

Wavendon Gate School

Gregories Drive, Milton Keynes, MK7 7HL

Inspection dates 14–15 July 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Governors have undertaken a wide range of training since the last inspection. This has enabled them to support and challenge leaders in improving teaching significantly and raising pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils achieve well from their different starting points and progress is accelerating rapidly. In 2014, pupils in Year 6 attained standards above other pupils nationally in reading, and broadly average standards in writing and mathematics.
- Teaching is good. Teachers make accurate assessments of pupils' work and plan exciting and interesting work. This stretches most pupils and enables them to make good, and sometimes outstanding, progress.
- High quality support for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is developed in all aspects of school life.
- Pupils concentrate and work hard because they are very enthusiastic about the subjects and topics offered.
- Leaders ensure that all staff are well trained and follow school procedures to keep pupils safe. Pupils say that they feel safe in school because they trust staff to protect them.
- The vast majority of parents and carers are very pleased with the work of the school. They say that their children are happy and doing well. Parents and carers are welcomed into school to work alongside their children. They help to identify areas for improvement in school.
- Pupils' good attitudes and behaviour make an important contribution to their learning. They are polite, respectful to others and sensible in all parts of the school.
- Governors judge the work of the school for themselves and hold staff accountable for pupils' achievement effectively.
- Children make good progress in all areas of the early years curriculum because provision is good. Staff plan exciting activities built upon their knowledge of what children already know and this motivates them to work hard.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Sometimes teachers do not set work at an appropriate level, particularly for the most able and those of lower ability.
- Occasionally, teachers' expectations of pupils' work are not high enough.
- Teachers' marking does not always help pupils to improve their work or follow up the point raised.
- Some pupils' handwriting and presentation is not good enough.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited lessons and an assembly, and examined the quality of work in pupils' books.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, around the school, and at break and lunchtimes. They had formal and informal discussions with pupils and met with the school council.
- Inspectors took account of the 87 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 27 responses to staff questionnaires.
- Inspectors met with parents, the headteacher, other school leaders, a group of governors and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at school documents, including information about pupils' achievement, records of behaviour and attendance, records of monitoring, school self-evaluation, plans for improvement, and information relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Lynne Bradbury, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Christopher Crouch	Additional Inspector
Bruno Grzegorzec	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Children attend full time in the Reception class.
- Most pupils are White British and almost all pupils speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for support from the pupil premium is lower than average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is lower than the national average.
- There have been considerable staffing changes in the last two years.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build upon the current improvements in teaching to raise pupils' achievement further by ensuring that all staff consistently:
 - have high expectations of pupils' work
 - plan work at the appropriate level, particularly for the most able and those of lower ability
 - ensure that all pupils' handwriting and presentation are of the highest quality
 - mark pupils' books so that all pupils understand how to improve their work and have the opportunity to follow up the points raised.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher's drive and ambition for all pupils to do well are shared by governors and members of staff. All members of the school community are committed to continuing to improve pupils' achievement.
- Leaders have established an atmosphere in which teaching is good and pupils behave well, make good progress and are highly motivated to work hard.
- Parents appreciate the regular opportunities to be involved with their children in lessons and to contribute to identifying areas in which the school can improve. They know how to help their children in their learning because the school helps them to understand the subjects taught.
- Leaders have successfully raised pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. Most staff have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour, and pupils respond by showing highly positive attitudes to learning.
- Leaders rigorously check all aspects of the school's work and use information about pupils' achievement to identify areas to improve. They have made significant improvements to the quality of teaching. Teachers now use tracking systems to understand what pupils can already do and plan appropriately challenging work for most pupils. However, sometimes the work set for the most-able pupils is too easy and too difficult for those of lower ability.
- Together with governors, leaders ensure safeguarding policies and procedures meet statutory requirements and are effective in keeping pupils safe.
- Leaders do not tolerate discrimination in any form. Pupils from all backgrounds and of all abilities are fully included in all school activities and are provided with equal opportunity to achieve their best. Pupils in difficult circumstances or who face particular challenges are supported well by all staff, including school mentors.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness, together with their understanding of other faiths, are developed effectively in all aspects of school life. Pupils in all year groups show high levels of respect and good relationships across all backgrounds as they explore British values and way of life. This prepares them well for life in modern Britain.
- The curriculum is broad and exciting. Connections between subjects are applied in all aspects of everyday life. For example, in Year 4, pupils considered the reasons for Stone Age people moving from their homes and compared this to the reasons that people may feel the need to seek refuge today. Pupils' personal and social development is supported well through the wide range of visits, experiences, sports and music offered by the school.
- Leaders and governors set challenging targets for pupils' achievement in all year groups through the management of teachers' performance. This is successfully raising standards for all pupils.
- Subject leaders provide high quality staff training based upon their careful monitoring of pupils' progress. They support class teachers well to help them understand how to challenge most pupils appropriately.
- The pupil premium funding is used effectively to ensure disadvantaged pupils take part in the full life of the school, including educational visits and clubs, and to provide extra support when they need it. These pupils are making good progress, sometimes more rapidly than their classmates and other pupils nationally.
- The primary sports premium supports staff training and professional coaching for pupils in tennis, athletics, football, cricket and gymnastics. Pupils are very proud of their performance in local tournaments with other schools.
- The local authority supports the school well through monitoring and supporting activities.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is effective. Governors undertake regular audits of their skills. They have recruited members who bring specific and high-level skills to this work. They take part in a wide range of training which has equipped them to support and challenge school leaders. They analyse and interpret data about pupils' progress and use their conclusions to set clear priorities for improvement. Individual governors work with subjects leaders to continue the improvement process. They provide feedback to ensure that the full governing body is kept informed about the quality of teaching.
 - Governors ensure that staff performance is judged by the progress pupils make and is managed through the appraisal system. They make well-informed decisions about staff pay increases, reflecting pupils' achievement. Governors know what to do to tackle any underperformance.
 - Governors match finance carefully to the priorities for improvement and they monitor and manage all resources well. They check that extra funding, like the pupil premium, is used effectively to raise the

achievement of those pupils eligible for support from this budget.

- Governors ensure that safeguarding meets statutory requirements and is effective in keeping pupils safe.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Their positive attitudes make a strong contribution to their achievement, and the work in most pupils' books is usually presented to a high standard. They persevere and take pride in their work.
- Pupils show respect and tolerance for adults and pupils across all backgrounds. They give a high level of care and support to those pupils who experience difficulties.
- Pupils behave well in lessons, and are sensible around the school and in the playground. They enjoy working together in groups and are able to challenge each other's ideas; this deepens their understanding.
- Pupils and staff say that there is typically no disruption to learning in any classes and this reflects school records. High quality mentoring for those who experience difficulties and exciting lessons maintain pupils' interest, and they are very keen to learn. Pupils say that serious problems with behaviour are rare and are dealt with effectively.
- The majority of parents expressed high levels of satisfaction with the work of the school and say they enjoy the opportunities to work alongside their children in class.
- Pupils like the rewards for working hard and they respond positively to staff instructions.
- Attendance is in line with the national average. There are effective procedures to support those pupils who have any difficulties coming to school regularly.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- All members of staff and appropriate governors are trained in child protection and safeguarding requirements. They follow guidance rigorously to ensure that all pupils are safe. Systematic checks are carried out on all visitors and new members of staff.
- Pupils understand the various forms of bullying, including name calling, and the risks concerned with using the internet and new technologies. They say that bullying is rare in school and is dealt with effectively if it happens. Pupils say that they feel safe and trust staff to help them if they need it.
- Leaders record risks within school and in outside activities or visits to ensure these aspects of school life are safe.
- Pupils display a good understanding of the kind of dangers which may arise outside school from extremist views within some parts of society or in talking to strangers. They know how to keep themselves safe in such situations.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Achievement is improving rapidly in reading, writing and mathematics because of good teaching.
- Teachers build warm relationships with pupils in all classes. Most staff have high expectations and make sure that pupils know what they are expected to learn and how they should behave. Pupils enjoy their work and happily cooperate with what staff ask them to do. Occasionally, staff do not have sufficiently high expectations of pupils' work, including their handwriting and presentation.
- Teachers use their accurate understanding of what pupils can already do to plan appropriately challenging work which stretches pupils of all abilities most of the time. Occasionally, most-able pupils and those of lower ability do not have work set at the appropriate level.
- Every pupil has appropriate targets for their progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Progress has accelerated because teachers work with pupils regularly to assess whether these have been achieved and how to move on to the next target. While marking is generally thorough, in some classes teachers do not give pupils enough help in understanding what they need to improve or enable them to follow up these comments.
- Skilful questioning enables most staff to check the progress pupils are making during lessons. They change the level of challenge or support to deepen pupils' understanding and help them move forward in their learning. Staff give appropriate feedback to pupils during lessons which helps them to think more

deeply about their work.

- Pupils make good progress in their reading and writing because the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) is good for all pupils. Teachers ensure that pupils apply their reading skills in researching their topic work and this leads to good achievement for most pupils.
- Teachers give pupils a wide range of opportunities to write extended pieces of work. They teach basic skills in spelling, punctuation and grammar well; this is evident in pupils' written work.
- In mathematics, teachers focus on deepening pupils' understanding by ensuring that their basic number skills are practised regularly and applied effectively in investigations and problem-solving tasks.
- Teachers ensure that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because they provide extra support for them within classes.
- Teaching assistants are generally trained well and make an important contribution to pupils' learning, particularly disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. They break tasks down into small steps so that pupils can learn confidently. Learning mentors give high quality and effective support to those pupils who encounter emotional difficulties.
- Pupils enjoy the work set for them to do at home. Teachers use homework effectively to give opportunities to practise basic reading and mathematical skills, and to follow-up or prepare for their topic work.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils achieve well from their different starting points. In 2014, the attainment of pupils in Year 6 was broadly in line with the national average in writing and mathematics, and above average in reading. Work seen in pupils' books and the information about current progress shows that achievement is improving rapidly in most classes.
- The proportion of pupils in Year 6 attaining the higher levels in 2014 was in line with the national average in reading, writing, mathematics, and spelling, punctuation and grammar. Currently, the most-able pupils are making good progress in most year groups because of the good level of challenge. Occasionally, they are not stretched sufficiently to work to the best of their ability. This slows their progress.
- Pupils of lower ability make good progress, but sometimes their work is too hard for them and this prevents them from making more rapid progress.
- There are very few disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, but these pupils make good progress because of the effective support they receive to meet their needs.
- Disadvantaged pupils are currently making good progress and any gaps in attainment with their classmates and other pupils nationally are closing. In the Year 6 national tests in 2014, disadvantaged pupils were just over half a term behind their classmates and almost in line with other pupils nationally in mathematics. They were half a term behind their classmates and a term behind other pupils nationally in reading, and one-and-a-half terms behind classmates and other pupils nationally in writing. In most areas, this was an improvement over their attainment in 2013.
- Pupils enjoy reading and make good progress. In the phonics screening check in 2014, a greater proportion of Year 1 pupils than nationally reached the required standard. Reading skills are used well to research topics.
- Achievement in writing is good because pupils apply their skills in spelling, punctuation and grammar for a wide range of purposes. Occasionally, their handwriting and presentation are not good enough.
- In mathematics, pupils make rapid progress in developing basic number skills and applying them in problem-solving situations and investigations.
- Pupils generally achieve well in work across a wide range of subjects. They find out about other countries and the traditions and beliefs of different cultures and faiths.

The early years provision

is good

- Children's attainment when they join the Reception class varies from year to year, but it is generally a little below typical expectations. Many have weaknesses in their speech and language.
- Teaching is good because teachers develop children's knowledge and skills across all areas of learning, particularly in speech and language. Teachers use their understanding of what children already know to offer exciting activities which stretch children of all abilities in the indoor and outdoor areas.
- Children are extremely enthusiastic about their learning and they behave well. They develop respect and

the ability to work happily in groups or on their own. They are confident and happy, and this supports their learning well.

- Children's achievement is good. They make good progress in reading and writing, building upon their good progress in phonics. In mathematics, they sort objects, make sequences, recognise patterns and start to apply their skills in number and shape.
- Leaders manage the provision for the early years effectively. They check children's achievement so that they can make improvements where needed and ensure that staff are trained well. This enables children to make good progress in the Reception class so that they enter Year 1 well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Staff ensure that children are kept safe and are well cared for.
- The school encourages parents to come into school and work with their children, to be involved in assessing their progress and to be part of the life of the school. This builds parents' confidence in supporting their children at home and forges strong links with school.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	131397
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	462760

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	411
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Malcolm Davey
Headteacher	Andy Cox
Date of previous school inspection	20–21 November 2013
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