

St Giles Church of England Primary School

Church Lane, Horsted Keynes, Haywards Heath, RH17 7AY

Inspection dates 12–13 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
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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.

- The headteacher, staff and governors have high expectations of all pupils. Consequently, they achieve well and make good progress in all year groups.
- Teaching is consistently good with some that is outstanding. Teachers and teaching assistants know pupils very well. Warm and trusting relationships underpin pupils' love of learning.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils feel absolutely safe and extremely well cared for.
- The school is a happy and united community. Respect for others is at the heart of its values, and pupils' very good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Leaders and managers are focused effectively on raising standards and improving the school further. Staff understand their accountability and benefit from good training and coaching.
- The governing body provides robust leadership and challenges and supports the school equally well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, lesson activities do not allow pupils to move up to a higher level of learning when they are ready.
- Pupils are not always clear about the next steps to take to improve their subject skills.
- Pupils are sometimes uncertain about how their success will be measured in lessons.
- Some opportunities are missed for pupils to show initiative, work on their own, and find things out for themselves.

Information about this inspection

- Teaching and learning were observed in seven lessons, and pupils' work was examined, especially in English and mathematics. Some observations were joint visits with the headteacher. Short visits were made to three small groups of pupils who were learning phonics (the sounds that letters make). Two assemblies were also observed.
- Meetings were held with staff, pupils, a representative of the local authority and five members of the school's governing body. One meeting with pupils was dedicated to a discussion of reading, with an opportunity for pupils to read aloud. Ad-hoc discussions with pupils took place at breaks and lunchtimes.
- Account was taken of the 44 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and 17 staff questionnaires. Parents' involvement in school life was discussed with senior leaders. At the beginning of one day, informal conversations were held with parents in the school playground.
- A range of documentation was looked at, including records relating to pupils' progress, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Jacqueline White, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average primary school. The five classes all have mixed age groups.
- Most pupils are White British. Of the few from minority ethnic groups, none speaks English as an additional language.
- No pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, children of parents serving in the armed forces and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals).
- Overall, the proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is below that found nationally. The number supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school holds the Healthy Schools, Sports Mark and Eco Schools awards.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by ensuring:
 - pupils are clear about how success will be measured in lessons so they can judge how well they are doing for themselves
 - lesson activities allow pupils to move to a higher level of learning as soon as they are ready
 - teachers avoid over-long explanations, so that there are more opportunities in lessons for pupils to show initiative and to learn and find things out on their own
 - all teachers, as a matter of course, give pupils feedback, including in their marking, about what their next steps are for improving specific subject skills.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children enter the school with the skills and knowledge expected for their age. In the Reception and Year 1 class, high expectations and very effective teaching ensure they make good progress in developing their early reading, writing and mathematics skills.
- The attainment of almost all pupils is above average at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. Evidence from lessons, pupils' work and the school's reliable data show that pupils make good progress. Most parents who completed the on-line questionnaire agreed with this.
- The new systematic approach to teaching phonics, adopted because standards in pupils' phonic knowledge in Year 1 were, previously, below average, is helping all pupils with their reading, writing and spelling.
- Pupils of all ages enjoy books and reading. They have very good opportunities to read for a variety of purposes in lessons. Where appropriate, pupils benefit from extra support. In discussion with some of those who had received help, pupils talked with pleasure about the books they were currently reading. They happily read aloud and showed persistence in working out new words.
- The progress made by disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good in all classes. This is because of the effective support given by teachers and well-trained teaching assistants, in class, in small groups, and in one-to-one teaching sessions.
- Through closely monitoring the progress and well-being of pupils, the school ensures that everyone has an equal chance of success and is well prepared for secondary school. This includes pupils from different ethnic backgrounds, and demonstrates the school's commitment to not tolerating any form of discrimination.
- In lessons, pupils were seen to be working conscientiously. They are very supportive of each other and have good speaking and listening skills. Most are confident learners who relish challenge and are not afraid to make mistakes.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and know their pupils very well. Usually, lessons are closely matched to pupils' needs and imaginative activities promote high-quality discussion and collaboration. For example, Years 1 and 2 pupils were observed working in groups with great industry to design and test games that required counting and recording skills. The very youngest children also enjoy a wide variety of interesting and exciting activities with an excellent balance of learning led by the teacher, and children learning through independent exploration.
- Where teaching is most effective, pupils are able to check their own and others' progress against clear measures of success and move to a higher level of learning as soon as they are ready. Questioning is used expertly to probe understanding, to help pupils to think deeply, and enable them to express complex ideas.
- There are instances where pupils are not so clear about what they must do to be successful in their learning. Also, teachers sometimes get carried away with long explanations to the whole class. When this happens, opportunities are missed for pupils to show initiative and find things out for themselves. Progress can slow, particularly for the most-able pupils, when, although they already understand, they have to continue listening to the teacher.
- Teachers mark work regularly and there are examples of excellent practice. However, feedback to pupils, including in some marking, does not always clarify the next steps for improving their subject skills.
- Teaching assistants skilfully work with individuals and groups of pupils who have particular needs. They are well informed about pupils' strengths and weaknesses, and use effective strategies to develop understanding, confidence and independence.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Very well established, caring relationships are evident throughout the school. The 'buddy system' helps new entrants settle in to the school and make friends quickly. Pupils from all backgrounds work and play together contentedly. Pupils are very proud of their school and have a strong sense of belonging. This is reflected in their above average, and improving, attendance.
- Pupils are polite and considerate. Behaviour in lessons is good and sometimes exemplary. The school is a calm, orderly and welcoming place. Behaviour records show that exclusions are rare, and that any behaviour that does not meet the school's high expectations is dealt with promptly.
- Pupils feel completely safe in school. They are taught through topic work and assemblies how to keep themselves safe both inside and outside school. The wide variety of activities on offer is not only enjoyed by pupils but helps them to learn how to manage risk and develop good judgement.
- Pupils are aware of the different forms that bullying can take. They are very clear that bullying is not a problem in school and they have full confidence in staff to sort out any problems that might arise. Some pupils are trained as peer mediators. They carry out this role with care and sensitivity when minor disagreements need to be resolved.
- Pupils have a very well-developed sense of right and wrong. They appreciate that people are different, and show tolerance and a genuine desire to support those less well off than themselves.
- Some parents raised concerns about pupils' behaviour and bullying. The wide range of evidence gathered and examined during the inspection supports the view that behaviour is typically good and incidents of bullying are very few-and-far-between. Pupils, staff and the large majority of parents share this view. A comment from one parent summed up the opinions of many others: 'This is a lovely, nurturing small school. The children look out for each other and the staff create an open, safe environment. My child loves school and is eager and enthusiastic to learn.'

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, well supported by the deputy headteacher, gives clear direction to the work of the school and makes sure that raising achievement further is a priority. To this end, she has been successful in improving the quality of teaching, and strengthening management systems since the previous inspection.
- Staff morale is buoyant, and teamwork is a strength of the school. As the school is small, all teachers have a leadership responsibility. They are very supportive of each other and work cohesively to make sure that every pupil achieves well both academically and personally.
- School self-evaluation is accurate and perceptive. The procedures for tracking pupils' progress have been improved. Any underachievement is detected swiftly, and carefully tailored support is put in place to help pupils catch up. Staff are rigorous in ensuring equality of opportunity.
- Lessons are observed routinely and pupils' work is scrutinised closely. Teachers receive detailed feedback and are given clear steps for improvement. The views expressed by staff in discussions and through their questionnaires indicate clearly that staff members value the effective support and training they receive.
- Teachers' performance is monitored closely and the headteacher and governors use information from lesson observations, as well as data about pupils' progress, to decide whether teachers should be paid more.
- The subjects and topics taught meet pupils' needs and stimulate their curiosity. Creativity and essential life skills are cultivated equally well. The wide range of visits, visitors and other after-school activities not only bring learning to life, but contribute to pupils' understanding of the diverse nature of the world and human relationships.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well through

close involvement with the local church and community, and links with schools in Guyana and France. Pupils participate in many community activities, and regularly join in with fund raising for local and national charities.

- The school is working hard to support parents' involvement in their children's learning. Parents' views are actively sought and various channels of communication, including the school's website, are used to keep in touch with parents and provide information. Some parents still feel that communications could be improved. The school takes this very seriously and is continuously reflecting on how to best meet parents' needs.
- The local authority provides the school with a useful external perspective of its performance; only light touch support has been considered necessary.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body is deeply committed to providing pupils with an education that will bring opportunities and fulfilment. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses because they work closely with the team of staff. Regular visits are made and the results are shared with other governors to inform decision-making. Governors have a clear picture of the quality of teaching across the school and pupils' achievement. Their oversight of teachers' performance is exacting. Governors manage the school's finances astutely and evaluate how the use of resources benefits pupils. They share a determined commitment to ensuring that pupils do equally well and that the school compares favourably with schools nationally. The governing body ensures all statutory requirements, including those for safeguarding, are met.

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	126057
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	403592

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	126
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Marion Lott
Headteacher	Joanna Francis
Date of previous school inspection	30 April 2008
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