

Walton Primary School

The Grove, Walton, Wakefield, West Yorkshire, WF2 6LD

Inspection dates 11–12 December 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher, supported by staff and the governing body, sets a very clear direction for the school's work and is leading the drive to raise standards further.
- Pupils play their part in the successes of the school through their outstanding behaviour and very positive attitudes to learning.
- Almost all pupils make good progress from their broadly average starting points. Progress is accelerating and standards are rising, especially in mathematics and reading, which are now well-above average.
- Parents hold the school in high regard.
- Teaching is good and there is a determined drive to make it better. The best teaching sees learning moving on rapidly because the work is challenging for all abilities.
- The successful promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is at the heart of the school's work.
- Relationships are strong and there is good team spirit.
- Children make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage because of good teaching and provision.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A small amount of teaching requires improvement, particularly for marking and levels of challenge. There are too few outstanding lessons to secure outstanding progress.
- Standards in writing are not as high as in mathematics and reading.
- Subject leaders are not yet fully accountable for standards and progress.
- The regular monitoring of teaching does not focus sharply enough on how pupils of different abilities learn.
- Some targets in improvement and action plans lack rigorous time frames to secure their rapid achievement.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 16 lessons taught by 11 teachers and a senior teaching assistant; six were joint observations with members of the senior leadership team.
- They held meetings with governors, staff and pupils and talked to a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 6 read.
- Inspectors observed pupils' work in all classes, especially focusing on the Early Years Foundation Stage, Year 2 and Year 6.
- Inspectors studied a range of documents including: the school's own evaluation documents; plans for the school's future development; a recent local authority review of aspects of the school's work; a record of leaders' observations of lessons; safeguarding policies and records; the school's analysis of data on pupils' progress; and attendance information.
- The 60 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), were analysed along with questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

Derek Pattinson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Paul Spray

Additional Inspector

Christine Millett

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an above average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after).
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching further to secure more that is outstanding in order to raise attainment in writing to that of the well-above average levels achieved in reading and mathematics by:
 - checking that activities are always at the right level of challenge
 - injecting greater pace of learning into some lessons and checking that pupils have enough time to get on with their work
 - ensuring that teachers' marking, and the targets and steps to success that they set, are used consistently to help pupils make the best possible progress.
- Strengthen the effectiveness of the leadership and management, including governance, further, in order to increase the pace of school improvement by:
 - building on the good work already started to develop the roles of new subject leaders to ensure that they are fully accountable for standards and progress
 - focusing more sharply on how pupils of different abilities learn when checking on the quality of teaching
 - checking that all targets in improvement and action plans contain rigorous time frames and ensuring that the governing body and school leaders regularly check on progress toward their achievement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most pupils achieve well from their individual starting points. Standards in reading and mathematics have been improving since 2011 and are now well-above average by the end of Key Stage 2. Standards in writing are not as high as in reading and mathematics, but have still been above average for the past two years. However, the school's detailed tracking, supported by a scrutiny of pupils' work, shows that progress in writing is accelerating. This is because its promotion is high profile and the quality of teaching is steadily improving.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are broadly typical for their age. The warm, caring, supportive approach of all adults, combined with the good teaching and provision, ensures that they steadily develop knowledge, skills and understanding as they move through Nursery and Reception Years.
- Progress across Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics is good for almost all pupils, including those who are disabled or who have special educational needs. For example, pupils with special educational needs do better in reading and writing by the end of both key stages than the same group nationally.
- The small number who are receiving the pupil premium, including those who are known to be eligible for free school meals, are doing as well as other pupils in school in reading but not in writing, although progress for this small group along with all other pupils is accelerating. These improvements indicate that equality of opportunity is promoted increasingly well.
- Pupils of all abilities, particularly the more able, make very good progress in mathematics. For example, one-quarter of all pupils achieved the high Level 6 in mathematics in the most recent national tests.
- In the most recent national check on children's ability to link letters to the sounds they make (phonics), which is carried out at the end of Year 1, the performance of both boys and girls was close to the expected standard. However, they make good progress as they move through the school in learning to read accurately and fluently for pleasure, information and enjoyment. As a result, by the end of Key Stage 2, many more pupils than nationally reach both the expected and the higher levels in reading.

The quality of teaching is good

- A wide range of inspection evidence showed teaching to be securely good. Many more positive features were seen than negative features. A little outstanding teaching was seen and a very small amount required improvement.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures that children make a good start to their learning. All adults work hard to engage children in conversation, stimulate their curiosity, extend their knowledge, develop important skills and nurture independence, such as, when children peel oranges, organise a birthday party for dolls and search for letters in the sandpit.
- Typical of the most effective teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2 was a mathematics lesson in Years 5 and 6 in which pupils were challenged to reflect complex shapes across four quadrants. In this lesson, pupils made outstanding progress because learning was brisk, work was challenging for all abilities, the teacher's subject knowledge was secure, time was used very well and pupils knew precisely what was required of them.
- Very strong relationships underpin learning and teachers give their pupils much encouragement. This ensures that pupils are very keen to learn and there is a very good working atmosphere.
- Most teaching assistants skilfully ensure that pupils with special educational needs, and the small number who receive additional funding through the pupil premium, make similarly good progress to other pupils.
- A few lessons have shortcomings which limit progress. For example, the pace is sometimes not brisk enough, which restricts the time for pupils to get on with their work or to think things out

for themselves. Sometimes, work is not at the right level of challenge, such as, when pupils undertake computation in mathematics that they already understand. Very occasionally, pupils are unclear what are their targets or steps to success to help them measure the progress they are making. Teachers' marking does not always help pupils to move forward. However, they often ask pupils how well they are doing so that they plan work for the next lesson which is at the right level of challenge.

- The teaching of reading and writing, boosted by successful and ongoing recent initiatives, is effective in ensuring that pupils read and write with increasing confidence. For example, pupils write for different purposes, such as, in Year 6 where pupils write detailed descriptions using a range of linguistic features, complete book reviews and use devices to create tension and foreboding in their stories.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Behaviour is outstanding and is underpinned by excellent relationships at all levels. This is confirmed by records, observations and discussions with pupils. The high-quality relationships are based on trust and respect between pupils and their teachers and other adults. Indeed, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, with its very strong emphasis on care and consideration for others, is at the heart of the school's work.
- Pupils' conduct around the school is often excellent and never less than good. For example, they enter the hall for assemblies quietly, listen respectfully, answer politely and show sustained concentration. These positive features were seen in an assembly led by the headteacher about the life of Nelson Mandela in which pupils' contributions were mature and thought provoking.
- Behaviour in lessons is usually of a high order. For example, children in the Early Years Foundation Stage enthusiastically search for numbers at different locations outside the classroom while pupils in Year 2 are totally immersed in attempting to complete a mathematical challenge. Even on rare occasions when pupils are required to listen for long periods, pupils still demonstrate very good listening and a thirst for knowledge.
- Behaviour is managed consistently well. A need for teachers to reprimand pupils is very rare because they are so well motivated and fully involved in their work. Pupils like and understand the reward system, involving the regular use of 'Golden Time' and the 'Golden Chair', believing it to be very fair.
- Parents and pupils are unreservedly positive about behaviour. Pupils know about different forms of bullying, including of dangers posed by the internet, say that 'it never happens here' and say there is no racism. Pupils say that fall-outs in the playground are very rare, always quickly dealt with and almost all the time pupils work and play very happily together.
- Pupils feel very safe; a view overwhelmingly supported by parents. Pupils comment positively about the well-supervised playground and the high level of security for visitors.
- Pupils enjoy school immensely because they say that 'teachers make learning fun' and all adults help them learn. This helps to explain their good punctuality and above-average attendance.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, ably supported by senior leaders, provides an effective steer for the school's work. The local authority has worked effectively with the school to help provide well-focused challenge and support, such as, through its 'Securing good' programme. A relentless drive to secure the highest possible standards has been established. As a result targets to ensure that most pupils make at least good progress over time are likely to be met in reading, mathematics, and especially writing, which is a relatively weaker area at present.
- All staff are committed to continued improvement. There is good team spirit and morale is high. Professional development, informed by secure performance-management arrangements, is given much emphasis. For example, a determined drive to improve the Early Years Foundation Stage

and to increase the amount of good teaching across the school has proved successful.

- Priorities for development are the right ones to help secure further improvement and there is rigour in the pursuit of them. Nevertheless, some targets lack precise time frames to help secure their rapid achievement.
- New subject leaders have made a good start in leading and managing their subjects. As a result they increasingly know what works well and what needs doing. However, they are not yet fully accountable for standards and progress because they are not yet fully involved in monitoring learning in lessons.
- The school's own assessment information and checks on test results provide accurate information about how well pupils are doing from when they arrive to when they leave. As a result leaders are able to give immediate support to those falling behind but also set challenging targets to help drive up standards further. Regular reviews indicate that the progress of almost all pupils is accelerating.
- Topics and themes, such as the Victorians, visits, such as to the theatre, the local church and a Viking village, and pupils' work in the 'class window' displays provide evidence of a rich and varied curriculum. Clubs, such as in sport and music, help also to extend pupils' learning.
- Primary sports funding has been used wisely to improve resources and appoint coaches to work alongside teachers. This carefully targeted professional development for teachers is already helping to secure better quality lessons for pupils. As a result pupils are developing healthy lifestyles, better physical well-being and are beginning to improve their performance.
- Safeguarding and child-protection arrangements meet requirements. For example, arrangements for access to the building are secure to ensure that pupils are safe.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. Indeed, all who completed the questionnaire on Parent View are happy to recommend the school to another parent.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body, including a new Chair and Vice-Chair, has substantially increased its involvement in the work of the school, such as by attending training on performance data analysis. Governors know how leaders measure pupils' progress and that ambitious targets have been set to help raise standards further. The governing body has knowledge of how performance management is being used to improve the quality of teaching and that pay increases are linked to pupils' progress. It knows that pupil premium funding is being used wisely to ensure that pupils who benefit are mostly making similar progress to their national counterparts, except in writing. Individual governors are becoming more confident in seeking out information for themselves about pupils' progress. They receive comprehensive information from the headteacher, which enables them to ask searching questions about how particular groups of pupils are doing. As a result they are steadily becoming more effective in holding the school to account.

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	135020
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	429657

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	357
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrea Kelcher
Headteacher	David Dickinson
Date of previous school inspection	26 March 2012
Telephone number	01924 303560
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