

West Byfleet Junior School

Camphill Road, West Byfleet, Surrey, KT14 6EF

Inspection dates

14–15 November 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' overall achievement is not good. The school does not do enough to ensure that pupils, particularly the most able, always make good progress, and do as well as they could.
- The quality of the teaching is not consistently strong enough to raise pupils' overall achievement to good. Pupils' make stronger progress in some classes than others.
- Lessons occasionally move too slowly. Time is sometimes wasted. Teachers sometimes spend too long explaining things to the pupils instead of letting them do their own work.
- Tasks are not always set at the right level of difficulty. Some tasks are too easy for the most able pupils.
- Pupils' writing needs improving. They have too few chances to write on a wide enough range of interesting topics. Spelling is weak.
- Leaders, managers and governors have not ensured that teaching and pupils' achievement have improved enough recently to be good.
- School leaders at all levels, including middle managers, do not visit enough classes to see the quality of teaching for themselves or look at enough work-books to assess how pupils are writing and spelling.
- Leaders do not always judge the quality of teaching rigorously enough and sometimes overpraise teaching that is not strong enough to raise pupils' achievement.
- Governors do not always hold leaders sufficiently to account for the quality of teaching and why there are differences in the way pupils learn.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils behave well and get on well with one another. They have positive attitudes to learning. Pupils enjoy school and this is reflected in their high attendance.
- The school is a caring community. It caters well for groups such as those with a range of additional needs, and those eligible for the pupil premium additional funding, and these groups do well in their learning.
- Pupils have a wide and enjoyable range of activities outside the classroom. These make a valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school works well with parents and involves them successfully in the life of the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 17 lessons across a range of subjects, most observed jointly with the headteacher or the deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read, looked at samples of their work, and attended assemblies.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, teachers with responsibilities for specific subjects, a representative of the local authority, and groups of pupils. A meeting was held with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body. The vice-chair and another member of the governing body attended the final summing-up meeting. Inspectors took account of the views of staff in 24 questionnaires.
- There were 58 responses to Parent View, the online survey of the views of parents. Inspectors considered these, together with a letter received from the parents of two pupils at the school, and also spoke to a number of parents during the inspection.
- Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documents including the school's own views of how well it is doing; its plans for the future; information on pupils' attainment and progress; safeguarding information; records relating to behaviour and safety; and minutes of meetings of the governing body.

Inspection team

Natalia Power, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Cliff Mainey

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- West Byfleet Junior is average in size for a primary school.
- Around one in eight pupils is eligible for the pupil premium. This proportion is much lower than average. The pupil premium provides schools with additional funding for children looked after by the local authority, for pupils eligible for free school meals or who have been eligible at any point in the past six years, and for those with a parent in the armed services. At West Byfleet Junior, about half of pupils who qualify for the pupil premium do so through eligibility for free school meals and about half through having a parent in the armed forces.
- A large majority of pupils are White British. Around a fifth of pupils come from a wide range of minority ethnic heritages, and this proportion is a little lower than usual. Few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action is slightly higher than average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- 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 the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by making sure that teachers:
 - keep lessons moving at a brisk pace, and make sure that no time is wasted, so that pupils learn well and make good progress
 - get the pupils actively involved as quickly as possible, so that they do not spend too long sitting passively listening to the teacher
 - plan tasks carefully so that they match the abilities of pupils, particularly making sure that the most able pupils always receive work that is sufficiently challenging.
- Ensure that leaders improve the consistency of the quality of teaching by:
 - making sure that all leaders and middle managers visit as many lessons as possible and look frequently at the quality of work in pupils' books
 - clearly conveying to teachers when they visit lessons their strengths and areas for development, and not overpraising them.
- In order to improve writing throughout the school, give pupils plenty of chances to write on a range of topics across the curriculum, and focus on improving spelling.
- Make sure that governors hold school leaders more rigorously to account for improving pupils' achievement by challenging school leaders more robustly on how well pupils are learning and how well the teachers are teaching.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because pupils do not make rapid enough progress from their starting points at the end of the infants to when they leave at the end of Year 6. School leaders do not always make sure that teaching is consistently challenging in every class to raise pupils' overall achievement.
- Pupils begin Year 3 with language and number skills which vary but which are typically above average. They make progress that is generally in line with that normally expected. However, too few pupils make the rapid progress they need to do as well as they are able. The most able pupils in particular do not always make as rapid progress as they could. This is because teachers do not always set them sufficiently challenging tasks.
- Pupils' attainment in the national tests taken at the end of Year 6 tends to be above average in reading and mathematics, though just average in writing. This is because they do not always have enough opportunities to write at length on a variety of topics, and because basic errors of literacy, including weak spelling, are not always picked up quickly enough.
- Disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, and those who struggle with their work, receive helpful support in class, in small withdrawal groups and with one-to-one support. This caring support enables them to make similar progress to other pupils.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language also receive effective support, tailored to their needs, throughout their time at the school. This helps them to make progress in developing their language skills. Overall, their achievement matches or exceeds that of other pupils.
- The school successfully fosters in its pupils a love of reading. Pupils are encouraged to read demanding and worthwhile books. The school actively engages the support of parents in encouraging reading, and this home-school partnership is successful in raising pupils' attainment in reading. In the provisional results from 2013, for example, Year 6 pupils were on average two and a half terms ahead of their peers in the country as a whole.
- The pupil premium funding is used effectively to benefit the pupils concerned. As a result, pupils supported by this extra funding, including those who have a parent in the armed forces as well as those eligible to receive the funding through their entitlement to free school meals, do as well or better than others in the school. For example, in Year 6 in 2012, there was little difference in their attainment in English and in mathematics compared to others not eligible for the additional funding.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching now requires improvement because it is not strong enough to secure good achievement. Sometimes, lessons move too slowly. Time is occasionally wasted at the beginning or end of lessons, or when the teacher keeps pupils sitting for too long while explaining tasks instead of letting the pupils get on with them. In such instances, the pace of learning slows down, and pupils receive too little challenge.
- Though some teaching is good, enabling pupils to make good progress in their learning, other teaching is less effective, and this inconsistency means that pupils within the same year-group sometimes make uneven progress.
- Teachers do not always ensure that there is enough challenge and tasks are not always closely matched to the abilities of pupils, particularly the most able.
- Marking generally provides clear guidance on what pupils should do to improve. However, teachers do not always make sure that pupils spell correctly, and so pupils get into the habit of not regarding spelling as important.
- Where teaching is best, pupils learn quickly and with enjoyment. For example, in one Year 5 English lesson, based on their study of Greek myths, pupils wrote their own exciting opening

sentences to their newspaper report of the events of the myth. They seized on the opportunity to write freely, and one pupil wrote, 'A couple of hours ago a brave athletic young man called Pheidippides unfortunately died after running an exhaustingly long way.' Such high-quality writing, typical of that written in the lesson, shows how well pupils can perform when stimulated by the topic and given free rein to work at their own pace.

- In some lessons, teachers provide tasks that offer an appropriate challenge to the most able pupils. For example, a fast-paced Year 6 science lesson about electrical circuits stimulated pupils' natural curiosity, so that they began to ask such questions as whether altering the length of the wire would change the brightness of a bulb.
- Teaching assistants and parent volunteers provide helpful assistance to class teachers, supporting pupils who struggle with their work, or have a range of additional needs, to learn and make progress in line with others.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

- Behaviour is good. Pupils show positive attitudes to learning in a range of lessons across the school.
- Pupils enjoy school, and this is reflected in their consistently high attendance.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. For example, a lively assembly led by the music specialist began by celebrating the work of the school choir, which had performed very well in a local music festival, and then successfully engaged pupils in reflecting on the special talents that their friends and classmates had, and on how these could be shared to benefit others. As a result of this inclusive approach, positive relations are well promoted, pupils from all backgrounds and heritages get on very well together, and leaders ensure that there is no discrimination.
- Pupils told the inspectors that they feel safe and happy at school, and that they enjoy their lessons. Inspectors observed good behaviour in lessons and around the school, behaviour records and pupils confirmed that this is typical.
- Pupils are polite and respectful towards visitors and considerate towards one another. School records show that there are very few incidents of bad behaviour.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of what bullying means and of different types of bullying, such as cyber or racial bullying. They told inspectors that there was scarcely any actual bullying, although occasionally pupils fell out with one another. In these instances, the adults sorted things out quickly.
- Most of the parents who spoke to inspectors or responded to Parent View said that they were happy with the school, and felt that it keeps their children safe and happy. The parents who wrote to the inspectors praised the school for its 'emotional and practical support' when they went through a difficult time, and a number of parents described the school as caring. They appreciate the good communication between school and home, and one commented that she was impressed that, when pupils came home in camouflage paint after an exciting activity, the school thoughtfully texted parents to advise them how to remove the paint.

The leadership and management

require improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because leaders have not yet ensured that teaching and pupils' achievement are consistently good.
- Leaders have not had enough success in raising the level of all teaching to that of the best. As a result, there are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, even within the same year group. Leaders, including middle managers, such as the literacy and numeracy co-ordinators, accept that they do not see enough teaching for themselves, or examine pupils' work-books enough to pick up deficiencies, such as in spelling.
- When leaders assess the quality of teaching, their judgements tend to err on the side of

generosity and they do not always make clear enough to teachers what they need to do to improve. As a result, weaker teaching is not always improved quickly enough, and this has slowed the progress of some pupils.

- The headteacher, ably assisted by her deputy and senior teacher, has created a happy school where all feel valued, staff as well as pupils, as is clear from the wholly positive staff questionnaires.
- School leaders have an honest and realistic understanding of how their school is doing, and their plans for future improvements cover the right priorities. Though the school is no longer judged to be outstanding, leaders have nevertheless taken effective action in a number of areas. Pupils with a range of additional needs do particularly well, because of concerted action by leaders, teachers and teaching assistants to give them the support best suited to their needs. The school has begun to make appropriate provision for the most able, particularly in mathematics, where in 2013 a higher than average proportion gained Level 6, a grade normally gained by teenagers. As a result of such actions, the school demonstrates a secure capacity for further improvement.
- Though the school has sound procedures for managing staff performance and linking this to movement up the pay scale, this has not yet had enough impact on improving the overall consistency and quality of teaching.
- The local authority accepts that, following the outstanding judgement in the previous inspection, it has not done enough to check pupils' learning and progress, so as to be able to provide support for the school more quickly.
- Leaders are committed to providing equality of opportunity for all, taking particular care to ensure that those pupils who have additional needs do not fall behind.
- The school keeps pupils safe and ensures that those who work with them have been properly checked.
- The school has acted swiftly to make the best possible use of its additional sports funding to attract pupils to sport, dance and movement who were previously not involved. For example, new clubs and activities, such as lunchtime clubs, have been set up with the aim of improving participation and pupils' well-being.
- The curriculum has an appropriate focus on reading and mathematics. However, pupils are not always given enough chances to write extensively on a range of topics. Year 6 topic work on China gave pupils the chance to write on the politics of China, the history of paper, and on Chinese stories. However, such a good range of opportunities is not always provided. As a result, pupils' writing tends to be less strong than other areas of their achievement.
- Outside the classroom, pupils have many exciting opportunities to develop their musical, artistic, sporting and practical skills. The clubs are varied and well-attended, and it was lovely to see some pupils busily engaged in baking muffins while others learned to play music through computers. Such opportunities, together with the many outings, visits and residential trips, make a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

■ The governance of the school:

- The chair and vice-chair are experienced governors. They make no excuses for areas of underperformance, and demonstrate energy and commitment to school improvement.
- Governors look closely at the information about how well pupils are doing, and have a clear understanding of how well the school compares with others. They visit the school regularly to ensure that they see its work for themselves. They know about the quality of teaching in the school and have a clear understanding of the link between teachers' pay and the progress made by all pupils, and approve pay increases only where they are merited. They are aware of where underperformance has been tackled.
- However, governors have not held school leaders sufficiently to account for the dip in pupils' progress over the past three years. Though some governors were proactive in noting the dip in 2012 and bringing it to the attention of the governing body, minutes of meetings show that they did not trace a three-year pattern of slower progress until shortly before the 2013 inspection.

- Governors keep a firm hand on the school’s budget. They carefully check the uses to which pupil premium funding is put, making sure that it benefits those for whom it is intended. They have set up plans for good use of the additional primary sports funding.
- Governors are well trained and effectively carry out their statutory duties, including safeguarding and ensuring equality of opportunity.

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	125081
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	426675

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	240
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Keith Creswell
Headteacher	Lesley Lawrence
Date of previous school inspection	3 November 2010
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