

The Royal First School

The Great Park, Windsor, Berkshire, SL4 2HP

Inspection dates

3–4 December 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Require improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement.

- Pupils do not make consistently good progress in writing and mathematics.
- The gap between the achievement of boys and girls is not closing quickly enough, especially in writing and mathematics.
- Teaching has not been good enough to ensure all pupils make good progress from their starting points.
- The most able pupils are not always challenged in lessons to work at and achieve higher levels. As a result, their progress is slower than it should be.
- Teachers do not always make sure that pupils respond to their comments in marking to help them improve their work and deepen their understanding.
- In some classes, teachers do not have high enough expectations of the quality of work that pupils are required to produce. As a result, their work is not always tidy and well presented.
- The role of middle leaders is not yet fully developed in checking the quality of teaching, so as to hold teachers responsible for the progress their pupils make.
- The systems for tracking the progress of pupils across the year groups are not fully developed. As a result, leaders and managers do not have an accurate picture about the progress of different groups of pupils.
- Although governors are informed about pupils' attainment and the quality of teaching, they receive too little information on the progress of pupils. As a result, they are not able to hold senior leaders accountable for the achievement of pupils.

The school has the following strengths

- The early years provision is good, and children make good progress and achieve well.
- The teaching of phonics (the link between letters and the sounds they make) has improved. As a result, pupils enjoy reading.
- Pupils' behaviour is good, and they have positive attitudes to learning. They say that they are kept safe and well cared for by staff.
- The school's work on promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effective.
- The school works well with parents. As a result, attendance has improved.
- The staff are highly supportive of the school's leadership, and morale in the school is high.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 10 lessons, of which two were joint observations with the headteacher. The inspector also observed pupils at breaks and lunchtimes.
- Meetings were held with different groups of pupils. The inspector listened to pupils read in Years 1 and 2 and discussed their reading with them.
- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher, middle leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and three other governors. A telephone discussion was also held with a local authority representative.
- The inspector observed the school's work and examined a range of documentation, including the school's information on pupils' performance, improvement plans and checks on the quality of teaching. The inspector also looked at records relating to behaviour, safety, safeguarding and attendance.
- The inspector looked at pupils' written work to see what progress they make and to judge the quality of marking and feedback.
- There were 39 responses received from parents to the online questionnaire (Parent View). The inspector spoke to parents in the playground at the start of the school day.
- The inspector also considered the 13 questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

Avtar Sherri, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The Royal First School is much smaller than an average-sized primary school.
- Early years consists of a full-time Reception class. Key Stage 1 consists of a Year 1 and Year 2 class, and Key Stage 2 consists of a Year 3 and Year 4 class.
- Children are taught in mixed-age groups in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are also taught in a mixed-age class in the afternoon.
- Most of the pupils are from a White British background.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is well below average, at about one in 17. This is additional government funding provided to give extra support to those disadvantaged pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and to children who are looked after by the local authority. There were no disadvantaged pupils who took the end of Year 2 test last year. Currently, there are no looked after children in the school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better in every year group by ensuring that:
 - the most able pupils are consistently challenged in lessons to achieve higher levels
 - pupils respond to teachers' comments in marking to improve their work and further their understanding
 - the work pupils produce is tidy and well presented in all year groups.
- improve the progress that pupils make in writing and mathematics, especially for boys, so that it is good or better by ensuring that:
 - pupils write at length, and are given as many opportunities as possible to practise their writing and mathematical skills across all subjects and topics
 - the over-reliance on worksheets does not hinder pupils from improving their writing skills by only requiring them to write short responses.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - developing the role of middle leaders so that they are better able to monitor the quality of teaching in their areas of responsibility, and holding teachers accountable for the progress their pupils make
 - improving the systems for checking the progress of different groups of pupils across the year groups to raise achievement
 - ensuring that governors receive detailed information on the progress pupils make in reading, writing and mathematics to enable them to hold senior leaders accountable for the work they do to raise achievement.

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 leadership and management

require improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because teaching and pupils' progress are not consistently good.
- The role of middle managers is not sufficiently developed in checking and improving the quality of teaching in their subject areas, and in holding teachers accountable for the progress their pupils make.
- The systems for checking pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics are not sufficiently developed to identify timely and effective support for pupils to raise achievement. As a result, leaders and managers have not been focused enough on the progress that different groups of pupils make across the different year groups.
- Although senior leaders have identified most of the main priorities for development in the school improvement plan, raising the achievement of pupils in writing and mathematics, particularly of boys, has not been given a sufficient focus. The link between school self-evaluation and the school improvement plan is not strong enough to ensure that there is a sharper focus on the areas for development.
- The role of governors in evaluating the impact of the actions in the school development plan is not always rigorous enough to enable them to hold leaders and managers accountable for the work they do on raising achievement.
- The headteacher, senior leaders, middle managers and governors work well as a team to improve the quality of teaching, and are highly ambitious for pupils. As a result, there have been improvements in the attainment of children in the early years, and in pupils' results at the end of Year 1 in the phonics screening check.
- There is effective management of performance and training system in place, which is supporting teachers in improving the quality of teaching. There is a clear link between the performance of teachers and their salary progression.
- Subjects are planned well through themed and practical activities. The school is increasingly using its 'forest area' and the extensive parkland that surrounds the school to enrich children's experiences, capture their interest and extend their learning. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Although pupils learn about other cultures and religions to prepare them for life in modern Britain, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to extend their understanding of cultural and religious diversity, particularly through visiting different places of worship. British values are effectively promoted through pupils learning about rights and responsibilities and about how democracy works. There are a range of activities and after-school clubs for pupils to develop their interest in sports and music. Leaders, managers and staff are working effectively to implement the new curriculum for primary schools.
- The school is using the primary sports funding well, and is increasing pupils' participation in and enjoyment of sports. For example, pupils took part in a hockey competition with other schools. Teachers are taking up opportunities to increase their skills in teaching physical education, for example, in teaching gymnastics and dance.
- There are good relationships between pupils from different backgrounds and leaders, managers and staff ensure that any form of discrimination is not tolerated. The school promotes equality of opportunity effectively.
- Staff morale is high, and staff work closely as a team for the best possible outcomes for pupils. They are highly supportive of the school's leadership and say that they are 'proud' and 'privileged' to work at the school.
- The school works effectively with parents. Parents responding to the Parent View questionnaire, and those who spoke to the inspector, felt that the school is well led and managed.
- Leaders ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements.
- The local authority has worked effectively with the school to improve the provision in the early years.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are highly ambitious, and are deeply committed to the school and to making further improvements. Governors have undertaken a variety of training, including on safeguarding, safer recruitment of staff and on the use of pupil performance information. As a result, they know how their school's performance compares with that of similar schools and with that of schools nationally. They also meet all their statutory duties, including those for safeguarding.
 - They ensure the efficient management of financial resources, and have a secure understanding of how pupil premium funding is spent and its impact on raising achievement for disadvantaged pupils. They are also familiar with how the additional sports funding is used to promote the physical well-being of

pupils.

- Governors have a good knowledge of performance management, including how decisions are made on teachers' pay scales, including how effective teaching is rewarded. However, they do not receive detailed information on the progress of different groups of pupils across the year groups. As a result, they are not secure in their knowledge about the progress pupils make in reading, writing and mathematics to hold senior leaders to account for the achievement of pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are very polite, friendly and courteous. Their behaviour is consistently good in lessons and around the school, and ensures that lunchtimes and breaks are calm and orderly. They show respect for each other and for adults, and relationships are strong. They also show respect for the school's environment by being careful not to throw litter on the floor, including in the dining hall during lunch.
- Pupils, including children in the early years, are keen to talk about their work with staff and visitors and have good attitudes to their learning.
- Pupils say that behaviour is good overall and bullying is rare. They also say that staff deal with any incidents of poor behaviour effectively. The school's records of behaviour indicate that behaviour is typically good, with very few incidents of poor behaviour.
- Pupils enjoy the various responsibilities they are given, for example members of the school council, sports leaders and house captains.
- Behaviour, however, is not outstanding because pupils say that there are occasions when a few pupils do not behave as well as they should, and 'some children talk when the teacher is talking'. Some pupils do not always ensure that their work is tidy and well presented in their books.
- All parents responding to the Parent View, including all those that the inspector spoke to, say that behaviour and safety are good. All staff responding to the staff questionnaire agree with them.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe in the school, and can easily talk to a member of staff if they have any concerns about their safety.
- Pupils are taught well how to keep themselves safe. For example, pupils know about road and fire safety and the safe use of the internet. They know about different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance has improved to above average. The school works closely with parents and has been effective in improving attendance. Punctuality of pupils to school is also good.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it has not been strong enough over time to ensure pupils make consistently good progress in all year groups.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' work has improved since the previous inspection, and pupils are mostly given guidance on how they can improve their work. However, not all teachers ensure that pupils respond to and practise the guidance they have been given in marking. As a result, some pupils make the same mistakes repeatedly when they have been corrected earlier, and they are not always able to improve their work.
- Some pupils do not take enough pride in their work. However, teachers do not always pick this up and some pupils' work in their books continues to be untidy. As a result, the quality of their handwriting is not improving quickly enough, and in mathematics it is difficult to see where they have made mistakes in their working out.
- In some lessons, the most able pupils are not challenged sufficiently to enable them to attain as well as they should. Sometimes they have to wait for harder tasks, particularly at the beginning of lessons during the introduction.
- Pupils do not always have enough opportunities to write at length to develop their writing skills across the different subjects. Sometimes, their progress in writing is hindered by the over-reliance on worksheets that only require short responses.
- In mathematics, teachers do not always provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to apply and improve

their mathematical skills across the different subjects and topics.

- The teaching of phonics is improving, and is giving pupils greater confidence in and enjoyment of reading.
- Teaching assistants are deployed effectively, and they work well to support the learning of weaker learners, including those who are disabled or have special educational needs and those who are disadvantaged.
- Relationships in the classroom are particularly strong, with good pupil engagement and opportunities for them to develop their speaking and listening skills. Teachers and teaching assistants mostly use questioning effectively to test and further pupils' understanding.
- Pupils and parents say that homework is appropriate and regularly set.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because pupils in some year groups have not made consistently good progress, especially in writing and mathematics.
- In 2013, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at Key Stage 1 was significantly above average. However, the school's provisional results for 2014 indicate that attainment at Key Stage 1 has declined to broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The attainment gap between boys and girls at the end of Key Stage 1 has increased in all subjects, especially in writing and mathematics.
- The school's own data show pupils, especially boys, do not make consistently good progress across the different year groups in writing and mathematics.
- Leaders and managers have not monitored the progress of different groups of pupils closely enough to target those who do not make enough progress in reading, writing and mathematics across the year groups.
- The most able pupils make good progress in reading and writing, but their progress is weaker in mathematics. In 2014, their attainment at the higher Level 2 declined in reading, writing and mathematics. Their attainment at the higher Level 3 declined in reading and mathematics, but improved in writing. Opportunities are sometimes missed in lessons to ensure that the most able pupils are sufficiently challenged in lessons to attain the higher levels.
- Children in the early years make good progress from their starting points. The proportion of children achieving the good level of development at the end of the Reception year is well above the average.
- In the 2014 national phonics (the sounds letters make) check at the end of Year 1, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected level improved significantly, and was well above the national average. This is helping pupils to improve and enjoy their reading.
- The disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make similar progress overall to that of their classmates. These pupils receive good-quality care and support from teachers and teaching assistants to help them in their learning.
- There are no children at an early stage of learning English as an additional language in the school. The very few children who speak English as an additional language do as well as their classmates. This is because of the rich opportunities for pupils to interact with each other and use their speaking and listening skills.
- The very small numbers of disadvantaged pupils in the school make similar progress to their classmates. There were no disadvantaged pupils in the 2014 Key Stage 1 cohort.

The early years provision

is good

- Children join the Reception Year with skills that are typical for their age. As a result of high-quality care and support and good teaching, children make good progress from their starting points. By the end of the Reception, the proportion of children who achieve a good level of development is above the average. This ensures that they are ready for their next stage of education in Year 1.
- Staff's commitment to equal opportunities ensures that children from different backgrounds, including disabled children and those with special educational needs, make at least similar progress.
- There are strong links with parents, and this ensures a smooth entry to the school and helps children to settle quickly into new routines. Parents who spoke to the inspector said that their children are well cared for and safe in school. Parents are happy with the progress their children make.

- Children show confidence, and are able to make their own choices about their learning, both indoors and outdoors. Their behaviour is good, and they interact well with each other and have good attitudes to their learning. There are opportunities for children in the Reception to learn from older children in Year 1. For example, a Year 1 child helped a younger child build a house.
- Learning journals have children's photographs, annotated samples of work and observation notes, and provide evidence that staff make checks on children's learning. However, sometimes the observations lack clear dates and information on the next steps for learning. As a result, the monitoring of pupils' progress is not always sharp enough.
- Leadership and management in this area of the school are good. Staff have received support and training from senior leaders and the school's improvement adviser, which is helping to improve the quality of teaching.

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	110014
Local authority	Windsor and Maidenhead
Inspection number	443778

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

Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	99
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Vivien Benn
Headteacher	Carolyn Jones
Date of previous school inspection	21–22 June 2011
Telephone number	017844 34274
Fax number	017844 38965
Email address	Theroyalschool@rbwm.org.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2014

