

Camp Primary and Nursery School

Camp Road, St Albans, AL1 5PG

Inspection dates 8–9 July 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils achieve well and make good progress. Most children enter Nursery with skills and abilities well below expectations. Pupils leave Year 6 with standards in line with or above the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching is good throughout the school and teaching assistants are used effectively to help pupils achieve well. Pupils are routinely offered appropriate challenges and this has had a strong impact on raising standards.
- The leadership and management of the school are outstanding. The headteacher is a very strong leader who has the confidence of the whole community in this improving school. Senior and middle leaders add greatly to the effectiveness of the leadership team.
- Pupils behave well, follow the rules and show kind and caring attitudes towards each other. They feel safe and show good attitudes to learning.
- Governors are well-informed and know the school well. They use data effectively to help the school move forward. Governors have the right balance between supporting the school and holding the leadership to account.
- The improvement points from the previous inspection have been addressed successfully.
- Provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language is good and they make good progress.
- Parents are extremely happy with the school. They say that the school celebrates its diversity and sees every child as an individual. Parents describe the school as a community where everyone is welcomed and valued.
- The school's curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils are provided with a wide range of exciting and varied opportunities that make them want to come to school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The attainment of pupils entitled to the pupil premium lags behind that of other children in some year groups.
- The work in pupils' exercise books is not always of good quality and does not always reflect the standards that they are capable of.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors gathered a range of evidence to judge the quality of teaching and learning over time. They observed parts of 19 lessons throughout the school. Some observations were undertaken jointly with the headteacher or one of the deputy headteachers. Inspectors looked at pupils' exercise books, listened to pupils read and talked to them about their work. Inspectors examined the school's documents on pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching.
- The views of parents were taken into account including: 67 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire; the four letters that were received; and those of the 26 parents who attended a meeting with the lead inspector. Inspectors also listened to the views of staff and evaluated the 23 staff questionnaires that were received.
- Meetings were held with pupils, staff, parents, governors and the school improvement partner.
- Inspectors looked at a range of school documents, including information about safeguarding, the school's self-evaluation, plans for future development, attendance records and minutes of governing body meetings.

Inspection team

Wendy Varney, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Isobel Randall

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school set in large grounds that include a playing field and school allotments. The school has one class per year group from Year Reception to Year 6. It admits up to 60 children into the Nursery class each year, half of whom continue into Reception at Camp Primary and half who move into Reception classes at other local schools.
- The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic backgrounds is well above the national average although White British pupils are the largest ethnic group. The number of Bangladeshi and Pakistani pupils is much higher than in most primary schools.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above the national average.
- The number of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium is average. The pupil premium provides additional government funding for those who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children in the care of the local authority and other groups.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion of such pupils supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is also average.
- The school meets current floor standards; these are the minimum expectations, set by the government, for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate the progress of pupils eligible for the pupil premium so that it is at least at the level of their classmates, and they close any gaps in attainment.
- Improve the quality of work in pupils' exercise books by:
 - raising the standard of pupils' handwriting and presentation
 - ensuring that marking and feedback are used consistently, across all year groups, to show pupils how to improve their work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the nursery class in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are well below those typical of their age. The school has addressed well the issue identified in the last inspection, and standards have risen in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children now make good progress and a much higher than average number achieved a good level of development this year.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with national average. This represents good progress for this cohort, including the most able, as a below-average number had reached a good level of development at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Standards in Key Stage 2 have improved on 2013, and the recent test results for current Year 6 pupils are very high. All pupils made at least expected progress in reading and writing and almost all pupils did so in mathematics. A much higher than average number of more able pupils achieved the higher levels because they are stretched and challenged appropriately.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because their needs are considered on an individual basis and appropriate interventions are put in place.
- Provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language is a strength of the school. There is an appropriate emphasis on developing pupils' oral skills when they first arrive and staff ensure that pupils' individual needs are met. Speaking English as an additional language is not allowed to be an excuse for low achievement and, as a result, pupils make good progress.
- In 2013, there were too few pupils eligible for the pupil premium to allow their attainment to be compared with that of their peers without risk of identifying them. In general, pupils entitled to the pupil premium make good progress and the gap is narrowing between these pupils and their classmates. However, in some year groups progress is not fast enough to enable pupils to catch up and the gap in standards in those year groups between those eligible to the pupil premium and those who are not is still too wide for achievement to be considered outstanding overall.
- Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds make the same good progress as other groups.
- Achievement in phonics (the sounds that letters make) is good because pupils make good progress in their learning. The school's good standards in phonics are not always reflected in the results of the phonics screening check because of the higher than average number of pupils who are at the very early stages of learning English at the point that the check is carried out.
- Pupils read often and well. They show enjoyment in books and a love of reading.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers plan work at a range of levels to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met. Pupils are used to selecting the level of challenge that is appropriate for them, according to how difficult they find the subject matter. Higher ability pupils are stretched because the hardest work is sufficiently challenging. This practice is consistent across the school.
- The school's strong focus on improving the quality of teaching in mathematics has been very successful. This has had a direct impact on standards and pupils now achieve at or above

expectations in all year groups.

- Teachers mark pupils' work well and give clear 'next steps' so that pupils know how to improve their work. Pupils are given the opportunity to respond to the teacher's comments and suggestions and this helps to move them on. However, this is much more developed in some classes than others and is not yet completely consistent across the school.
- During lessons there is a strong focus on what teachers want pupils to learn. Learning is most rapid when, teachers constantly check that pupils have understood and intervene appropriately when they have not.
- Pupils show good attitudes to learning and are usually fully engaged with their work. Pupils say that their teachers 'make you feel smart'.
- Pupils are given opportunities to write across a range of subjects. However, although some work is well-presented, too much is untidy and appears careless. Teachers do not routinely tackle poorly presented work so pupils do not always produce their best work in their exercise books.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are taught well. Teachers plan appropriate activities and skilled teaching assistants are used effectively to help pupils achieve well. The school engages well with outside agencies when extra support or advice is needed to meet pupils' individual needs.
- Teachers and teaching assistants use questioning effectively to deepen pupils' understanding. They use a range of questions skilfully to check whether pupils have understood and to encourage them to think more deeply about the subject.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. The skilled practitioners work collaboratively together and adapt their planning according to the children's needs and interests. The children are very focused during their independent time and learn new skills well. Pupils in Reception use their phonics knowledge independently to write simple sentences and to read unfamiliar books.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good; it is managed well and staff expectations are high. The school's behaviour management policy is applied consistently throughout the school and parents who attended a meeting with the lead inspector were all able to talk knowledgeably about the 'golden sunshine' and 'grey clouds' system. School records show that good behaviour is the norm; as a result, pupils consistently display good attitudes to learning.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel safe and free from bullying. They know how to keep themselves safe and about healthy lifestyles. Parents say that bullying is rare and issues are dealt with quickly and effectively as soon as they are raised.
- Pupils are friendly, polite and welcoming. They play well together and are supportive of each other. During an observation, a child was heard to say spontaneously, 'That's a lovely painting you're doing' as she walked past a child at an easel.
- Exclusions are rare. The school manages very well the pupils with additional behavioural needs and uses the outreach service provided locally for support and guidance.

- Pupils are given opportunities to take responsibility around the school and do so very well. Peer mediators are successful in helping pupils to sort out issues that occur during playtimes. Pupils are keen to take on responsibilities. They ensure that their plots in the school's allotments are watered and well-tended. Members of the Sports Council help to plan and organise events, and increase the amount of exercise that pupils take.
- In most lessons, pupils show good attitudes to learning and work hard. They enjoy school and one parent commented, 'The school holidays are too long for my son.'

The leadership and management are outstanding

- This is a good and rapidly improving school. The headteacher is an outstanding leader who has gained the respect and trust of the entire school community. She knows the school very well and this enables her to shape her development priorities and plans in the right way.
- The relentless focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning has had a direct impact on raising standards for all pupils. Any gaps in attainment are quickly spotted and immediately addressed. As a result, pupils from different ethnic backgrounds make equally good progress and the progress made by pupils eligible for the pupil premium is accelerating. She is committed to ensuring that this gap is closed.
- Leaders at all levels have a very clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of their areas. They work extremely well together, as a team, to drive improvement. The deputy headteachers, the Early Years Foundation Stage leader and the leader responsible for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are all well-informed and knowledgeable, and skilfully prioritise the school's development.
- Performance management is used very well to help the school improve. Teachers' appraisal targets are linked to pupil progress meetings and termly opportunities for review are built into the timetable of staff meetings. This tight focus on pupils' progress is key to rising standards.
- The school's self-evaluation is thorough and rigorous. There is a system of 'review-plan-do' and all members of staff and the governing body are involved in the development of the school improvement plan. The plan is monitored throughout the year and adapted as necessary to ensure that the momentum for improvement is maintained.
- The school's inclusive ethos is one of its strongest features. Parents describe the school as 'a community' and say that they feel welcomed and involved. Everyone is seen as an individual at Camp Primary and everyone is valued. Parents say that achievement is good because the teachers know every child so well and try so hard to meet their individual needs.
- The local authority provides good support to the school. The improvement partner's review visits, and the school's involvement in a project focused on improving mathematics, have helped the leadership team to move the school forward.
- The school's curriculum excites pupils' interest and keenness to learn; as a result, standards are rising further. Pupils' learning is enhanced by themed events, such as the recent 'Food for Thought Week'. Pupils are provided with a wide range of exciting and varied opportunities that make them want to come to school. The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well.

- The primary school sports funding is being used effectively to encourage participation in physical activities and to increase the range of clubs and sporting activities available to pupils. The number of pupils eligible for the pupil premium who participate in sports clubs has increased by nearly 50% since the funding was introduced.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors know the school well and have a good level of involvement in self-evaluation and school improvement processes. Their understanding of data enables them to ask searching questions in order to hold the headteacher to account; as a result, they have a good grasp of where teaching is strongest and how any weaker teaching is being improved. They employ the services of an improvement partner from the local authority to provide assurance that internal judgements, particularly on achievement and the quality of teaching, are correct. They use performance management effectively to ensure that teachers, including the headteacher, are properly rewarded and that any underperformance is addressed.

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	117136
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	444067

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	248
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Adriana Osborn
Headteacher	Louise Cornock
Date of previous school inspection	18 October 2010
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