

# North Heath Community Primary School

Erica Way, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 5XL

**Inspection dates** 6–7 March 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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

- Pupils achieve well and make good progress in writing and especially in reading.
- Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage because staff provide a stimulating and nurturing environment.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve at least as well as their peers and sometimes better, due to the well-tailored support and good teaching they receive.
- Teaching is typically good, with some that is outstanding. Relationships within the school are excellent and pupils are well supported by effective support staff.
- Pupils are polite, behave well and feel safe. There is effective provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The strong leadership of the headteacher is the driving force behind the school. He is ably supported by senior leaders, a strong staff team and by governors who strive for excellence, holding staff to account by having the highest expectations. The school promotes a positive, caring ethos to which all subscribe.
- School leaders have worked hard to put rigorous systems in place. They accurately identify areas they wish to improve. There is no sense of complacency.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils do not make as much progress in mathematics as they do in reading and writing.
- Not all pupils make consistently rapid progress throughout the school. Sometimes, a few of the more able pupils are not given hard enough work.
- Pupils' mathematical skills in problem-solving are not as good as they could be and this sometimes hinders the rate of progress they make.
- Marking in some year groups is effective, but it is not consistent throughout the school, particularly in Key Stage 1.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 21 lessons. Approximately half were jointly observed by the headteacher or deputy headteacher. In addition, the inspection team made three shorter visits to lessons and provision for pupils learning outside the classroom.
- Pupils were heard to read. One Y3/Y4 assembly and one Key Stage 1 singing assembly were visited.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, six representatives of the governing body and the school's middle and senior leaders, and with a representative of the local authority to discuss the range and impact of support provided for the school.
- The inspection team took account of the 87 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, the views of 16 parents and carers who spoke to the inspection team during the inspection, one email and three letters received from parents or carers. The inspection team also looked at the 23 questionnaires returned by staff.
- The inspection team observed the school's work, and looked at a number of documents, including the school's information on pupils' progress for the current school year and previous three years.
- Inspectors also looked at self-evaluation and school improvement documentation, planning, governor minutes and documentation on the management of teachers' performance over the last three years and school policies and records relating to behaviour, safety and attendance. The school's safeguarding procedures were also evaluated.

## Inspection team

Jill Thewlis, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Wendy Forbes

Additional inspector

Peter Wibroe

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- North Heath is a larger than average primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average. The proportion of pupils who are supported at school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is well below that seen nationally. This is additional funding for pupils, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, in local authority care or from service families. There are only pupils from the first category at the school.
- The school meets the government floor standards in English and mathematics, which set the minimum standard required for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Since the last inspection, the school has experienced a number of changes in its staffing organisation. This includes the development of wider leadership through the implementation of three school improvement teams led by senior and middle leaders and the appointment of a substantive deputy headteacher. The temporary absence of the special educational needs leader is currently being covered by a permanent member of staff.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning from good to outstanding by ensuring that:
  - all learning opportunities are accurately matched to the needs of all learners and provide the right level of challenge, especially for the most able
  - when teachers mark pupils' work, particularly at Key Stage 1, they give pupils a clear idea of how well they are doing and how to improve.
- Accelerate pupils' progress in mathematics by making sure:
  - pupils have more opportunities in lessons to practise and extend their knowledge and understanding of mathematics so that they can apply and extend their skills in problem-solving and investigations.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- In the last two years, children have entered Reception with skills and abilities typical for their age in most areas except speech and language, which is lower. They progress well, particularly in the three prime areas of communication and language, physical development and personal, social and emotional development because a stimulating, nurturing environment is provided.
- Children in the Reception class enjoy learning. One child, captivated by the changing water levels as they added stones to containers full of water, exclaimed 'It's like being real scientists!' Progress in learning letters and sounds, (phonics) is good. Many already read and write simple words and sentences, count accurately to 20 and are able to choose different activities independently.
- Pupils throughout the rest of the school achieve well. Results in national tests over the last three years indicate a pattern of attainment which is above average in reading, writing and mathematics. School performance information shows pupils are on track to achieve the challenging targets set by the school for the current year.
- Attainment in reading is well above average by Year 2 and Year 6 because of the school's strong focus on the development of reading and writing, particularly early reading. Pupils are encouraged to develop a love of books; for example, in a Year 4 assembly, groups acted out scenes from their favourite books. Investment in a new library space, developed in consultation with pupils, has heightened the focus on reading.
- 2012 results were broadly average in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Improvements in the teaching of phonics have improved younger pupils' understanding of the link between letters and sounds so that they read confidently.
- The successful drive to improve literacy skills since the last inspection has accelerated pupils' progress in writing. This was seen in a literacy lesson, where children were developing the skill of using precise language in order to communicate meaning more effectively.
- Mental calculation skills have improved since the last inspection and are now good. Actions taken to develop pupils' skills in problem solving, for example through changes in curriculum, have begun to improve the quality of their work. However, opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills in solving mathematical problems, or to use them well in other subjects remain limited. As a result, they make slower progress in mathematics than in English.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make similar rates of progress to other pupils, due to appropriate support. This demonstrates the school's effective focus on promoting equality of opportunity.
- The school has taken successful steps to ensure the very few pupils eligible for pupil premium funding are well supported in improving their English and mathematics skills as well as personal needs. The effectiveness of this support is demonstrated by the good progress made by current pupils in these areas, measured by the increase in average point scores. The pupils make good progress, shown by the narrowing of the gap between their attainment in both English and mathematics and that of similar pupils both locally and nationally.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is typically good and sometimes outstanding, promoting pupils' positive attitudes to learning. Expectations are high.
- Since the last inspection, the teaching of phonics has improved by the introduction of a more systematic approach. As a result, pupils are acquiring the skills necessary to decode

words and, by the time they enter Key Stage 2, they are confident readers.

- The improved use of assessment information to plan lessons and personal targets help pupils to build on what they already know and can do. Activities are generally matched appropriately to most pupils' learning needs. However, there are occasions when some activities do not challenge pupils enough, particularly the most able, when developing mathematical skills to solve problems.
- Teaching makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, especially during times given to reflect on their learning and through setting high expectations for behaviour.
- Teaching in the Reception classes is effective. Planning is good, providing a good balance of activities between those they can select for themselves and those directed by adults. This promotes confidence in learning.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs benefit from effective support provided by adults. As a result, their attainment has improved in reading and writing when compared to that of similar pupils nationally.
- Teachers mark most pupils' work regularly. However, some pupils, particularly at Key Stage 1, are not made aware of the next steps needed to improve their work. As a result, the progress of these pupils is slower than might otherwise be expected.

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

- The school's overwhelmingly positive atmosphere extends through all areas of school life. Pupils have excellent attitudes to school and say they enjoy their learning.
- Behaviour is exemplary; pupils are unfailingly polite and courteous. There is a calm, orderly atmosphere around the school. Pupils describe their school as a 'jolly school'. They say, 'No one is without a friend.'
- High levels of mutual respect between pupils and adults are evident in lessons and at playtime. Pupils are confident that adults will always help and support them.
- Pupils report that they feel very safe in school at all times. They say that bullying is rare and any is dealt with swiftly. Pupils have a good understanding of the nature of all forms of bullying, such as name calling and cyber bullying. Pupils act responsibly and are able to resolve minor disagreements themselves. Excellent documentary evidence is kept and the overwhelmingly positive views of parents, carers, staff, governors and pupils clearly show that this behaviour is typical over time.
- Attendance rates are higher than average, reflecting pupils' overwhelming desire to be in school.
- In lessons, children are able to work collaboratively in a mature and responsible manner, demonstrating that they have absorbed the values upheld by the school – cooperation and respect. School leaders and other members of staff make a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by celebrating their achievements.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- The motivational leadership of the headteacher has secured continuing strength in leadership by developing the roles of middle leaders. Leaders have promoted a clear vision for school improvement shared by all.
- Additional funds, such as the pupil premium funds, are used effectively to enhance pupils' personal development and well-being through building confidence in their social and emotional skills and improving achievement in English and mathematics.
- Leadership and management are not yet outstanding because they have not yet secured a

greater proportion of outstanding teaching.

- However, rigorous methods of measuring pupils' progress and checking the quality of teaching have led to continued good teaching and achievement, indicating the school's good capacity to improve further. A focus on clear priorities for development, such as improving reading skills, has been particularly successful.
- School leaders are reflective, and able to accurately identify the areas for improvement. Effective plans are implemented to address these, for example the more systematic approach for the teaching of phonics which has raised attainment in reading.
- Teachers' performance is closely checked and links directly to whole-school priorities, the impact on pupils' progress and, in turn, staff salaries. Appropriate support and training are provided to help them improve their skills. This is leading to continued improvement in the quality of teaching.
- Leaders have developed a curriculum which enhances pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural education. It is well planned and enriched by a wide range of visits, including residential trips for older children. Good use is made of the locality to promote learning such as the visit to Wakehurst Place.
- Governors and staff promote effective links with parents and carers, which help secure pupils' positive attitudes to learning and higher than average attendance. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly enthusiastic about the school, secure in the knowledge that their children are safe and well cared for. Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements.
- Activities which involve pupils' learning about others' beliefs promote tolerance and understanding of ethnicity and diversity. All pupils are treated equally and, through appropriate support, leaders ensure that all pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, achieve well.
- The local authority has contributed well in continuing to strengthen school systems and complementing the school's 'bought-in' support.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is effective. Regular training and the continued school improvement drive ensures governors have a key focus on school performance. They understand their related responsibilities and make sure that staff and pupils are very safe. Governors examine pupils' progress information and know how it compares with similar schools. They receive information on the quality of teaching and make sure that improved pay and promotion of staff are closely related to performance in the classroom. By these means, governors have a good knowledge of the quality of teaching and hold the school to account. Governors ensure efficient financial management and check that funds for the few pupils in receipt of pupil premium are used effectively to provide the quality of additional support that helps them to achieve as well as other pupils.

## 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>	125949
<b>Local authority</b>	West Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	402589

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>	410
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Shirley Breeden
<b>Headteacher</b>	Michael Gildea
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19–20 September 2007
<b>Telephone number</b>	01403 254790
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