

# Ibstone Church of England Infant School

Ibstone, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP14 3XZ

**Inspection dates** 3–4 December 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- Ibstone Church Of England Infant School is a happy and welcoming place where pupils feel safe, secure and well cared for. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good.
- The school is led and managed well by the senior leaders and governors provide good support for them. A strong team of teachers and teaching assistants, who have pupils' success at the heart of their work, has been developed.
- Pupils achieve well and make good progress in all subjects. They reach standards in reading, writing and mathematics that are higher than the national average. Pupils develop their confidence and speaking skills well.
- Pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs are supported particularly well and make outstanding progress.
- Children settle into the Reception class quickly in its warm and nurturing atmosphere and rapidly develop independence.
- Most teaching is good and some is outstanding. Teachers make best use of the awkward teaching areas in the small school. They mark pupils' work regularly and plan activities that engage pupils well.
- Pupils behave exceptionally well. They like their teachers, collaborate very well and are eager to learn and to join in activities.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Not enough teaching is outstanding. In lessons, more-able pupils are not always challenged enough. Pupils are not given good enough opportunities to respond to teachers' advice in their marked work.
- Boys do not do as well in writing as they do in reading and mathematics.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons or parts of lessons, including five jointly with the headteacher. He also looked at pupils' written work and children's learning journals.
- Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body, the headteacher and deputy headteacher and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector spoke to a group of Year 2 pupils and informally with other pupils in lessons and around the school. He listened to pupils reading and talked to them about their reading habits.
- The inspector examined several of the school's documents. These included: the school's own evaluation of its performance and its improvement plan; information about pupils' progress and the support given to disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs; evidence about the quality of teaching; and records relating to behaviour, safeguarding and attendance.
- The inspector took account of 26 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), one letter from a parent or carer and the views expressed by parents and carers as they arrived at school. He analysed 12 questionnaires returned by staff.

## Inspection team

Jim McVeigh, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. There is a Reception class with 12 children and a mixed-age class with 14 Year 1 pupils and six Year 2 pupils.
- Most pupils come from a White British background and the remainder from a small number of different ethnic backgrounds. There are very few pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- There are no pupils supported by the pupil premium (extra government funding for specific groups of pupils including those known to be eligible for free school meals, children in local authority care and other groups).
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action and the proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are both below the national average.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate boys' progress in writing so that it at least matches their progress in reading and mathematics by engaging them more in literacy by finding stories and writing activities that really interest them and spark their imagination.
- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
  - making sure teachers always provide activities that stretch all pupils, particularly the more-able, so that an appropriate pace of learning is maintained in lessons
  - ensuring that pupils are given time and guidance to respond to the advice in teachers' written comments about their work.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start school in the Reception class of the Early Years Foundation Stage with knowledge and skills typical for their age, though with weaker skills in literacy than other areas of development. Children are given a good deal of individual attention from an adult and feel valued and secure. They develop independence and self-confidence in the caring and nurturing atmosphere of the small class and quickly learn how to get on well with their classmates. For example, children willingly shared with the rest of the class their ideas about the rhyming words they could see or hear in a poem. With the effective teaching, children make good progress in all areas of learning.
- Following a smooth transition into Year 1, pupils continue to make good progress throughout Key Stage 1. By the end of Year 2, pupils reach higher standards than the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Despite their below-average performance in the national phonics (linking letters with the sounds they make) screening check, pupils attain most highly in reading. Boys do not make as much progress in writing as they do in reading and mathematics.
- The school encourages pupils to maintain a reading diary and advises parents and carers how to support their children with reading so pupils read regularly and develop a love for reading. Pupils have good opportunities to read to an adult at school and regularly take books home from the library. Also, pupils regularly talk to an adult as well as fellow pupils in class so their vocabulary, confidence in speaking and their speaking skills develop well. For example, a child in the Reception class acted as an 'expert' to lead the class in recognising a string of rhyming words.
- Children in Reception learn to count confidently and write the numerals because teachers give them frequent opportunities to do so. They learn the names of simple shapes through activities such as creating pictures using paper circles, triangles and squares. By Year 2, pupils know their number bonds to add and subtract two-digit numbers and begin to recognise fractions.
- The school's few pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs are provided with exceptional support. Consequently these pupils make rapid progress from their starting points. Good use is made of external specialists to identify their needs and advise or support them in the most appropriate way. Well-trained and experienced teaching assistants support teachers very well in meeting these pupils' needs and in maintaining a caring and safe environment. Parents and carers are very pleased with the way their children have settled in, the progress they have made and the help they get to support their children at home.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Staff have made the best of the small classrooms and high walls to create good climates for learning. Bright displays record key points for current learning and, by photographs and annotations, pupils' achievements in recent lessons.
- Teachers have established very good relationships with pupils. They deploy teaching assistants and volunteers effectively. Adults cooperate well in lessons and clearly model the sort of behaviour and interaction expected. Teachers manage their classes easily. They have high expectations of behaviour and productivity.
- Makaton signing is used effectively by teachers and teaching assistants to support pupils' understanding well, particularly those with speech or hearing difficulties. Teachers explain what they expect pupils to be able to do by the end of the lesson and usually work with them to identify the steps they need to take.
- Teachers use skilful questioning to make pupils think hard about their answers. They give them thinking time and often ask them to explain their thinking in arriving at the answer. The main questions to ask form part of each teacher's planning. Pupils have regular opportunities to show how well they understand ideas and to use 'thumbs up or down' to indicate their self-assessment of their understanding.

- Teachers plan activities that interest and motivate pupils well. They take into account each pupil's earlier achievement to modify plans. However, the wide range of abilities in the Key Stage 1 class is not always catered for well enough. Occasionally the more-able pupils are not moved on to harder tasks quickly enough.
- Activities in lessons develop concepts logically. For example, in an outstanding mathematics lesson about halving, pupils followed a fun activity spotting the half-value of a number, by halving amounts of money and then shopping for toys at a half-price sale or researching the link between halving and quartering and number oddness or evenness.
- Children are taught well in the Reception class. Teachers and teaching assistants know each child well and regularly record the key steps in learning they make to plan future activities. A choice of activities associated with the main teaching theme stimulates children's interest and curiosity well so that they persevere and consolidate learning.
- Displays in the Reception are rich in letters and text and children have good opportunities to develop fine motor, reading and writing skills. The spacious outside area offers exciting grassy areas for children to play in and explore. Children and pupils have built a 'bug hotel' and are eagerly awaiting spring to investigate further.
- Pupils' written work is marked regularly and in detail. Teachers identify what pupils have done well and advise them on what to do next to improve their work. However, pupils are not always given the opportunity to respond to the marking straightaway, for example, by correcting the marked work and this restricts their progress.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**

- Pupils look forward to coming to school to meet their friends and teachers. They feel secure, safe and valued. As one parent or carer said, 'My child is very happy at school and cannot wait to get here every morning.' Attendance is usually above average, although it dipped slightly last year due to an outbreak of chicken pox.
- Pupils enjoy learning. They like their teachers and say their lessons are always interesting and that teachers and other adults readily help them if they get stuck. Years 1 and 2 pupils enjoyed being outside separating piles of bean bags into hoops when learning about fractions and pupils still recall the great fun they had forming a human water chain in the Great Fire of London re-enactment.
- Pupils have exemplary attitudes to learning and engage in all activities. They listen carefully, know what they have to do to complete tasks and always persevere with them. They present their written work neatly and cooperate very well when discussing ideas or solving problems.
- Inappropriate behaviour that disrupts lessons is very rare. Pupils know the school rules and do not want their name to go into the 'cloud'. They know that because they all behave so well it helps them to succeed.
- In the playground and around the school, pupils are polite and considerate of others. Pupils always have someone to talk or play with and all pupils get along well with one another. They are eager to take on responsibilities, such as book and snack monitor or helping to conserve energy as a member of the Ecoteam.
- Governors, staff, parents, carers and pupils themselves agree that behaviour at school is very good. School records show that, recently, there have been no incidents of misbehaviour. Pupils have a good understanding of bullying for their age. Pupils in Year 2 can only recall one incident of bullying and that was sorted out quickly.
- The school has promoted health and safety well. Pupils have learned about healthy diets, for example, through creating models of balanced meals, and about internet and road safety, including through visits from the police.

## The leadership and management are good

- Governors and staff have high expectations and a common vision for the school. Teachers and school leaders, who mainly work part time, communicate and share workloads well so that the school runs smoothly. Senior leaders are well aware of the school's strengths and areas for development and have set appropriate priorities for continue improvement.
- Improving teaching and learning is the central element of planning. The headteacher regularly checks the quality of teaching, including through lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning. Suitably challenging targets set for each teacher are linked to the school's improvement plan and to pupils' progress. The work of teaching assistants is managed and monitored in a similar way.
- The local authority provides useful advice based on an external view of the school's performance. The headteacher works well with other local schools as a member of the federation of small schools, and gets better value for money through economy of scale. The school is improving the way it makes use of its outside space and has achieved a Bronze Award for Learning Outside the Classroom.
- Despite the small funds available for the purpose, teachers and teaching assistants are given good opportunities for relevant professional development. Staff meetings are always used to share good practice and teachers have visited outstanding schools as well as attending external training courses. Newly qualified teachers are well supported through school mentoring and induction courses from the local authority, though there are no teachers new to the profession this year.
- Pupils' progress is constantly monitored. Any signs of underachievement are tackled quickly through well-targeted extra support, ensuring equality of opportunity for all pupils. The school is effective in discouraging all forms of discrimination.
- The school has engaged well with parents and carers and communication between parents, carers and teachers is good. Parents and carers speak highly of the approachability of staff and the excellent care their children receive. Parents and carers have been given guidance on how to help their child at home through workshops, such as the 'Maths Teach-in', and the website. They have opportunities to see their children at work and say they are making good progress.
- The school provides a broad and balanced range of subjects with a two-year rolling programme of topics to ensure pupils of different ages in the same class do not repeat the same material. Topics are introduced with an exciting activity to engage pupils straight away, such as a visit to a wildlife park to start a topic on animals and the body.
- Within a strong Christian ethos, the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well, including through assemblies and visitors from different cultures, such as from Japan. Children regularly take part in charity events to raise money for less fortunate people, for example, 'Mozambique Build – A House', and they know they should be kind to everyone. They model the respect and cooperation they see between adults in school.
- The school runs a well-organised after-school club which provides a safe environment for children and regular activities, such as dance and drama. The extra sports funding for primary schools is being used for teacher training to develop the school's and the club's expertise in teaching physical exercise so regular healthy exercise can be better promoted to pupils.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body has a good range of relevant skills and has taken advantage of training, for example, to improve understanding of school information and in safer recruitment. Governors know how well the school is doing through regular reports from the headteacher and their own focused visits. They ask searching questions and provide good support to make sure the school is continually moving forward.
  - Governors are well informed about the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make. They are financially prudent, for example, they ensure value for money when organising professional development, and check that rewards for teachers are warranted. All statutory arrangements for safeguarding are securely in place.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	110464
<b>Local authority</b>	Buckinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	433175

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	32
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Alistair France
<b>Headteacher</b>	Michelle Masters
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14–15 March 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01491 638281
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