

Godolphin Infant School

Warrington Avenue, Slough, Berkshire SL1 3BQ

Inspection dates

15–16 November 2016

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupil absence rates are too high. Too many pupils are repeatedly absent.
- Teaching is not consistently strong enough to ensure that all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, achieve well.
- The quality of teaching in classes and year groups is variable. As a result, pupils do not always make the progress they are capable of.
- Pupils do not always understand their next steps in learning. They do not know precisely what they need to do to improve their work.
- Some teachers' understanding and use of assessment, and their knowledge of end-of-year expectations, are at an early stage of development.
- Pupils' handwriting and presentation require improvement. Teachers do not convey high enough expectations of how pupils should present their work. They do not ensure that pupils form their letters and numbers correctly to develop neat, well-organised work.
- Governors have not fulfilled all their statutory duties. They have not ensured that all the information required by the Department for Education is published on the school's website.
- Most-able pupils are not sufficiently challenged. They do not make rapid progress.
- Assessment procedures are not yet fully embedded.

The school has the following strengths

- The inspirational leadership of the new headteacher is infectious. Teachers understand and welcome the new vision for improving the school. There is a strong commitment to rapidly improve outcomes for pupils.
- The headteacher has successfully instilled a culture of improvement across the school. Staff, pupils and parents welcome the positive improvements since the start of the school year.
- Pupils feel safe. Relationships are positive. Pupils behave well. They are eager to learn and work well together.
- Children in the early years enjoy the activities on offer. They understand the routines and get on well together. They are happy in their learning.
- Safeguarding is effective.

Full report

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attendance and reduce rates of persistent absence.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and increase rates of pupils' progress by:
 - securing consistently high-quality teaching to ensure that all groups of pupils make rapid progress
 - making sure that all pupils have a good understanding of their next steps in learning and understand how to achieve them
 - improving the quality of pupils' handwriting and presentation
 - ensuring that teachers fully implement assessment procedures and understand end-of-year expectations
 - increasing the challenge for the most able pupils.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management, including governance, by:
 - ensuring that governors fulfil their statutory duties and provide all the required information on the school's website
 - securing a highly effective, stable workforce
 - embedding and evaluating assessment procedures that are clearly understood and accurate.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The governing body has not fulfilled all its statutory duties. It has not made sure that all the information required by the Department for Education is readily available on the school's website.
- Assessment procedures have not yet been embedded across the school. Changes to staffing and a lack of focus on ensuring that all teachers understand the end-of-year expectations for pupils have meant that teachers' assessments of pupils' learning have not always been accurate.
- During the last academic year, senior leaders did not check on pupils' attendance well enough. They did not act decisively enough to increase pupils' attendance. As a result, some pupils were regularly absent from school. Too many pupils were absent too often, which holds back their learning.
- The new headteacher has put a greater emphasis on the importance of good attendance. Pupils are rewarded for good attendance and parents are now informed regularly in newsletters about the importance of school attendance and its link to pupils' achievement. As a result, attendance has improved slightly in recent weeks.
- The headteacher is ambitious for the school. He has successfully inspired staff and galvanised everyone to create a positive, supportive culture where all can be successful and achieve. Expectations have been raised and everybody is in no doubt of the direction the school is taking on its journey to become a very successful school. Improving outcomes for pupils is at the heart of the headteacher's vision for improvement.
- The headteacher recognises that turbulence in teaching has held back the progress pupils make. As a result, a key priority for the school is to employ highly effective, permanent teachers to ensure continuity of teaching for all pupils. The headteacher is passionate about making sure that all teachers are clear about the policies and procedures within the school, particularly in relation to assessing pupils' learning. Teachers are supported very well. The induction and mentoring procedures ensure that any transitions are managed successfully. The senior leadership team is deployed effectively to provide encouragement, guidance and training for all teachers, including temporary teachers, regularly.
- School self-evaluation is insightful and accurate. School leaders know what the school needs to do to improve and with the energy, enthusiasm and vigour of the new headteacher, everyone is working effectively together to achieve the school's aims for every pupil to become a 'Hero': 'Happy, effective learner who is responsible and open-minded'.
- Curriculum and assessment have undergone a period of change within the school. The headteacher has now invested time, energy and resources to ensure that the curriculum is broad and balanced and provides pupils with interesting and stimulating activities to support their learning. Plans are in place to increase opportunities for learning through visitors to the school and through visits to local places of interest linked to the curriculum.

- The headteacher carried out a review of behaviour within weeks of his arrival as the new school leader. A new behaviour policy has been developed. It focuses on positive reinforcement, which motivates pupils and supports their social and moral development well. The wide range of cultures represented within the school ensures that pupils develop a good understanding of their own culture and the cultures of other pupils.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual awareness is less well developed. The headteacher has re-introduced whole-school assemblies which develop pupils' understanding of British values, engender an ethos of care, understanding and support and also celebrate pupils' achievements, academically and socially. Pupils' good attendance is rewarded.
- The school has been provided with a wide range of support from Baylis Court Trust. This has mainly been to improve teaching and learning and to develop an effective assessment system. Since the school has been part of the trust, a substantive headteacher has been appointed. Previously, a number of temporary headteachers led the school. The trust is now focusing on appointing high-quality, permanent teaching staff. This turbulence is a cause for concern for parents.

Governance of the school

- Since the previous inspection, there have been a number of changes in governance. The external review of governance required following the previous inspection did not achieve the aim of increasing the effectiveness of governors. Governors encountered difficulties in 'turning the school around' to become more successful and also in appointing a successful substantive headteacher. The governing body was therefore disbanded.
- The governing body was reconstituted in April 2015. Currently, a second review of governance is under way, to identify how the governing body can carry out its roles and responsibilities more effectively.
- Baylis Court Trust has recently strengthened the governing body by appointing two new governors. These two governors have highly effective skills and proven success in bringing about school improvement. Their knowledge and understanding of early years and primary education, including safeguarding, strategic planning and assessment, have increased the effectiveness of the governing body since the start of the year.
- The governing body receives reports from senior leaders on the performance of staff. It makes sure that decisions about teachers' salary progression are linked to their performance and success in improving pupils' progress.
- Governors receive information about the assessment of pupils' learning. However, the level of detail in the information has not always enabled governors to fully understand and evaluate assessment procedures. The new governors with experience of headship are in a stronger position to probe and challenge school leaders about the performance of all groups of pupils.

- Governors receive information about the strategies the school plans to put in place to increase the progress of disadvantaged pupils. The evaluation of the impact of this spending in the last year has been positive. For example, a higher proportion of disadvantaged pupils were successful in the Year 1 and Year 2 phonics screening check. The difference between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and that of other pupils has diminished.
- Physical education and sport funding has been used to provide sports coaching for pupils and training for staff. This has had a positive impact on pupils' experiences at breaktime and lunchtime. Governors have not yet evaluated whether the impact of this funding has improved pupils' health and well-being.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- School leaders have ensured that there is a strong culture for keeping pupils safe. This begins with effective recruitment procedures, including all the required vetting checks on staff, visitors and governors. Safeguarding is at the heart of the induction of new staff, including any temporary staff.
- The single central register meets requirements and records all the information required by the Secretary of State for Education.
- Pupils feel safe and all parents who completed the online Parent View questionnaire agree that their child feels safe in school. Pupils know that there is always an adult to talk to if they are concerned about anything.
- The designated safeguarding lead is proactive in her support of pupils in need of protection. She ensures that vulnerable pupils are supported well.
- All staff receive up-to-date training to make sure that they can quickly spot any signs of abuse. They know that keeping pupils safe is everyone's responsibility.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching is not yet consistently strong enough to enable all groups of pupils to make good progress. The quality of teaching in different year groups and classes is variable.
- Teachers do not consistently plan work to challenge all groups of pupils, particularly the most able. Some activities do not meet the learning needs of different groups of pupils well enough. This means that the work is too easy for some pupils; it does not always deepen the understanding of the most able pupils.
- Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. They too readily accept work that is not presented well. Teachers do not put enough emphasis on helping pupils to write neatly. They do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to practise correct letter formation. Pupils are not encouraged to orientate their letters and numbers correctly to enable them to develop a neat, legible cursive style of writing.

- Not all teachers are confident enough to use the new assessment system to identify pupils' achievements and plan suitable activities to enable pupils to make better progress. They do not accurately assess pupils' learning consistently or pick up misunderstandings in lessons. Teachers' understanding of what pupils are expected to have learned by the end of year is underdeveloped. This means that some teachers are not guiding pupils well enough to know what they need to do to improve their work.
- School leaders have recently amended and agreed the way teachers provide feedback to pupils. However, a scrutiny of pupils' work shows that pupils do not always understand their next steps in learning. This inhibits their progress.
- Provision for pupils in the 'Launchpad' resource does not always effectively support their learning well enough. Although activities are generally well matched to pupils' learning needs, sometimes the organisation of the provision leads to pupils becoming distracted from their learning. Learning opportunities for the youngest children in the setting do not meet their needs well enough because they are not provided with suitable resources to help them explore and investigate their surroundings. The development of pupils' social skills within the Launchpad is limited.
- Senior leaders are supporting improvement in teaching. As a result of the turbulence in the teaching staff, the headteacher has arranged for teachers in the same year group to meet together to plan pupils' learning activities. This is designed to ensure that there is equality of entitlement for all pupils. It is supporting the development of teachers' skills appropriately. However, teachers do not always deliver high-quality learning opportunities for all groups of pupils.
- Disadvantaged pupils are generally supported well. Adults know who these pupils are and provide additional support for those falling behind.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well in lessons and in small groups. Teachers and teaching assistants use effective strategies to focus and engage these pupils in their learning.
- Teaching assistant support for pupils' learning is improving. The most skilled teaching assistants use questions effectively to check on pupils' learning and adjust activities to support their learning well. At times, some teaching assistants are not guided well enough to intervene when pupils struggle to understand what they are expected to do.
- The teaching of phonics has improved. Teachers and teaching assistants have received regular support to ensure that their pronunciation of letters and sounds is accurate. The 'phonics champion' is skilled in supporting adults to deliver the agreed strategies. There is greater consistency in the quality of teaching. Routines are embedded and plenty of praise and encouragement enables pupils to make better progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.

- Many pupils are not encouraged to take pride in their work. Some work is scruffy and poorly presented. Pupils' handwriting and presentation require improvement.
- School leaders are taking steps to increase pupils' ability to learn successfully. The recently introduced 'Hero' points are having a positive impact on pupils' readiness to learn, but this is at an early stage of development. Pupils now settle more quickly to their learning. They are well motivated to learn. They respond swiftly and positively to instructions from adults.
- Leaders make sure that the school site is safe for pupils. The recently introduced curriculum is beginning to provide more opportunities for pupils to understand about keeping themselves safe. Currently, pupils find difficulty in articulating their understanding of keeping safe when using the internet and mobile technologies.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and know that if they have a problem, there is always an adult on hand to support them. They are confident that the headteacher will always help them too.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning have improved. They work well together in pairs and small groups and enjoy discussing their learning together.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. This is because pupils' attendance is not good enough. Too many pupils are not in school on a regular basis.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school has improved since the previous inspection. The headteacher made significant changes to the behaviour policy in October this year, which has had a positive impact on pupils' behaviour. The low-level disruption mentioned in a number of the monitoring letters was not evident during this inspection. On the contrary, pupils were positively engaged in learning and displayed good attitudes to one another and to the adults around them.
- Pupils play and learn well together. The introduction of more organised sports activities by the sports coach is successfully engaging pupils as they play together well and enjoy breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Pupils know what bullying is. They know that they can tell an adult if they are concerned about the way they are treated by other pupils. They are confident that adults will sort out any issues quickly.
- All the parents who responded to Parent View say that their child is happy in school. Almost all agree that the school makes sure that pupils behave well.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes for pupils are improving in reading, writing and mathematics. However, not enough of the most able pupils gain a greater depth of understanding in writing and mathematics.

- At the end-of-year assessment in 2016, Year 2 pupils with low starting points achieved well above national expectations in reading, writing and mathematics. Children reaching the expected standard at the end of Reception in reading, writing and mathematics achieved the expected standard at the end of Year 2. However, too few pupils achieved a greater depth of understanding.
- All the most able disadvantaged pupils achieved the expected standard in reading and writing in the 2016 assessments. All achieved a greater depth of understanding in reading, but too few achieved a greater depth of understanding in writing and mathematics.
- Currently, the progress of disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, in Years 1 and 2 is similar to that of other pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. This is because of the support they receive, which is targeted to meet their learning needs.
- The skills pupils learn during their phonics teaching sessions support their wider reading skills well. Pupils enjoy reading, are able to tackle unfamiliar words effectively and blend and segment words to read texts accurately. They are developing a love of reading through reading regularly in school. They enjoy reading in the attractive reading areas in their classrooms.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Children begin school in the Reception classes with skills and abilities that are typical for their age. Some of the most able children have greater skills and understanding than you would typically find. They quickly settle into activities at the start of the school day. This is because the new 'soft start' arrangements enable children to instantly access interesting learning activities of their choice. However, not enough teaching enables children to make rapid progress. Activities are not always demanding enough to ensure that children make the progress they are capable of making. Senior leaders have identified that the leadership of the early years needs to be improved.
- The 'soft start', which parents welcome, also helps children to develop their independence. On arrival into school, they are able to find their coat peg, organise their belongings and self-register by finding their name to put on the pictorial register on the classroom door. Children are self-assured, confident, motivated and keen to join in activities with other children right from the very start of the day.
- Outcomes for children in the early years are improving. They were much higher in 2015 and 2016 than at the time of the previous inspection. This is because school leaders acted on areas of weakness, such as the achievement of boys. School information shows that boys' skills and abilities on entry to the Reception classes are below those of the girls. However, activities are now planned more effectively to ensure that the progress of boys is in line with that of girls. Achievement at the end of Reception in 2016 shows that a higher proportion of girls achieved a good level of development than boys did. However, the proportion of boys who are well prepared for Year 1 has increased from previous years.

- Children are able to access a wide range of learning activities both inside and outdoors. School leaders sought advice and guidance on how to improve provision. These improvements are under way. Adults are aware of the need to develop children's thinking during their own initiated activities, by checking their understanding and developing their knowledge more effectively. Some adults in the Reception classes do this well, but some do not extend children's thinking well enough.
- Most children develop early reading skills well. This has been more effective in recent weeks. This is because the organisation and planning of the teaching of phonics are more sharply focused on children's abilities. All adults have been suitably trained and support this learning by working with small groups of children, mostly with an appropriate amount of challenge. However, some of the most able children are not challenged well enough. Their already strong skills in reading, which are clearly evident, support their reading well. They are able to instantly read words such as 'tasty' and 'burst' in isolation. Their well-developed language skills showed their strong understanding. During a reading session about a cat eating fish, one child excitedly exclaimed, 'Imagine if he had 10 fish to eat!' The most able children are very capable and the lack of further challenge limited their ability to make even more rapid progress.
- Children behave well, enjoy positive relationships with one another and with adults, and are confidently developing skills to help themselves and develop their independence. During lunchtime, they carefully carried their trays of dinner to their tables, well supervised by adults, and enjoyed eating their lunch in a calm and orderly manner.
- Children settle quickly into the routines of the school day because adults take time to find out about their interests and abilities during the home visits carried out before children start school. Parents are able to contribute to ongoing assessments of children's learning by sharing children's achievements at home with class teachers.
- Children are kept safe, know how to keep themselves safe and respond well to instructions and listen carefully to adults and each other. Adults make sure that all the safeguarding and welfare requirements for the early years are met.

School details

Unique reference number	138731
Local authority	Slough
Inspection number	10011665

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	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	354
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	Jon Reekie
Headteacher	Kevin Oakley
Telephone number	01753 521888
Website	www.godolphin-inf.slough.sch.uk
Email address	KevinOakley@godolphin-inf.slough.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12–13 June 2014

Information about this school

- The school does not comply with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish about the impact of physical education and sport funding on improving the health and well-being of pupils, and accurate information about the curriculum.
- Godolphin Infant School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are of Asian or Asian British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and supported by the pupil premium is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- The Launchpad resource has provision for up to nine pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, who have autistic spectrum disorder and complex needs.

- The school is supported by Baylis Court Trust, a multi-academy trust.
- There have been three temporary headteachers since the previous inspection. The new substantive headteacher took up post in September 2016. A new inclusion manager took up post in September 2016.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was conducted under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. It is the first inspection since the school required special measures in June 2014.
- Inspectors observed learning in a number of lessons on both days of the inspection. Some observations were undertaken jointly with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the assistant headteacher.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher (who is also the early years leader), the inclusion leader, the subject leaders for English and mathematics, the executive headteacher and the director of standards from Baylis Court Trust, members of the governing body, middle leaders, staff and pupils.
- Inspectors listened to pupils talk about their work and listened to pupils read in Year 2.
- Informal discussions were held with pupils during lunchtimes and playtimes. Inspectors spoke with parents at the start of the school day.
- The inspection team observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including pupils' work in books, achievement and progress information, documents relating to safeguarding, and school policies and procedures.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school improvement plan and external reports on the school.
- The inspection team also considered the 55 responses to the online questionnaire and five free-text responses in Parent View, five responses from staff gathered through the staff survey and 17 responses from the school staff survey.

Inspection team

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