

Kings Hill School

Crispin Way, West Malling, ME19 4LS

Inspection dates 23–24 January 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils achieve well. Attainment of pupils at the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics is above average.
- Most teaching is at least good, and there are examples of outstanding teaching throughout the school.
- Skilled teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning, especially for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Children receive a good start to school life in the Early Years Foundation Stage where they are taught well.
- Pupils are well behaved. They say they feel safe at school, a view that is supported by most parents.
- Senior leaders have a good track record for developing teaching through their careful monitoring and support.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership and this has helped the school to improve well since its previous inspection.
- Governors are a strength of the school. They work well with senior leaders to improve the quality of education the school offers its pupils.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always give pupils sufficient information so that they know exactly what they must do to improve their work and move on in their learning.
- Teaching is not always pitched at the right level, so that pupils sometimes lose concentration, and progress in their learning slows.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all classes. They visited 21 lessons of which two were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, inspectors made a number of short visits to lessons and assemblies.
- They held meetings with leaders and managers, staff, pupils and members of the governing body. They held a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors met informally with parents at the beginning and end of the school day and took account of the 64 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and individual communications from parents.
- They observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's current assessment data, the self-evaluation summary, the school improvement plan, planning and monitoring documents, minutes of governing body meetings, governors' action planning, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and safeguarding documents.
- Inspectors sampled pupils' work, listened to pupils read, and checked information on pupils' attendance.
- The inspectors analysed 39 questionnaires from staff.

Inspection team

Gay Whent, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Gavin Jones

Additional Inspector

Janet Watson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average-sized primary school.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two Reception classes.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of those supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average. All pupils are educated on the school site.
- The proportion of pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding (extra government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children looked after by local authorities, and children of service families) is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to outstanding by making sure that all teachers:
 - apply the school's marking policy consistently and give clear guidance to pupils about the next steps in their learning
 - plan for pupils to have enough time to respond to teachers' comments in their books so that they know how to improve their work
 - plan for their lesson content to be pitched more consistently to appropriate levels of challenge, so that pupils' attention and interest are maintained throughout their learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 is broadly average; however, by the end of Year 6, it is above average. The proportion of pupils making expected or better progress is higher than in other schools nationally. Almost all pupils make at least two National Curriculum levels progress, or more, between Key Stages 1 and 2 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium make good progress, as their needs are identified accurately, and effective strategies are put into place to aid their learning. In the 2012 national assessment at age 11, their attainment was below that of other pupils in the school but in line with national figures. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs also make good progress.
- Achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Most children start school with skills and abilities expected for their age. They make good progress because of consistently good or better teaching, and enjoy exciting and purposeful activities linked to interesting learning.
- The teaching of phonics (learning about the sounds that letters make) is good. As a result, pupils make fast progress in their reading because they use their knowledge of letters and sounds to read words they cannot recognise.
- Pupils throughout the school are encouraged to read and, as a result, they quickly develop good reading skills. They have access to a well-stocked library, and once older readers are able to read independently they are encouraged to bring in books from home to read.
- Attainment in writing is improving as a result of a whole-school focus. Pupils write in a variety of styles from story maps to explanations, and improve their spelling, punctuation and grammar as they get older.

The quality of teaching is good

- The vast majority of teaching is good or better across the school, and is a key factor in the good, and sometimes excellent, progress made by most pupils, including those who are supported through pupil premium funding.
- Children start their school life in the Early Years Foundation Stage with a very positive learning experience, as teachers concentrate on helping them very quickly to develop their personal and social skills.
- The teaching of literacy and numeracy continues to be good throughout the school, with examples of some outstanding teaching across the key stages.
- In the most productive lessons, teachers inspire pupils to succeed, and encourage them to share responsibility for their learning. In one example of outstanding teaching in a mathematics lesson, a pupil discussed whether a game was fair or not. By sharing his clear reasoning with the class, the understanding of all his classmates was improved.
- Well-planned lessons ensure that most activities are set at the right level of difficulty for the varying abilities of different groups of pupils. These are not always pitched at the right level, however, with the result that they do not maintain pupils' interests well enough, and progress slows.
- Pupils of all abilities and age ranges are able to talk about how being provided with clear targets help them to improve their learning, and how teachers' comments in their books help them to understand the next steps they need to take. However, in some cases the comments relate more to correcting work already completed rather than providing guidance on how to make better progress. In some classes, pupils are given time to respond to teachers' comments, but this is not yet consistently applied across the school.
- The use of additional classroom assistants provides all pupils with opportunities to work in small groups with adult guidance. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are given

well-planned activities, carefully adapted to match their specific needs.

- Pupils take their home learning seriously and many receive much parental support to carry this out. The majority of parents who responded to the on-line questionnaire feel that their children receive appropriate homework for their age.

The behaviour and safety of pupils is good

- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is typically good, and sometimes exemplary.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They are thoughtful and considerate to one another, and the vast majority are polite and respectful to adults. Pupils are keen to do their best during lessons, and make good progress because they concentrate well. Parents, staff and governors all agree that behaviour is good.
- The behaviour of pupils when moving around the school and at playtimes is consistently sensible. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well. They record any concerns in class logs and follow them up on a daily basis so that any problems are quickly resolved.
- Pupils are very clear about what bullying is. They say that bullying is not an issue for them, and that they are confident that any adult at the school will quickly sort out any problems they may have.
- The school takes good care of pupils and ensures that they work and play in a safe environment. Pupils know all about keeping safe and how to avoid potential dangers both in and out of school. As one pupil commented, 'I feel as safe here as I do at home.'
- Pupils' enjoyment of the school is evident. This is reflected in consistently above average attendance. Punctuality is good. There have been no permanent exclusions since the previous inspection.

The leadership and management is good

- The headteacher provides strong leadership and has created an effective team of teachers. Through the creation of temporary roles, the senior leadership team continues to be effective even though two key members are currently on leave.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate. The school's leadership is clear about what makes the school successful, but also knows what still needs to be improved. Development planning focuses accurately on priorities for improvement, which are shared with and understood by staff.
- A key aspect of leadership and management that has been very effective in raising pupils' achievement has been the thorough process of developing and improving teaching across the whole school. Teachers know that their work is monitored closely. Opportunities for training are well matched to teachers' needs.
- Accurate information also informs the system for managing teachers' performance. This process holds teachers to account for their work. It ensures that rewards are appropriately linked to the progress made by pupils and is tied in to the meeting of agreed targets. The school expects good value from its staff.
- The use of additional funding is carefully checked and reported to parents through the school website which itemises how the money has been spent. The school carefully tracks the progress of pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding and reports this to the governing body. The funding has been used to good effect in providing additional support to accelerate the learning of key skills, as well as for purchasing equipment and providing additional specialist teaching.
- Leaders focus sharply on ensuring that all pupils fulfil their potential, that they have equal opportunities to prosper, and that there is no discrimination.
- Safeguarding arrangements are thorough and fully in place.
- The school has good relationships with parents. Parents spoken to at the start and end of the school day were very positive about the school's work. Almost all feel their children are happy and doing well.

- The curriculum is firmly focused on developing reading, writing and mathematics skills across a wide range of subjects. It supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. The school is currently extending its creative curriculum to use the superb outside environment to enrich learning even more.
- The local authority has provided support for the school to validate the judgements of senior leaders and help them to improve the quality of teaching.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governance of the school is strong, well informed and very well organised. Governors know the school well. They have a clear programme for carrying out their visits which are linked directly to the school development plan. Consequently, they understand what teaching is like and know how well pupils are doing in comparison with all schools nationally. Governors keep a tight rein on the budget, in particular ensuring that pupil premium funding is correctly directed at benefiting the learning of pupils in receipt of the funding, as seen in the narrowing attainment gap between those pupils and their peers. Governors take full advantage of available professional training to become even more effective. They monitor performance management well and ensure that it is used to recognise and reward good teaching. There are clear systems for tackling underperformance should it arise.

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	130952
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	403619

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	422
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sarah Whibley
Headteacher	Kerry Thomas
Date of previous school inspection	4 March 2008
Telephone number	01732 842739
Fax number	01732 849634
Email address	office@kings-hill.kent.sch.uk

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