

Phoenix Infant Academy

Warrington Avenue, Slough, Berkshire SL1 3BQ

Inspection dates

19 to 20 March 2019

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	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and the deputy headteachers provide enthusiastic, strong, focused and effective leadership. Their hard work and dedication have resulted in an infant school that develops happy, aspirational pupils who believe in themselves and the values of the school.
- All members of staff are supportive of parents, and of pupils' welfare and development. The school's commitment to the inclusion of all pupils is outstanding. Pupils are well equipped to be thoughtful and caring, and to make good choices.
- English and mathematics are well planned and assessed throughout the school. As a result of good teaching, pupils make good progress, having been well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- The overwhelming majority of parents are positive about the school. They are confident that their children are happy and safe, and that they learn well and make progress.
- The school provides a broad range of subjects, but many curriculum areas are heavily focused on English skills. Hence learning is not always linked to subject-specific skills. This means that some pupils are not provided with a wide range of opportunities.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They behave well and are sensitive to other's needs. The vigilance of all staff ensures that they are safe and happy.
- Leaders are successful in ensuring that support and professional development are available for all staff. As a result, there have been improvements in pupils' outcomes and experiences throughout the school. However, some staff are not encouraged to take an appropriate level of responsibility.
- Governance is strong. At a local level governors monitor leaders' actions successfully and provide effective challenge. The trust supports the school to a high standard.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further devolve responsibilities across the staff team so that middle leaders and teachers can be held accountable for improving outcomes throughout the curriculum.
- Strengthen teachers' subject knowledge of the wider curriculum in order to increase opportunities for all pupils, including the most able, to practise subject-specific skills and gain greater knowledge.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher has built an effective leadership team who are enthusiastic, knowledgeable and set high expectations. As a team, they work tirelessly to improve the school. The school now provides a safe and happy environment in which pupils thrive and make good progress, and their families are supported.
- The headteacher and deputy headteachers have an accurate and comprehensive understanding of the strengths of the school and the areas that need development. As a team, they carefully monitor and evaluate the effect of changes and devise clear next steps. They responded well to the actions for improvement identified in the last inspection report and have systematically brought about improvement in all areas of school life.
- The headteacher has taken robust action to address any teaching that does not meet the needs of all pupils. Coaching and mentoring is readily available for teaching staff, and they value the opportunity to develop further skills. Some newly appointed leaders have not yet had the opportunity to take on their responsibilities fully and so cannot be held to account for the outcomes of pupils.
- Leaders make effective use of the sports premium to support staff training and to enable professional mentoring to take place. Leaders carefully track the participation of all pupils in physical activity, targeting pupils who lack confidence so they can develop their skills. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the opportunities offered to them, and they enjoy taking part in sports activities.
- Leaders use the pupil premium funding well to improve the progress of disadvantaged pupils. Careful monitoring of the progress of disadvantaged pupils shows that support is appropriate and the funding is having a positive impact on pupils' rates of progress.
- The headteacher has been continuously proactive in brokering support from outside agencies, tailored to the school's needs. The school has a good relationship with the Baylis Court Trust. An appropriate level of timely support and guidance has been used effectively to improve teaching skills and establish a better understanding of curriculum and planning.
- Parental views of the school are overwhelmingly positive. Parents value the improvements they can see in the school, and they are quick to mention the care and support their children receive and the good communication with all staff.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. An extensive range of educational visits and visitors to the school enrich pupils' experiences. Pupils relish the responsibilities given to them and, as school councillors, feel they make decisions that affect the whole school. Leaders are strongly committed to preparing pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- Additional funding is used effectively to support pupils with a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders invest highly in staff development to meet the needs of all pupils. This includes the employment of skilled teaching assistants who work with individual pupils. The inclusion manager has a good understanding of the support that pupils need and has worked with determination to

promote parental involvement and raise aspirations and confidence. As a result, pupils with SEND are happy at school and make progress from their varying starting points.

- The curriculum offer is broad and balanced and teachers provide pupils with a range of interesting and engaging activities. However, many curriculum areas are heavily focused on developing English skills and there is less emphasis on subject-specific skills and knowledge. As a result, pupils do not always have the opportunity to acquire knowledge and understanding in all aspects of their education.

Governance of the school

- Governance is good. Governors work alongside the trust and outside agencies to hold leaders to account. They make good use of the headteacher's accurate reports in order to ask probing questions and promote improvement effectively. They have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are rightly proud of recent improvements.
- Governors are ambitious for all pupils. They have a comprehensive understanding of the quality of education across the school and make good use of assessment information to monitor outcomes. Governors use their knowledge and expertise to support and challenge leaders and refine the actions the school takes.
- All governors have access to a wide range of induction, training and development opportunities. They make good use of these, keeping abreast of changes and improving their knowledge and skills.
- Governors understand and fulfil their statutory duties well, particularly those relating to safeguarding and welfare. Through their monitoring work, governors ensure that the pupils are safe and that school finances are well managed. They routinely meet with members of staff, having a good understanding of the coaching and support that staff are given.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders aim for all members of staff to be able to respond to any worries that a pupil raises. This leads to the timely sharing of all concerns about pupils' well-being.
- The designated safeguarding leaders use an effective system of information sharing, ensuring that concerns are addressed and closely monitored. Leaders vigilantly follow up any referrals made, both internally and to outside agencies. As a result, leaders ensure that they put appropriate support in place for pupils and their families.
- Leaders manage the logistics of a difficult school site well and ensure that all pupils are safe as they move from class to class. Routines are embedded well and all staff share responsibility for keeping pupils safe.
- Leaders ensure that pupils understand their own responsibility for keeping themselves safe. Pupils were quick to identify a trusted adult who they would talk to if they were worried. The additional needs of pupils with SEND are met effectively and sensitively.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching has improved and is now good. Leaders have introduced a range of support to teachers, including careful coaching and monitoring by the deputy headteacher. This is rapidly leading to greater consistency across the school. As a result, pupils are generally focused and motivated in sessions and make progress.
- The teaching of vocabulary and writing is a strength of the school. Pupils are encouraged to use full sentences, to include key vocabulary from the beginning of topics, and to explain the meanings and nuances of the words they use. This high level of understanding is reflected in their writing and discussions.
- Adults have high expectations of pupils' writing skills across the curriculum. Leaders design imaginative and engaging writing experiences that motivate pupils and support the development of English skills.
- Skilled questioning by class teachers and teaching assistants supports pupils' thinking and learning. In some classes, teachers reshaped activities and learning for pupils, and they were challenged or supported appropriately. However, in some sessions, teaching did not challenge the most able pupils.
- Pupils have a good equality of experience across the year groups. Where teachers had well developed subject knowledge and a good understanding of the lesson purpose, pupils made good progress. However, in some classes, teachers' subject knowledge was weaker and therefore progress was slower.
- Class teachers, with the support of the inclusion leader, make appropriate modifications for pupils with SEND. Teaching assistants support pupils sensitively. They are well aware of individual pupils' needs and are careful to ensure that all pupils feel included in the classroom experiences and are successful in their tasks.
- Strong coverage of the mathematics curriculum is evident throughout key stage 1. Pupils are encouraged to use a range of resources to support their learning. They are able to apply their mathematical knowledge in different situations and explain their reasoning. Purposeful questioning from adults encourages pupils to discuss their ideas and think carefully about the information that they require to solve a problem.
- Pupils are encouraged to discuss and debate ideas, and they enjoy sharing their work with others. They make good use of previous learning and can track their own progress when they look back in their books. Pupils are able to edit their own work and are keen to improve.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. The caring nature of the school is evident in the attitude of parents, pupils and staff. The inclusion manager works tirelessly to build strong relationships with parents and involve them in the work of the school.

- Pupils' welfare is one of the main priorities of the school. Leaders work very effectively with other agencies, including the local authority and social care, when they identify any pupils that may be at risk. Leaders are prepared to escalate concerns when necessary and continuously seek positive outcomes for their pupils.
- Vulnerable pupils and those with highly complex needs are actively included in the school's wider activities, and are looked after with great care and attention. All pupils show great respect for others and are willing to listen to a range of views and ideas.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe in school, in their local community and online in an age-appropriate manner. Parents and pupils are clear that the school is a safe place. Visitors, such as the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), are valued by pupils and effectively support their understanding.
- Pupils are proud of their school's ethos and are quick to share the school's 'HEROIC' values with inspectors. They delighted in showing inspectors their new school badge and giving examples of how 'together we soar'.
- Pupils enjoy attending the school breakfast club, and they happily select activities to take part in and talk to their friends. The warm relationships between adults and pupils and the well-established routines enable pupils to thrive and promote a settled and purposeful start to the day.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite and courteous, and show consideration for one another as they move around the school. Pupils play together sensibly during playtimes. Adults supervise and support pupils well, and routines are adhered to. Pupils say that behaviour is largely good. They are confident that adults will address any issues quickly.
- At the last inspection, leaders were asked to improve attendance and reduce persistent rates of absence. Attendance is now broadly in line with the national average and not as many pupils are persistently absent. Inspectors were confident that leaders are doing everything they could to improve this further.
- Pupils take pride in their work and they know what it means to be a successful learner. In lessons, pupils are confident to share their opinions, and they show high levels of respect for the views of others. They settle to work quickly and generally persevere with activities. They collaborate well, and they share ideas and resources sensibly. Occasional instances of low-level disruption are well-managed by staff and cause minimal disruption to others' learning.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Since the previous inspection, outcomes for pupils at the end of key stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics have been in line with national figures. Pupils' achievement in reaching the higher standards has remained stable in reading and mathematics, and it has increased in writing.
- Careful tracking of pupils ensures that leaders know them and that their individual needs are addressed. Robust progress meetings and frank discussions ensure that

teachers are beginning to be held to account for pupils' outcomes. The senior leadership team, including the inclusion manager, are keen to extend this further.

- Outcomes for current pupils have improved from previous years, and many pupils are making strong progress. Current Year 2 pupils, including those with SEND, and those in receipt of pupil premium, are making progress in reading, writing and mathematics, helping them to catch up with other pupils nationally.
- The work in pupils' books, particularly in English and mathematics, shows that pupils are making good progress since the start of the academic year from their varying starting points. This is less well developed in some other curriculum areas where subject-specific knowledge and understanding is not as clear.
- On leaving early years, girls outperform boys in all areas of the foundation stage curriculum. Leaders throughout the school are mindful of this and they ensure that the curriculum is designed to help boys to catch up. At the end of Year 2, the difference between boys' and girls' attainment reflects the difference seen nationally.
- Pupils read widely and they enjoy reading. Structured and well-planned phonics sessions support pupils' decoding skills and help them gain fluency. Pupils welcome opportunities to visit the newly developed library and report that they read frequently at home and at school. Teachers and workshops guide parents in how to support reading at home.

Early years provision

Good

- Children have a positive start to their education in early years because they are taught effectively by well-trained and enthusiastic staff. Activities are carefully planned to meet children's specific needs and ignite their interests. The early years team members are ambitious for all children to achieve well and be happy.
- Children are keen and enthusiastic learners. Children move confidently around their environment, carefully choosing activities and working together. Leaders have planned and provided a broad curriculum which interests children and secures their engagement.
- Adults build strong relationships with parents. The early years team manages children's transition into the school very effectively, ensuring that children and their parents are aware of the school's expectations and that they work well with staff. Parents of children in Reception Year are overwhelmingly positive about the school.
- In 2018, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development at the end of early years was in line with national average, and girls performed much better than boys. However, leaders' careful analysis showed that all children made good progress from their starting points. The early years environment and curriculum design are carefully planned to appeal to both boys and girls.
- Reception children develop positive attitudes to learning. They are curious and able to concentrate for sustained periods of time. Adults skilfully extend children's speaking and listening skills, helping their vocabulary development through thoughtful questioning and an environment which is rich with words and writing.

School details

Unique reference number	138731
Local authority	Slough
Inspection number	10053314

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	324
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Mrs Carol Pearce
Headteacher	Mr Kevin Oakley
Telephone number	01753 521 888
Website	www.phoenixinfants.uk
Email address	head@phoenixinfants.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 to 16 November 2016

Information about this school

- Phoenix Infant Academy is a larger-than-average sized primary school. Previously known as Godolphin Infant School, it was renamed in September 2018.
- The vast majority of pupils are of Asian or Asian British heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above average. The proportion with educational, health and care plans or a statement of special educational needs is above the national average.
- The Therapy Room resource currently provides for thirteen pupils who have autism spectrum disorder and complex needs.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is below the national average.
- The school runs a daily breakfast club.

- The school is supported by Baylis Court Trust, a multi-academy trust.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons throughout the school, some jointly with the headteacher, deputy headteachers, inclusion manager and early years leader.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of books from across the school with leaders.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteachers, senior leaders and middle leaders.
- Inspectors attended breakfast club and talked to pupils on the playground at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors met with the vice-chair of the governing body.
- The lead inspector met with the Chief Executive Officer and Director of Studies of the Baylis Court Trust.
- Several documents were scrutinised, including the school's own information about pupils' learning and progress, minutes of governing body meetings, the school improvement plan, external and internal teaching and learning reviews, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and safeguarding information.
- Inspectors took account of the 67 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, and to comments. They also met informally with parents.
- Inspectors spoke with staff and took account of their views. They reviewed the staff questionnaire issued by the school.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and met with groups of pupils taking account of their views.

Inspection team

Tracy Good, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Susan Aspland	Ofsted Inspector
Hilary Goddard	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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