a healthy lifestyle is excellent. Children talk impressively about the importance of eating sensibly and the reasons why this is necessary. They were keen to say that 'this is a healthy school and we eat healthy lunches.'

Teaching is satisfactory overall. Children in Reception get off to a good start. They achieve well because they receive good quality teaching. Learning is not as rapid in Years 1 and 2 because teaching is not as consistently good. The way basic literacy and numeracy skills are taught does not always ensure that all children learn how to write letters and numbers correctly. When they write in literacy, mathematics and science, children are not encouraged to spell the words, which they use frequently, correctly. Assessment is not always used accurately to match activities to children's individual needs. Teachers' marking does not ensure that children are given clear guidance on what they need to do to improve. Standards are broadly average by the time children leave in Year 2. This represents satisfactory progress from their starting points in Year 1. A few children make good progress and a small number, particularly White British boys, do not do as well as could be expected.

The recently appointed headteacher has got off to a good start and has quickly got to know the children and accurately identified the school's strengths and what needs improving. Self-evaluation is satisfactory. Not all teaching has been sufficiently monitored and current weaknesses in teaching have not been identified and worked on. Subject coordinators are not yet using data effectively to check that all children are

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making the progress expected of them. The governing body are now better informed than they were during the previous inspection, and so are able to support and challenge the school more effectively. The school engages well with the large majority of parents and carers. During the inspection, a workshop on encouraging parents and carers to become more involved in their children's learning was well attended and there was a buzz of purposeful activity in the hall where it took place. Attendance is satisfactory. However, engagement with the very few parents and carers of children who are persistent non-attendees is not as strong as it could be. The headteacher feels that more could be done in this area. The school has made adequate improvements since it was last inspected and has satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and progress in Key Stage 1 by ensuring that the quality of teaching is consistently good by:
 - checking that the teaching of basic literacy, numeracy and science skills enables children to learn how to write letters and numbers correctly, spell frequently used words accurately, and know how to form proper sentences.
 - making sure that children are given good quality written guidance on what they need to do to improve and move to the next step of learning
 - using assessment more carefully so that children always receive activities that are tailored to suit their individual needs.
- Improve the monitoring role of the subject coordinators for English, mathematics and science by:
 - ensuring that they use data, that is collected on each child, to identify their individual progress, with particular attention to the progress of White British boys, so that progress is tracked more carefully and individuals and groups of children achieve well.
- Improve attendance by working more closely with the very few parents and carers of children who are persistent non-attendees.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Achievement is satisfactory and, by the end of Year 2, attainment is broadly average. Children quickly develop positive attitudes to learning and thoroughly enjoy school. They try hard and persevere well in lessons. However, learning slows down when children are given tasks which involve reading and writing when they have not acquired the basic skills to cope. This was observed, for example, in a literacy lesson in Year 2. Relationships were good and there were good links with science as children recorded information about circuits. However, not all were able to complete the task appropriately because of their limited writing skills. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve as well as their classmates because they are sensitively supported. Those who are learning to speak English as an additional language make satisfactory

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progress because their individual needs are identified and progress on how well they are acquiring basic language skills is effectively monitored.

Children contribute well to the community and take the little jobs of responsibility which they are given in school very seriously. They show empathy for people who are not as fortunate as they are. Children in Year 2 spoke sensitively about the flooding in Pakistan and spoke of raising funds for the people who were involved in the earthquake in Haiti. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Children from many different backgrounds get on well with each other. They have numerous opportunities to learn how people from different cultures live. Attendance is satisfactory but a very few children do not attend well. By the time they leave, in Year 2, most children are satisfactorily prepared academically, and well prepared personally and socially, for their next school.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Learning objectives are shared with the children so they are clear what they are learning about. Activities are usually well resourced and teachers give children satisfactory

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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opportunities to be involved in their own learning by checking for themselves how well they are doing. Relationships are good throughout. Teaching assistants and teachers were seen giving good quality support when they were teaching letters and sounds to small groups of children. As a result, children learn well in these short daily sessions. Learning occasionally slows down when children find activities too difficult. Teachers' marking does not clearly identify what children need to do to improve and reach their targets. Basic literacy skills, including spelling, are not always effectively promoted in literacy lessons or when children write in other subjects, such as mathematics and science.

The curriculum is well organised and interestingly planned, and enables pupils to make satisfactory progress overall and sometimes good progress. Many interesting activities are planned which especially promote the arts and children's personal and social skills. Children visit different places of worship, such as the Sikh temple, and theatre groups come to school and entertain and work closely with the children. World festivals such as Eid, Diwali and Easter are planned for and enable children to become more aware of the traditions of different cultures. Extra-curricular activities particularly support the physical education programme.

The level of care, guidance and support provided for children is good. Children with specific needs are well supported because of good partnerships with outside agencies. Those with social and emotional difficulties are supported effectively by specialists in school. Induction procedures are very good and parents and carers said that they were very pleased how well their children settled into Year 1. Effective links with junior schools enable smooth transition when children leave at the end of Year 2. The children who attend the breakfast club start their day in a caring and safe environment. They are given choices as to what they would like to eat and socialise well with each other.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, in a short time, has gained the respect of the governing body and staff. Questionnaires show that staff morale is high. There is a positive team effort and all staff and the governing body are ambitious to move the school forward. Detailed analysis is completed on the progress of all children. As a result, leaders are aware of where individuals and groups are underachieving. However, they do not use this information well enough to effectively improve matters. The personal development

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needs of individuals are carefully identified and addressed. The school takes satisfactory steps to promote equal opportunities and tackle discrimination. The school works well with parents and carers involving them effectively in their children's education. The school community is cohesive. It recognises that, although links with the local community are developing well, those with the wider world are not so strong. Safeguarding procedures and practices are exemplary. Statutory requirements are fully met. Adults are well trained in safeguarding and are vigilant in the keeping of records and the monitoring of safety.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Induction procedures are very good and as a result children quickly settle into school life and develop positive attitudes to learning. Skilled teaching enables children to learn well as they move through Reception. A few children have very weak listening skills and, when they have to sit and listen for too long, find it difficult to concentrate.

Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are effectively supported to enable them to progress as well as their classmates. Those who speak English as an additional language are sensitively supported so that they achieve well. These children are all assessed and progress is measured as they acquire basic language skills. All children, whatever their backgrounds, get along well with each other and behaviour is good. Children flourish in the stimulating and caring environment both in the well-resourced classroom areas and in the exciting and attractive outdoor area. Adults work very well together to provide an interesting range of activities, some of

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which are child-initiated and others that are led by adults. Experienced staff know when to interact with children and when to stand back so that learning moves on. There is much enjoyment as children work and play inside and in the outdoor area which promotes learning in all areas of learning. Leadership and management are effective. Good provision has been maintained since the previous inspection. All adults have a clear idea of how these young children learn. Adults have good procedures to assess and record the progress children make. As a result, individual needs are effectively addressed. All children are well looked after and cared for.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the work of the school and are happy with the experience their children receive at Oldbrook. They think teaching is good. Inspectors find that, although there is some good teaching, especially in the Reception classes, overall the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Almost all parents and carers think that the school helps their children to develop a healthy lifestyle and that the school keeps their children safe, views that inspectors strongly agree with.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of children registered at Oldbrook First School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received completed 54 questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 146 children registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	36	67	14	26	3	6	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	34	63	19	35	0	0	1	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	22	41	29	54	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	14	26	34	63	3	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	20	37	31	57	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	16	30	30	56	5	9	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	23	43	29	54	0	0	1	2
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	19	35	28	52	2	4	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	16	30	32	59	2	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	14	26	31	57	2	4	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	10	19	37	69	2	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	16	30	32	59	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	19	35	31	57	1	2	1	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



22 September 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of Oldbrook First School, Milton Keynes, MK6 2NH

Thank you for making the inspectors so welcome when we recently came to visit you. It was especially nice to see children in Reception, who had only just started school, getting on well with each other and playing happily. Your school provides a satisfactory education. That means that some things are good and some things need to be improved further to make them better.

These are the good things we found out about your school.

- The children in Reception get off to a good start and learn well.
- You know how to keep safe and are all looked after and cared for really well.
- A very good range of interesting visitors and well-planned visits out make learning even more fun.
- You are all keen to help out in school.
- You know how important it is to eat the right things to stay healthy.
- Your parents and carers are encouraged to help you in your learning
- Adults work hard to make sure that you are very safe in whatever you do.

We have asked the school to do a few things to improve the education you receive.

- Make sure that you are all taught to write letters and numbers correctly, to spell words you often use accurately and to write in proper sentences.
- Make sure that when teachers mark your work they show you what you need to do to improve.
- Check that staff make sure that activities are not too easy or too hard so that you all make good progress.
- Work more closely with the very few parents and carers of children who do not attend regularly.

All of you can help by continuing to work hard in all lessons.

Yours sincerely

Nina Bee

Lead inspector

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