

Hartley Primary School

Round Ash Way, Longfield, Kent, DA3 8BT

Inspection dates 15–16 November 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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- High-quality leadership, management and governance have ensured that the school has improved rapidly since its last inspection. Learning is at the heart of school life and it is enjoyable for pupils.
- Pupils make good progress, and attainment at the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics is above average.
- Pupils are well mannered, behave considerately in and out of lessons and feel safe. Their good attitudes to learning in school and completing homework help them to achieve well.
- Children in Reception make a good start to school, largely because of the exciting things to do and imaginative use of the outdoor area.
- Teaching is good in most lessons and some is outstanding. Teachers know their pupils and their needs very well. Marking helps pupils to understand the quality of their work and what they have to do to improve further.
- Pupils find the wide range of subjects interesting and this spurs them on to do their best.
- The school's continuous drive for improvement means that leaders regularly review all aspects of school life and have an excellent understanding of where further gains can be made.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There are minor inconsistencies in the way teachers plan for learning. In a few lessons, the lesson objectives were too broad and did not identify the expected learning for the different groups in the class in sufficient detail.
- Staff have accurately identified that there is more to do to identify and bring in best practices in teaching from beyond the school, including how to use the potential of the extensive grounds to promote learning further.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed significant parts of 20 lessons involving all teachers, a small number jointly with the headteacher. A number of other lessons were visited as part of a learning walk with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Inspectors listened to a sample of pupils read.
- Meetings were held with representatives of the governing body, local authority, staff and a group of pupils.
- Inspectors observed the school's work, attended assemblies, and scrutinised pupils' work, progress data, evaluation and development documents, safeguarding information, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and the governing body minutes.
- Inspectors took account of 96 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) as well as questionnaires completed by 43 staff.

Inspection team

Helen Hutchings, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Noureddin Khassal

Additional inspector

David Wolfson

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Hartley Primary School is an above-average-sized school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium (additional funding made available by the government for pupils who receive free school meals or are in the care of the local authority) is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic backgrounds is below that of schools nationally, and few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is well above the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is well below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has a breakfast club attended by around 40 pupils daily.
- Among a wide range of awards, the school holds Activemark, Sportsmark and Artsmark awards and anti-bullying accreditation.
- The Department for Education has agreed that the school should convert to an academy within the Leigh Academy Trust early in 2013.
- Roundash Pre-School operates on the school site. It is not managed by the governing body and is subject to separate inspection.
- Pupils do not attend any alternative provision.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen teaching so that more pupils make outstanding, rather than good, progress, by:
 - making sure that the objectives set for lessons always focus clearly on the learning to be achieved by the different groups in the class
 - drawing on best practice from outside the school, particularly in making more use of the school grounds to extend learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The overwhelming majority of parents and carers responding to the online questionnaire say their children make good progress. Pupils' achievement is good and improving quickly across the school. However, some pupils are capable of even faster progress in order for achievement to become outstanding.
- Most children start school in Reception with knowledge and skills that are typical for their age. They settle quickly into school life and make good gains across all areas of learning so that they are prepared well for later learning.
- Pupils learn to read quickly because phonics (letters and their sounds) is taught well. This means that pupils develop confidence at a young age because they understand how to attempt unfamiliar words. Pupils read regularly at home and their enjoyment is seen in their comments such as, 'Imagination can help you when you read and make it enjoyable.' In reading lessons, the wide range of interesting activities and choice of books help pupils to concentrate well and make good progress, particularly when they read together and share their ideas in pairs or small groups.
- By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in the national tests is above average in English and mathematics. There has been very rapid improvement in pupils' attainment in mathematics since the last inspection, and there is no significant difference in standards between reading, writing and mathematics.
- The way in which teachers promote independent learning skills has a strong impact on pupils' learning and achievement. For example, in a Year 2 literacy lesson, a few pupils decided to consult a thesaurus to find words which would describe Florence Nightingale's feelings on her journey to Scutari. They came up with "tense" and "apprehensive".
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well and the attainment of many is above average. This is because their needs are identified carefully and short interventions put in place to address their difficulties quickly.
- Similarly, the attainment of pupils supported through the pupil premium is above that of other pupils nationally because of the good progress they make. This is because of the additional support they are given individually or in small groups.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved since the last inspection to good overall, with some that is outstanding, and parents and carers agree. Teachers have high expectations that all pupils should achieve well.
- Teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan activities which pupils enjoy. Pupils can use their literacy and numeracy skills in different subjects in interesting ways, such as when, as part of a topic on the Tudors, teachers used role play and a discussion about crime and punishment, then and now, to get pupils excited about their writing.
- Teachers encourage pupils to think things through for themselves so that lessons are practical and relevant, helping them to solve problems. This has raised standards in mathematics. In a Year 4 lesson, for instance, pupils were challenged to establish a system to work out how different sums of money could be made up of different coins.
- The outdoor 'Forest School' activities for Reception children are successful. Staff have identified, as a key priority, that the school grounds can be developed to extend this approach to older pupils.
- Teachers take good account of the different range of abilities within their classes, setting tasks at the right levels to enable all to achieve success. Teaching assistants effectively boost specific

skills and make a particularly good impact on the learning of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Occasionally, the objectives for the lesson cover too much ground so that the smaller steps in learning are not sufficiently detailed for the different groups in the class.

- Teachers use technology confidently to enliven learning with stimulating visual images which encourage pupils to develop their information technology skills. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils used electronic tablets to plan an online journey to four different destinations around the world and work out the price per kilometre. 'Visualisers' are used very effectively for pupils to share completed tasks, such as pieces of writing which are projected on to a screen, and to deepen their understanding of their own work by assessing how well they have done.
- The quality of marking, particularly in supporting literacy and numeracy, is a key strength and is linked well to pupils' learning goals. Pupils are keen to act on their teachers' helpful feedback and advice. Pupils' progress is tracked rigorously and action taken quickly if a pupil is in danger of falling behind.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils enjoy school and are proud of it. They are considerate of one another and respond well to adults as consistent role models. Relationships are strong across the school. Typically, pupils behave well and with courtesy in and around the school. Parents and carers say that behaviour is good and that their children are safe.
- In lessons, pupils are attentive and enthusiastic so that there is a lively buzz of purposeful learning across the school. Pupils' keenness is shown in the way they follow up at home work introduced in school and their excitement in talking about new topics such as the Crimean War. Very occasionally, pupils allow their attention to wander so that the teacher has to refocus them on their tasks.
- Because pupils have an acute understanding of right and wrong, incidents of inappropriate behaviour are rare and exclusion has not been necessary for some time.
- Older pupils take on responsibilities seriously, such as head boy or girl duties. The school council is active in working with the parish council to reopen a local play park, or organising the school's pyjama day during the inspection to raise funds for the Children in Need appeal.
- Pupils say that they feel very safe in school. They know all about cyber-bullying and other types of harassment, although they have few concerns because they know that any incidents are taken seriously and dealt with well by the school.
- Attendance has improved well since the last inspection. With a reduction in the number of pupils who are persistently absent or who take holidays in term time, attendance is above average.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- This rapidly improving school is a result of hard work by staff under the visionary and proactive leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Senior leaders check the quality of teaching systematically and rigorously, and use the information well to support teachers in improving their practice. Training is well matched to individual and whole-school priorities and has helped to improve teaching quickly since the last inspection.
- Teamwork is exceptionally strong, so that staff share and challenge one another's ideas and middle leaders give valuable advice to colleagues. Increasingly, teachers are researching outstanding practice elsewhere. As a result, pupils' achievement is accelerating rapidly and older pupils say that learning 'gets better and better'.
- There is a wide range of subjects that promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by making them think deeply, such as ethical issues around tourism in poorer

areas. Teachers adapt their methods to suit pupils' interests and make sure they can practise their numeracy and literacy skills in different ways.

- Pupils enjoy regular enrichment days and residential visits. The breakfast club is a hive of activity. The timing of the club is just one example of how the school works closely with parents and carers, in this case to align club times to accommodate the needs of parents who are reliant on public transport timetables or who are employed in front-line services.
- Staff actively promote equality of opportunity and tackle discrimination, and this is seen in the good progress made by all groups of pupils, including the few pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The local authority has provided effective support to develop aspects of the school, such as the way Reception classes are organised. However, the school has been able to develop well with little external support.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has a deep insight into the school's strengths and weaknesses because of regular paired governor visits and reviews of pupils' progress. Governors work closely with staff to evaluate the school's performance and to set priorities for the future. They understand about data and compare the school's performance with other similar schools. They have identified where they have expertise to share with the school, and have undertaken training to develop their skills. The governing body ensures, with the headteacher, that performance management targets hold staff accountable. They know about promotion issues and how the salary structure is used to reward good teaching. The governing body has done its homework about how best to allocate the pupil premium funding. Priority is being given to small-group booster programmes to develop pupils' confidence, and to making sure eligible pupils can take part in visits and clubs so that they do not miss out. Systems for safeguarding pupils are exemplary.

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	118481
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	405774

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	384
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Graham Clewes
Headteacher	Lorraine Hollingworth
Date of previous school inspection	2–3 February 2011
Telephone number	01474 702742
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