

Onslow Infant School

Powell Close, Onslow Village, Guildford, Surrey GU2 7DD

Inspection dates

7–8 June 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Parents appreciate the friendly family feel of the school. They are overwhelmingly positive about the education and care their children receive at Onslow Infant School.
- The school's culture of 'nurturing confidence, curiosity and creativity' is very evident. Pupils really enjoy their learning and are well prepared to go confidently on to the next stage of their education.
- Children make a positive start to their education in the early years. Good teaching and well-organised indoor and outdoor learning areas help children to make good progress.
- Since her appointment, the headteacher has led improvements in the quality of teaching. She has halted a decline in standards and pupils now make good progress.
- Across the curriculum most groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are now making faster progress.
- Leaders are tackling vigorously the poor attendance of a minority of pupils. Persistent absence has halved but there is more work to do to improve attendance for some groups of pupils.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced and interesting. In addition to their usual lessons, pupils enjoy a wide range of special learning opportunities that generate extra inspiration and enthusiasm.
- Safeguarding is effective. Leaders are relentless in their work to keep pupils safe.
- Pupils behave well in class and around the school. They play well together and care for each other.
- Leaders, including those responsible for the early years and for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are having a positive impact on improving teaching and raising standards.
- Governors did not challenge previous leaders when standards fell. They are still not focused enough on raising standards quickly for all groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged.
- There are a few remaining inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. As a result, the most able pupils do not regularly receive challenging work.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Tackle the remaining inconsistencies in teaching so that progress for all groups of pupils accelerates by:
 - raising expectations of what all pupils can achieve
 - ensuring that all adults have the necessary skills to support pupils, including in phonics
 - checking that the most able pupils are given challenging work.
- Strengthen the work of governors so they challenge school leaders effectively about the progress of all groups of pupils, and especially those who are disadvantaged.
- Improve attendance by working more effectively with pupils' families.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The school has a positive and nurturing ethos that is universally valued by parents. As one parent said, 'this is a fantastic school and staff really care for the children'. Pupils enjoy coming to school to learn and be creative. Pupils develop into confident young citizens, ready to thrive at their next school and in British society.
- Pupils are inspired by the special events, days and themed weeks that enhance the broad, balanced and interesting curriculum. For example, during the inspection the pupils were enjoying a 'maths superhero week'. Teachers had transformed into caped 'superheroes' who set pupils a range of mathematical challenges. This certainly raised the profile of mathematics within the school.
- Leaders make effective use of the primary sport funding to enhance the curriculum with high-quality physical education coaching. Specialist music teaching and extra-curricular clubs, ranging from dance to Spanish, provide further rich learning opportunities for the pupils of Onslow.
- The headteacher has an accurate awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Soon after joining the school she realised that standards had fallen since the previous inspection. Together with the deputy headteacher she has successfully set about improving teaching and outcomes for pupils. Parents recognise that the headteacher is doing a good job. They appreciate that she is getting the balance right between improving things, developing and evaluating effectively the curriculum, and maintaining the positive ethos of the school.
- Staff told inspectors that the school is now more focused and there are better structures in place to support improvements. For example, leaders have used performance management effectively to raise expectations, tackle underperformance and improve teaching.
- The headteacher has supported subject leaders by providing them with time and guidance to make improvements in their areas of expertise. These leaders appreciate the opportunities for professional development.
- Teachers and teaching assistants who are new to the school feel well supported by their mentors.
- Strong leadership of the provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has led to improving outcomes for these pupils. Additional funding is spent appropriately.
- The local authority has provided the school with additional support and challenge over the last year and half, after the headteacher alerted them to the previous fall in standards. This has helped the headteacher to make the changes needed to improve teaching.
- Pupil premium funding has been spent effectively to help disadvantaged pupils make faster progress this year. However, leaders and governors have not evaluated this spending in detail to enable them to develop a more effective strategy to further accelerate pupils' progress.

- The school improvement plan identifies accurately the things that need to be done to improve the school. There are clear milestones of what needs to be achieved. However, these are not sufficiently measurable. This means that governors cannot check that the planned actions have been achieved.

Governance of the school

- The composition of the governing body has altered since the time of the last inspection and continues to change. New skills are being added.
- Governors visit the school regularly to find out information for themselves. For example, each term one governor checks on the provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Governors ask questions about the right things, such as pupil premium funding and safeguarding, but their questions are not challenging enough. In the past governors have been too accepting of mediocrity. For example, governors have not challenged leaders about phonics outcomes that have improved too slowly.
- Governors did not do enough to stem a decline in standards and quality of teaching as the school expanded.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Checks on staff and volunteers who work with pupils are rigorous and are recorded accurately on the school's single central record of employment checks on staff. There are effective policies in place to ensure that visitors to the school are aware of the well thought out safeguarding procedures.
- Staff are trained well and know their responsibilities to keep pupils safe. Leaders provide additional training beyond that which is statutorily required to strengthen the safeguarding culture.
- Leaders and the home-school link-worker liaise well with parents and other agencies to keep the most vulnerable pupils safe. The headteacher is tenacious in following up concerns with other agencies when she feels that they can do more to keep pupils safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Leaders have successfully strengthened teaching in the last year so that it is good overall. However, they are not complacent and know that there is more to do to ensure that teaching consistently ensures that all groups of pupils make rapid progress.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and are often enthused by the activities that teachers plan. One pupil told inspectors that 'the teachers try their hardest to make it fun'.
- Teachers use assessment information well to plan activities to fill gaps in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in a range of subjects. The school's marking policy

is used consistently. Pupils told inspectors how their teacher's comments helped them to improve their work.

- Where teaching is strongest, teachers ask challenging questions and amend their plans when needed. They use different strategies when some pupils need more help, and adjust tasks to provide more challenge for the most able.
- Teaching assistants, in many instances, provide strong support for teachers. Some teaching assistants lead additional teaching sessions to help pupils who are falling behind to catch up, while others provide individualised support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Mathematics teaching ensures that pupils develop their fluency, problem-solving and reasoning skills well. Practical resources are usually used effectively to support pupils' understanding. However, sometimes work is not challenging enough for the most able pupils.
- Phonics teaching is improving. The current approach is having a positive effect on strengthening outcomes and helping those pupils who had fallen behind to catch up. A few teaching assistants are still developing their skills to model and teach this essential area of reading well.
- Specialist teaching in physical education and music adds extra strength to the curriculum. One parent told inspectors, 'My daughter likes the well-planned activities.' Additionally, many parents feel that the school has got the balance right with homework and appreciate the new mathematics tasks.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have an accurate view of the quality of teaching and have managed well the turbulence caused by staff changes. They recognise that a small minority of teaching could still be improved by ensuring that expectations are always high, including for the most able pupils. They are aware that time is not always used wisely and that sometimes teachers do not explain tasks well enough.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The strong, nurturing environment encourages pupils to be happy and confident learners. Throughout the school each pupil's individuality is accepted and valued, whatever their characteristics or interests.
- Parents and pupils, rightly, have no concerns about bullying in this school, because it is rare. However, pupils know what bullying is and can explain strategies to tackle any worries, should they arise.
- Pupils feel safe at school and learn how to stay safe in different situations. For example, they have learned about online safety and what to do during a fire drill. Year 2 pupils were seen working sensibly with visiting instructors during the inspection, learning to ride their bikes safely.

- There are opportunities for pupils to vote for their friends to take on extra responsibilities as part of the school council or eco-committee. Pupils regularly raise money for those less fortunate than themselves, including for pupils who attend a linked school in Gambia.
- Pupils generally take pride in their work. Most pupils present their learning neatly. However, where teachers have lower expectations the presentation of pupils' work varies.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils understand the new behaviour management system and can explain how teachers use it fairly. Pupils nearly always behave well in class. They lose concentration rarely, and only when teaching is less effective.
- Parents rightly believe that behaviour is good at the school. At playtimes and lunchtimes, pupils get along well together and play sociably with their friends.
- Leaders have taken effective action to reduce persistent absence, which has halved this year. Attendance is broadly average. However, leaders know that there is more to do to ensure that families all understand the importance of attending school regularly.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Leaders have reversed the decline in standards that started shortly after the previous inspection. Current pupils are making much stronger progress than pupils who left the school in recent years.
- Pupils currently in key stage 1 are making good progress, and developing their skills, knowledge and understanding in a range of subjects. Pupils apply their reading and writing skills in other subjects well, including in science, geography, history and religious education.
- Pupils are making better progress in writing this year due to a renewed strategy and focus on the importance of all aspects of the subject.
- In mathematics, pupils, including the most able, are regularly deepening their understanding and successfully tackling challenging problems.
- Differences in attainment for disadvantaged pupils narrowed at the end of key stage 1 in 2016. Current disadvantaged pupils, including the most able, are now making similar progress to their peers and not falling further behind. However, they are not yet making the accelerated progress that will allow them to catch up with other pupils nationally.
- Outcomes in phonics have improved annually, and because of a clearer strategy further improvements have been made this year. Many Year 2 pupils who had previously fallen behind are now making strong progress to help them catch up. Nonetheless, standards in the Year 1 phonics screening check have remained below national averages.
- There are striking examples of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities making strong progress from low starting points. This is due to effective

provision and support in all year groups. However, a small group of pupils who are both disadvantaged and who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making slower progress as teaching is not yet meeting their needs well enough.

- Leaders are aware that in a small minority of classes, the most able pupils are not challenged across the curriculum as much as they should be. This is because some teaching is still in the process of being improved.

Early years provision

Good

- Parents are rightly very positive about the good start to their education that children receive in the Reception classes. Parents feel well informed about the progress their children are making.
- The proportion of children achieving a good level of development has improved in recent years and is now accelerating further under the strong leadership of the deputy headteacher. Children make good progress in all areas of the early years curriculum and are typically well placed to continue their learning in Year 1.
- Leaders have ensured that assessment information is now accurate. They know that more could be done to challenge the most able children, both to provide additional challenge at the point of learning, and over time to help these children to exceed their early learning goals.
- Teachers skilfully and effectively work with individual children who need some extra one-to-one teaching to master a skill or secure better understanding. As a result, children do not fall behind, and those with low starting points catch up quickly. Other adults are not yet as well skilled at helping children to make progress in the learning.
- The teaching of phonics is highly effective in the early years. Children work at a fast pace and are challenged to make links between their early reading and writing skills, for example by writing sentences which use the sounds they have learned.
- Classrooms and the outside learning area are appealing and stimulating to children. Resources are well organised and this encourages children to play and learn independently. Children are highly engaged and sustain interest and focus on interesting activities.
- Children are very sociable and behave positively. They help to solve problems. For example, an inspector observed one child kindly comforting an upset friend and helping to fix a model that had broken. These acts of kindness are not uncommon.
- Safeguarding in the early years is effective and children's welfare requirements are met well. Any additional needs that children have are quickly identified and appropriate extra support is put in place for them.

School details

Unique reference number	125067
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10032918

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	264
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Patricia McIntosh
Headteacher	Katherine Donlon
Telephone number	01483 532726
Website	www.onslow.surrey.sch.uk
Email address	info@onslow.surrey.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	26–27 January 2011

Information about this school

- The school has expanded since the previous inspection. There are now three classes in each year group.
- The headteacher joined the school in September 2015 and the deputy headteacher was appointed to her role in September 2016.
- Around one third of pupils are from minority ethnic groups.
- Just under a quarter of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is smaller than that found in schools nationally.
- The school operates a morning club that provides childcare before school each day.

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- On the first day of the inspection, Her Majesty’s Inspector visited classes with the headteacher to observe learning, look at pupils’ workbooks and talk to pupils. On the second day the inspection team visited all classes, mainly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and various other school leaders. They also held discussions with members of staff. Her Majesty’s Inspector met with three members of the governing body (including the chair) and a consultant representing the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke informally to pupils in lessons and on the playground at breaktime. One inspector met more formally with the school council. Inspectors heard some pupils from Years 1 and 2 read.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the start of both days of the inspection to gain their views of the school.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of the school’s documentation, including information about attendance, behaviour, pupils’ progress, governance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Lee Selby, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Jo Garlick	Ofsted Inspector
Stuart Cateridge	Ofsted Inspector
Darren Aisthorpe	Ofsted Inspector

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