

John Hampden Primary School

Park Street, Thame, OX9 3HU

Inspection dates 29–30 April 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils achieve well. They make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- When pupils leave school at the end of Year 6 they reach standards that are just above national averages in mathematics and reading, and broadly in line in writing.
- Senior leaders create a culture of belonging to the community that pervades all of school life. Pupils and staff want to succeed; staff to improve their skills of teaching and pupils in their learning, and all to do their best.
- Teaching across the school is good. Adults plan work that helps pupils make good progress. There is a strong focus on developing pupils' understanding of the language used in each subject.
- Pupils are proud of their school and enjoy talking about the range of different activities that help make the curriculum interesting. Their attendance is above average. They have a great respect for each other and the adults in school.
- Pupils feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe. They know that adults will always help them if they ever have any difficulties.
- The governing body has a very clear understanding of the strengths and areas to develop in the school. The governors give strong support to leaders and staff of the school to ensure the best for the pupils.
- Children in the early years provision have a good start to school. They make good progress and are helped to move confidently into Key Stage 1.
- Teaching assistants give strong support to individuals and groups of pupils so that they can make good progress.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Sometimes activities provided for pupils do not interest or challenge them enough, so that a few, especially the most able, lose concentration and progress slows.
- Teachers do not always ensure that all pupils are fully engaged in whole class discussions. As a result, opportunities to learn really well are lost.
- Sharing teachers' skills is not yet embedded enough to have had a strong impact on improving the quality of teaching further.
- Some middle leaders do not have a complete overview of the strengths and weaknesses in their area. As a result, their contribution to school development is not as strong as it could be.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 24 lessons and part lessons. They were accompanied by the headteacher and a senior leader in 10 of the observations.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, teaching and non-teaching staff, members of the governing body, and pupils from Years 2 to 6. The lead inspector had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority
- The inspectors heard pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3 read.
- Inspectors looked at the school’s development plans and monitoring files, the headteacher’s leadership files, and arrangements for the management of staff performance. They also looked at safeguarding documentation and minutes of the governing body meetings. They looked at the school’s records of pupils’ progress and evaluated work in pupils’ books.
- Inspectors considered the 42 staff questionnaires that were returned.
- Inspectors considered the 102 responses to the online parent questionnaire Parent View. They also noted comments from parents, including an email.

Inspection team

Jenny Batelen, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Barbara Carr	Additional Inspector
Raphael Moss	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- John Hampden is a slightly larger than average-sized primary school.
- Children attend the nursery part time and Reception classes full time.
- The majority of pupils come from a White British background.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after) is below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The governing body manages a breakfast and after-school club and also wraparound care for nursery-age children.
- There have been some staff changes since the previous inspection.
- The school is federated with Tetsworth Primary School. The headteacher is executive headteacher of both schools and they share the same governing body. The other school did not form part of this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning further by:
 - providing more challenge for all pupils, especially the most able, so that they are always fully engaged in their learning
 - ensuring that during in whole class discussions all pupils are fully involved
 - sharing best practice among staff.
- Develop the skills of some middle leaders further so that they are able to more effectively contribute to school improvement.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The strong leadership of the headteacher, well supported by staff and governors, creates a culture where staff and pupils work together to ensure that all can achieve their best.
- The school is very inclusive and ensures that all pupils have equal opportunities to access all that the school offers and that there is no discrimination. Specific training helps staff to support pupils with particular needs so that they are able to take a full part in all activities. The special educational needs coordinator gives strong guidance and supports staff and parents of pupils with particular needs.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively in a range of ways, including providing additional small group support, extra targeted resources and to access trips. As a result, the eligible pupils make progress that is at least in line with their peers across the school.
- Senior leaders rigorously check on teaching to ensure that, despite the staff changes, the quality of teaching remains at least consistently good and continues to improve. Targets are set for staff based on national teaching standards and school improvement priorities. Teachers know that they are responsible for the progress that their pupils make. They understand that their pay is linked to pupils' achievement.
- Leaders at different levels understand their subjects and areas of responsibility. They value the training they have to help them fulfil their roles. However, in some subject areas, leaders do not yet have a whole school view of how well pupils are progressing and therefore are not confident at identifying and leading improvements. Senior staff and governors are well aware of inconsistencies and have developed detailed plans to improve the skills of subject leaders.
- The curriculum is rich and exciting. Pupils develop their English and mathematics skills well as they use them across different subjects. Links across the subjects increase pupils' enjoyment of learning. Pupils spoke with enthusiasm about making Mexican masks in Key Stage 1 to complement their learning about Mexico. Pupils in Year 4 explained how learning about Monet and experimenting with his style of art increased their enjoyment of French. The strong emphasis on creativity is evident in the work produced during arts week, which pupils described in detail. Music is celebrated through learning to play instruments and performing in public. The school involves itself in community events such as 'Music in the Park'.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. There is a thorough understanding of the school values, including tolerance and respect. Pupils learn how to care for and respect themselves, each other and their world. They understand that modern Britain is a country with a range of cultures that they enjoy learning about. Pupils are learning to be responsible citizens as they elect school councillors, buddy with younger pupils and learn about and support Fairtrade practices. As a result, they are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The primary physical education (PE) and sport funding is used effectively to improve the equipment available, increase the access to a range of sports, including competitive opportunities, and to provide staff training. Pupils spoke with enthusiasm about their participation in PE and sport, particularly taking part in competitions and the successes they have achieved.
- Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet current statutory requirements and are well organised. Pupils feel safe and well looked after, and are confident to ask an adult for help if necessary. The security and oversight of the spacious site ensure the safety of pupils at all times.
- Parents have confidence in the school. They value the strong leadership and the help and support their children and they, themselves, receive. Parents spoke of how their concerns are listened to and acted upon. They value the after-school provision that supports their working lives.
- Staff value links with Tetsworth Primary School and a wider group of schools. Staff have benefited from shared training and opportunities to check that their assessment of pupils' work is accurate and in line with other schools.
- The local authority has provided light touch support to this good school. It has particularly given support to develop the teaching of writing further.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has a range of skills that enables it to maintain a thorough understanding of how well the school is doing. Governors are able to rigorously scrutinise the information about pupil progress and identify areas that need further development, such as writing. They ask questions of senior leaders to ensure that the focus is on improving pupil achievement. Governors are frequent visitors to school and are welcomed into classrooms. As a result, they understand the information they are given about the quality of teaching and know how teachers are helped to improve through the performance management process and associated training. They are also kept well informed about how leaders tackle any weaknesses in teaching.

- Governors keep a rigorous check on the finances of the school. They know how additional funding, such as pupil premium and sport funding, is spent and the impact this has on the pupils. Governors know how good teaching is rewarded and budget plan for this.
- Governors review policies, particularly those relating to safeguarding, and ensure that they support school improvement and the well-being of pupils and staff.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are very polite and well mannered at all times. They enjoy welcoming visitors and are keen to talk about their work and their school. Attendance that is above national averages reflects pupils' enjoyment of school.
- Relationships across the school are very strong. As a result, there is a great deal of trust which leads to a strong sense of 'togetherness' whether pupils are working or playing.
- Most pupils work hard all the time in lessons. They are keen to succeed, listen carefully and contribute well in class discussions. Sometimes, when the work provided is not quite challenging enough, some pupils lose focus and so do not involve themselves in the lesson as much as possible.
- School records show that the management of behaviour is good. Incidents of poor behaviour are rare. Strong and consistent routines set out by school leaders and in pupils own class codes help pupils know how to behave well. Those who sometimes find it difficult to behave well are helped to stay on task and manage friendships with skilled adult support.
- Pupils' behaviour around the school is good. Pupils enjoy the wide spacious grounds and the different activities and resources available which keep them fit and active at playtimes.
- A calm atmosphere and healthy food at the breakfast club mean pupils attending it are well prepared for the start of school.
- Parents and staff agree that the systems in place help pupils to be well behaved in and around school.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils experiencing any difficulties are well looked after and able to talk about their concerns.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. They understand about the possible dangers when using modern technology and know what they should do if they have any worries. They learn to keep themselves safe in the wider world and are aware of potential risks from such things as the inappropriate use of drugs.
- Pupils understand about the different forms of bullying, including racial and homophobic bullying. They report that there is some occasional bullying at school, but they are confident that adults will sort this out. School records support this view.
- Parents feel that their children are kept safe at school and do not have concerns about bullying.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching over time is consistently good and some practice is outstanding. Leaders identify this outstanding practice through careful checks on the quality of teaching, and encourage teachers to share the outstanding features of their teaching.
- Teachers make good use of language specific to the subject they are teaching. For example, pupils use terms such as adverb, adjective and preposition with confidence, and show good understanding as to how these can improve their writing.
- Pupils are very clear about the tasks they are set and are able to explain what they must do and how they will know if they have done well. Tasks set to help them improve their work are clear and challenge them to make further progress and to deepen their understanding. This was clearly demonstrated by a pupil who described the challenge she had been given to arrange decimals in order and explain her reasoning.
- Marking of books helps pupils know how to improve their work and this is particularly strong and consistent in writing. As a result, pupils are confident that they know how to make their work better.
- Resources are used extremely well and pupils make good use of them to help them in their work. Helpful displays provide ideas and tips for improving work. Pupils make use of these regularly.
- Adults use questions effectively to challenge pupils explain their thinking and give reasons for their answers. Sometimes, in whole class sessions, adults do not ensure that all pupils are fully involved and, as

a result, on occasion, pupils lose the opportunity to explore their ideas fully. As a result, they make less progress than they could.

- Teachers carefully identify how well pupils are making progress in reading, writing and mathematics. They mostly plan lively lessons that interest and excite pupils and challenge them to make at least good progress. Just occasionally, this is not so apparent and some pupils, particularly the most able, find the tasks too easy, so that they lose interest and progress slips.
- Teaching assistants make a strong contribution to the learning of pupils. They work with small groups or give one-to-one support so that pupils who may have disabilities or particular needs are able to take a full part in the lessons.
- Phonics (the sound letters make) is taught well, so that pupils from an early age have the skills to read and to tackle new words. Pupils enjoy reading; they choose from a range of texts and read confidently with expression and understanding.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Leaders' actions to improve achievement have proved effective. All groups of pupils are currently making good progress through the school after a slight 'dip' in performance in 2014.
- Current school information and work seen in books indicate that all year groups are achieving well and that achievement is consistently rising. Pupils are meeting the standards expected for pupils of their age. More pupils in Year 6 now are working at the higher Level 5 in reading, writing and mathematics than last year. The proportion of pupils in this year group making more rapid progress exceeds the proportions last year in English and mathematics. As a result, pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are just above national standards. Pupils in the current Year 2 are making good progress and maintaining the standards set in previous years.
- Writing is a focus throughout the school and the development of marking to help pupils make good progress has been strong; this is helping to raise achievement. The development of spoken language skills to support writing and improve grammar, punctuation and spelling skills is reflected in well-written pieces of work in books and on display. Pupils write across the range of subjects and are proud of their own and their friends' work.
- Reading standards are good. Pupils in Year 1 achieve standards that are above the national average in the phonic screening check. Group and one-to-one reading sessions help pupils to understand and enjoy a range of texts and to develop confidence, fluency and the ability to read expressively.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics. Effective mathematics teaching has helped pupils to gain confidence in the basic skills and to deepen their understanding of different strategies to solve calculations and problems.
- The most able pupils are almost always challenged to do their best and achieve highly. An increasing number of these pupils are now on target to reach the higher levels in English and mathematics. However, on occasion, tasks do not challenge them enough. They do not always learn as well as they could.
- The needs of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are very clearly identified. The range of needs is met through individual and group support as well as in the whole class. Leaders support teachers well to plan lessons that ensure these pupils can take a full part. As a result, most of these pupils make good progress in line with others in their class. Careful monitoring ensures that those who might not be making enough progress are identified and further support is put in place.
- Disadvantaged pupils eligible for pupil premium make good progress from their different starting points. In the 2014 national tests, the gap in disadvantaged pupils' attainment compared with other pupils nationally was equivalent to one and a half terms in reading, three terms in mathematics and five terms in writing. Compared to other pupils in the school, the equivalent gaps were the same for reading and mathematics and four terms for writing. School information shows, however, that the progress of these pupils compared with their peers in each year group is often slightly better and the gaps in their learning are closing.

The early years provision

is good

- The bright and lively early years area is welcoming and allows children to have a happy and exciting start to school. Children make good progress through the early years, and the proportion achieving a good level of development is above that typically expected for their age. As a result, children are well prepared for

Year 1.

- Leadership of the early years is strong and team work and planning across Nursery and Reception mean children benefit from high levels of adult support to encourage and develop their learning
- There is a clear understanding by all staff of how children learn, and activities are planned that encourage development in all areas of learning. The current topic of the life cycle of a frog enabled children to explore a range of art techniques to create pictures, such as frog spawn, to identify and label parts of a frog using their sound mats to help with spelling, as well as observing the growth of the tadpoles in the fish tank.
- Disabled children and those who have special educational needs are very well supported to take a full part in the life of the class. Staff are well trained to meet particular needs. As a result, these children make good progress.
- The outside area is spacious and very well equipped, so that children can learn and develop a range of skills. They run and play together safely and are helped to understand how to keep themselves safe when using the range of equipment.
- Children behave well. They share resources and help each other in their activities. They listen carefully to adults and respond quickly to instructions.
- Adults make observations of how well children are progressing, both when working with an adult and when independently choosing their activity. Adults share this information with each other and with parents through regular conversations.
- Parents are encouraged to be part of the children's learning and to contribute information about achievements at home to be part of the 'learning journey' of their child.
- Wraparound care, including a lunch club and after-school care, means that children in Nursery can be well cared for throughout the day, helping parents with their work commitments.

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	123076
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	461947

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	390
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mary Stiles
Headteacher	Alan Haigh
Date of previous school inspection	5–6 June 2013
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