

# Northlands Wood Community Primary School

Beech Hill, Haywards Heath, RH16 3RX

## Inspection dates

16–17 October 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Not all of the teaching is good, particularly in Key Stage 2. The pace of lessons is often too slow and teachers do not always use questioning well to help pupils make progress.
- Too many pupils in Key Stage 2 do not make enough progress in writing and mathematics.
- Senior leaders are not doing enough to improve the progress of those who are lagging behind in mathematics. There are not enough catch-up sessions to help pupils improve quickly.
- Writing across the full range of subjects is not well enough developed.
- A small minority of leaders in charge of subject areas have too many roles. As a result, this occasionally restricts the opportunities they have available to carry out some aspects of their work as effectively as others.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to write longer pieces of writing in a range of different styles. Not all pupils know enough about what they need to do to improve

### The school has the following strengths

- Children make good progress in their learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Good progress continues in Key Stage 1.
- The behaviour and safety of pupils are good. Pupils enjoy school and attendance is above average.
- The school has formed strong links with the local community.
- Relationships are a strength in this inclusive school. Pupils are well cared for and get on well together. The school works closely with other professionals to help those who need additional support, including vulnerable pupils.
- Parents are welcomed in school and make a huge contribution to the life of the school.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 19 lessons. Three observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher and the two assistant headteachers. In addition, inspectors made a number of short visits to observe pupils reading, as well as to sessions where phonics (letters and the sounds they make) were being taught.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils and pupils' views were also gathered more informally from discussions in the playground.
- Discussions were also held with the headteacher and other teachers and support staff. Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body and three other governors. A meeting was held with a representative from the local authority. Some parents who were attending the open classrooms day were interviewed, as well as representatives from the parent council.
- A range of documentation was examined, including the school's own data on pupils' current progress. Records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding were also scrutinised.
- Account was taken of 51 responses to the Parent View survey on-line questionnaire. Other evidence included parents' interviews and a letter to the inspection team.
- The views of staff from 20 responses were also examined and analysed.

## Inspection team

Liz Bowes, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Laura Dickson	Additional Inspector
Warren Wilkinson	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school; all classes consist of mixed age groups, except in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is smaller than most schools, as are the proportions supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs. Their needs include speech, language and communication difficulties and behavioural, emotional and social problems.
- The proportion of pupils known to eligible for the pupil premium is below average.
- There are fewer pupils from minority ethnic groups than in most schools this size. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- Since the last inspection the school has moved into new purpose-built accommodation.
- The school currently meets the government's floor standard, which sets the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, particularly in Key Stage 2, so that it is consistently good or better by:
  - providing pupils with clearer information about the level that they are working at and how they can improve
  - making sure that the pace of learning in lessons is always brisk enough
  - developing teachers' use of questioning to support pupils' learning
  - ensuring that teachers follow up on advice given after lesson observations and that managers discuss with them the difference this, and other activities, is making to their teaching.
- Improve progress in writing and mathematics at Key Stage 2 by:
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in all subjects of the curriculum
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to write at length and so develop their skills
  - ensuring that teachers plan carefully how writing is to be taught so that it includes writing in range of different styles
  - providing more catch-up sessions in mathematics for those pupils who are lagging behind.
- Ensuring there is a fair distribution of responsibilities in the school by;
  - providing more time for leaders, especially those in charge of subject areas, to monitor and develop their areas of responsibility.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and abilities that are broadly in line with those expected for their age.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children progress well because of clear expectations of staff, good routines and regular assessment. The attractive outside environment is enlivened by many exciting activities. Children make the most of the learning opportunities provided and, from an early age, develop independence, for example children can decide for themselves when they want their morning snack.
- Good progress continues through Key Stage 1. Reading is promoted well through a wide range of interesting reading materials in the school library and in classrooms. Most pupils say they enjoy reading. Pupils are able to decode words and regular assessments are carried out to determine what pupils have achieved. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is higher than national averages in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In Key Stage 2, progress slows so that by the end of Year 6 pupils' attainment is in line with national averages; this has been the case for the last two years. The school and governing body recognise the need to improve progress, particularly in writing and mathematics, and have implemented plans to secure improvements. However, the impact of these plans is not yet fully evident.
- When teachers are planning how to teach writing they do include writing in a range of styles. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills more extensively, both within English lessons and also in other subjects of the curriculum. As a result, pupils' progress in writing, despite elements of good progress in Years 5 and 6, is less marked overall in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is in line with their peers and any gaps in their skills and knowledge are closing. Pupils are well supported through the pupil premium and make progress in line with their peers. All other groups of pupils, including those from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language, also make progress in line with their peers.
- Throughout the school, catch-up sessions in small groups speed up the development of pupils' speaking, phonics and other reading skills. However, there are very few similar sessions for pupils who are making slower progress in mathematics and this has an impact on their achievement.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- The school's own records, following lesson observations by senior leaders, show that over half of the teaching was judged to be 'satisfactory'. This indicates that as it was not good such teaching required improvement. Over time this has most affected pupils' progress in Key Stage 2.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, good teaching, coupled with a good range of exciting activities, enables children to make good progress. There is a careful balance between teacher-led and child-initiated activities, and all are carefully recorded. In an outstanding lesson where pupils were exploring the theme of harvest, the range of different exciting activities gave pupils wonderful real-life experiences, such as discovering what carrots need to grow and how potatoes change when they are cooked.
- In Key Stage 1, pupils' speaking and listening skills are well promoted. Features of good teaching include positive relationships, good subject knowledge and planning that ensures teachers meet the needs of all pupils.
- In Key Stage 2, there are too many inconsistencies in teaching. The pace of lessons is often too slow and teachers' too limited use of open ended questioning does not always help pupils to learn as well as they could.

- Where teaching is good it is characterised by tasks which are well matched to learning needs. Collaborative group work is actively encouraged. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson for the most able, pupils were encouraged to discuss with their partner how to measure accurately with a protractor.
- Marking helps pupils to make progress by highlighting areas of strength and improvement. One pupil in Key Stage 2 commented that, 'We all know what the teacher wants when she marks our work.' Pupils are often encouraged to feedback on how well they have understood a piece of work. However, too many pupils do not know precisely what they must do to improve.
- Knowledgeable support staff assist teachers in providing good learning opportunities for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- Most parents and carers consider that teaching is good. Inspection evidence shows that, although much current teaching is good, inconsistencies in the quality of teaching over time have led to too much variation in the rates of pupils' progress.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good; pupils listen attentively in lessons and are keen to complete their work. Teachers encourage pupils to be responsible for their own learning and develop independence.
- Pupils say that behaviour is typically good and that Northlands Wood is a safe and friendly place. Pupils feel that staff listen to them, and that they are well cared for, and that any concerns they have are dealt with quickly and fairly. A pupil said, 'The school is really friendly, you make friends easily here.'
- Pupils have a well-developed awareness of different types of bullying such as cyber bullying. Every term the school covers the issue of e-safety to ensure that pupils act in a safe way when online. Pupils feel that the school deals with bullying effectively.
- The school council is very influential and works hard to ensure all pupils feel safe and are well looked after. For example, they are revising the 'buddy system' in the playground to make sure that all pupils are included in playtime and lunchtime activities.
- The school is an integral part of the community and there are good links with a range of external agencies. Visiting professionals, such as a play therapist, are very effective in building the self-esteem and confidence of vulnerable pupils. All pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, get on well together.
- Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in above average attendance. There are very few exclusions.
- The overwhelming majority of staff, parents and carers think that pupils' behaviour is good and inspectors support their views.

### **The leadership and management requires improvement**

- The headteacher has identified several ways to improve the school. There is a new plan for school improvement; however, there is too little emphasis on the achievement of pupils. Although the plan correctly identifies the need to improve progress in writing and mathematics in Key Stage 2, this issue has not yet been fully addressed.
- Over the last year there have been many lesson observations conducted by senior leaders, who identified that teaching required improvement in Key Stage 2 and these have resulted in on going improvement. However, leaders do not always make sure that teachers follow up the advice given following observations, and discussions do not focus enough on how this advice, and other training activities, are improving teachers' work.
- The middle leaders' effectiveness at raising achievement is variable, particularly regarding monitoring their subject. This is because some middle leaders have too many roles to enable them to carry out their responsibilities effectively.

- The headteacher has considerably strengthened the way in which teachers are appraised for their performance. He does not allow staff to be rewarded unless they have helped pupils improve their achievement.
- Pupils, staff and parents have been involved in improving the school's range of subjects and activities over the last three years. It includes various subject-specific weeks, such as arts week and science week. These experiences contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development. All pupils learn French and there is an emphasis on global citizenship. Senior leaders ensure all pupils are provided with opportunities to take a full part in all activities and that there is no discrimination. The community status of the school ensures that there are strong links with families as well as the local community. The school fully involves parents, who help on the parent council.
- The breakfast club and after-school club, which are run by the school, are popular with pupils who appreciate time to have a snack and socialise.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors receive information on the progress of different groups. As a result of this, and support from the school improvement partner, they are aware of the historical issue with regard to progress in Years 3 and 4 and have a growing understanding of achievement across the school.
  - Pupil premium funding has been effectively targeted to provide additional support for more vulnerable pupils.
  - The governing body gives good support to the headteacher in meeting the safeguarding responsibilities. It meets all statutory requirements.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	125948
<b>Local authority</b>	West Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	403588

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	303
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Chris Roe
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gavin Oulton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16–17 October 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01444 455653
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