

Salehurst CE Primary School

George Hill, Robertsbridge, East Sussex, TN32 5BU

Inspection dates 12–13 December 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Senior leaders, supported well by the governors, have succeeded in improving the school since its previous inspection, particularly the teaching and pupils' achievement in mathematics and science.
- Pupils reach above average levels in national tests by the time they leave the school.
- Pupils' behaviour is excellent, reflected in their polite, courteous and mature approach to each other and visitors.
- The wide range of subjects taught broadens pupils' experiences and typically good teaching caters for a wide range of abilities.
- Senior staff and governors foster a good team ethos and very harmonious relationships between pupils and staff.
- Parents and carers are very positive about the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- While pupils write well for a range of purposes, they do not always write confidently at length to extend their skills even further.
- Not all teaching is at the level of the very best. For example, information and communication technology (ICT) is not always used in pupils' day-to-day learning and the outside area in the Reception class is not as enticing for children to use as the indoor classroom.
- Mathematical activities are not always linked enough to real-life situations so pupils see how investigating or solving number problems are useful.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 13 part lessons taught by six teachers, of which two were joint observations conducted with the headteacher. In addition, inspectors observed a number of small groups for those pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs.
- They listened to a sample of pupils read in Year 2 and Year 6 and observed playtime and lunchtime routines. They observed two assemblies and part of a Reception class Nativity play.
- Inspectors held a meeting with a representative group of pupils, met with the Chair of the Governing Body, held meetings with subject and phase (those responsible for more than one age group) leaders. Discussions were held with those responsible for work related to pupils who may be disabled or who have special educational needs.
- They took account of 33 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) survey. They analysed questionnaires completed by 17 members of staff.
- The inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including the school’s checks on teaching, governors’ visits and meetings, planning, internal pupil progress information and records relating to behaviour and attendance, together with documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Kevin Hodge, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Carol Vant

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- It is much smaller in size than most primary schools. The number of pupils attending has risen since the previous inspection; some classes, such as Reception, having almost twice the number of children than previously.
- A lower than average proportion is eligible for the pupil premium (funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and children from service families). The proportion of pupils identified who may be disabled or who have special educational needs is also lower than average. This includes those supported at school action, school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs.
- The majority of pupils are White British and there are very few pupils from minority ethnic groups. There are none at the early stages of learning English.
- The school has awards reflecting its commitment to promoting pupils' basic skills and has links to other schools locally and more distant from the school.
- None of the pupils are taught in alternative provision (other schools or units).
- The school currently meets the government's floor standards which are the minimum expected for pupils' attainment and progress in national tests.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' achievement in English and mathematics in Years 1 to 6 by:
 - increasing their opportunities to write for sustained periods to improve the creativity and quality of their unaided writing
 - increasing their understanding and experiences of how to use their mathematical skills in real-life situations so they see their relevance and use in everyday life.
- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching through the school by:
 - using information and communication technology more often in every day activities to help extend pupils' research, recording and presentational skills
 - ensuring the Reception class outdoor activity area is as enticing and exciting as the indoor classroom to motivate children's learning further
 - ensuring pupils do not have too many steps to complete before they start on the main activity of the lesson.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the school with skills and abilities which are typical for their age. They make good progress in a happy, purposeful atmosphere, so they enter Year 1 at those levels expected. Children enjoy activities ranging from learning their letter sounds and reading simple words to how to compare different lengths of a snowman's scarf.
- Pupils in Years 1 to 6 make good progress so achieve well. In national tests taken in the summer, Year 2 pupils reached above average levels. Year 6 results were also above average, improving over the past two years since the school was last inspected.
- Pupils write with confidence and skill. Pupils like writing in other subjects, such as being evacuees in their work connected to the Second World War. However, pupils do not always have enough chances to write longer pieces of work regularly and unaided to really stretch their imagination or to practise writing for extended periods.
- In mathematics, pupils have well developed number and problem solving skills, although activities are not always linked to everyday real-life situations.
- Reading standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are generally above average. Pupils know a good range of authors and are keen to say who their favourites are. Year 1 pupils reached just above average levels in their national screening phonics check, reflecting their secure knowledge of letters and sounds to aid their reading.
- Pupils achieve well in a wide variety of topic work, ranging from learning about space, to experimenting how to keep Henry VIII's imaginary drink warm using differing materials. Pupils have good information and communication technology (ICT) skills, but these are not always extended or used during classroom-based learning activities.
- Pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding make good progress because they respond well to the more individual help, usually through provision of extra staff and resources.
- Some good activities, well matched to pupils' level of understanding, help disabled pupils and those with special educational needs to achieve as well as their classmates. Adults are skilful at enabling them to learn confidently. This also helps ensure that all pupils are given an equal chance to learn and make good progress, including any pupils from different ethnic heritages.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is now typically good. Some highly effective teaching really extends pupils' learning. At times pupils' progress varies, as not all teaching is as good as the very best.
- Teaching in the Reception class is usually lively and fun as children have a variety of purposeful activities to follow, such as comparing sizes of clothing or constructing models to develop their coordination. The relatively small outside area is not always used in the best way to enhance childrens' learning in a similar way.
- Reading, particularly early letter sounds and combinations of letters, is taught well. Older pupils are encouraged to read different texts. Pupils' writing skills develop well, particularly within other subjects such as topic work and science. On occasions, pupils do not have extended periods of time to write more freely or creatively. Pupils benefit, however, from exciting very well taught activities, such as when 'William Shakespeare' visited Year 6 class to talk about his life and his views on writing.
- Pupils work at a good pace, as teachers make good use of audio visual resources to enhance pupils' learning. Teachers' explanations are clear, but pupils sometimes have too many things to do which are not always relevant to their learning, before they get down to the main task in the lesson.
- Planning is effective so work is set at the right level which aids pupils' good progress. Teachers

manage classrooms well so that pupils are involved in their learning for the whole lesson. Relationships are typically excellent so pupils like their teachers, want to learn and are excited about their work. For instance, lower Key Stage 2 pupils made rapid progress in investigating different insulation materials in an excellent science lesson.

- Teachers are good at checking pupils' progress so they quickly answer pupils' questions and correct any misunderstandings. Teachers' marking is good and pupils use their simple 'ladders to success' to record their targets to work upon, showing they have a good understanding of how well they are doing and what they need to do next to get even better.
- Additional adults support learning effectively. They are well prepared, work closely with the class teacher and have a good understanding of how to move pupils' learning on during the lesson so that they make good progress. Additional activities for some pupils, known as 'spotlight pupils', help teachers tackle specific learning points with a small number of pupils so that they also make good progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour is typically excellent and has improved since the previous inspection. Pupils are very courteous, kind and universally respectful to all adults and visitors. Pupils say they really enjoy being at the school and, not surprisingly, their attendance is high.
- Pupils enthusiastically take on a variety of simple, but important, jobs around the school such as giving out equipment, holding doors open, operating equipment in assemblies or helping with play equipment at lunchtimes. Pupils say they are proud to be involved in running the school.
- Pupils' achievement is recognised; for example, in an assembly, a variety of awards were distributed both to individual pupils and classes who had achieved particularly well. These awards ranged from academic achievement, to the class that won the 'Golden Peg' award in recognition of the class that had the tidiest cloakroom of the week. Those pupils who came to the assembly with examples of their work were particularly proud to share their work as their parents attended the assembly.
- Bullying is extremely rare according to the pupils. All those spoken with said that they felt the school is quick to act should it occur and all said they felt extremely safe. This extended to their knowledge of internet safety and how to stay safe outside of school.
- The extremely harmonious relationships mean that all pupils feel valued, including any that join the school midway through the year. Pupils' awareness of others from differing backgrounds and beliefs has been enhanced by visiting other schools and in developing links with schools further afield.

The leadership and management are good

- Senior leaders, supported by staff and governors, have been successful in improving the school's effectiveness since its previous inspection. Checks on the quality of teaching are regular and helpful and the school has ensured that the teachers' performance is linked to salary progression and promotion.
- Subject and age group leaders know their subjects well and have clear plans for further improvement, such as expanding the size and quality of the outside area in the Reception class. Senior leaders recognise there are some areas to 'fine tune'. These include ensuring all teaching is as good as the very best in the school, further improving pupils' quality of writing and linking mathematics activities more to pupils' everyday experiences.
- Additional resources funded from pupil premium effectively support those pupils for whom it is provided and enables them to make similar progress to fellow pupils.
- The local authority provides effective, but light touch, support to the school.
- The subjects taught help pupils develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness

extremely well. These aspects thread through lessons, assemblies, visits and informal discussion and have resulted in the very high standards of behaviour and community ethos.

- Links with parents are good and nearly all those who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire said they would recommend the school to others.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are regular visitors to the school and their links with classes have enabled them to keep abreast of what is happening, and to be aware of the quality of teaching. They also benefit from attending a wide range of courses to extend their understanding of school issues. In this respect they have a clear understanding of how teachers' performance is assessed on the basis of the impact teaching has on pupils' achievement, and improved where necessary, along with being aware of different options for teachers' salaries, responsibilities and promotion. They also have a very clear understanding of how the pupil premium is used effectively to provide extra staffing and resources to help those pupils keep pace with their fellow pupils. Governors ensure that, wherever possible, pupils and staff have equal opportunities to succeed within the school and discrimination of any sort is not tolerated. Their day-to-day responsibilities to ensure safety, secure staff vetting procedures and health and safety routines are carried out conscientiously and to a good standard.
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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	114521
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	405518

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	157
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Melanie Powell
Headteacher	Andrew McGregor
Date of previous school inspection	9–10 November 2010
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