

# Harcourt Primary School

Biggins Wood Road, Folkestone, Kent, CT19 4NE

## Inspection dates

13–14 March 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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 and members of the governing body have successfully improved the school from its satisfactory position at the previous inspection.
- Achievement is good. Expectations have been raised so that pupils now make good progress in English and mathematics from the time they enter the school.
- Teaching is good and some is outstanding. Relationships between staff and pupils are good and pupils are well known as individuals by all staff.
- Pupils behave well and feel safe. They do not fear bullying or any kind of discrimination.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning and enjoy school, which is reflected in their above-average attendance rates.
- Pupils, staff, and parents and carers are very proud of their school. Pupils spoke about the friendly, caring atmosphere. A typical comment was, 'We learn well because we're all friends, and work together as a team and share ideas.'
- Leadership and management are good. Regular checks are made on the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make.
- The governing body supports the school effectively and holds it to account for its performance.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching to secure outstanding achievement and not enough opportunities for the best practice to be shared.
- Plans for what will be taught do not always include enough opportunities for pupils to apply their skills across different subjects, especially in mathematics.
- Pupils do not always have enough opportunities to take the initiative and be more resourceful and creative in their learning.
- Teachers' expectations for the quality of pupils' handwriting and the presentation of their work are not high enough.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 10 lessons or part-lessons, including joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspector talked to pupils about their work and listened to some children read during their lessons.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, other staff with key leadership responsibilities, groups of pupils, a member of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, records of pupils' progress, monitoring information and the safeguarding procedures.
- The inspector took account of 10 responses to the online Parent View survey and 12 questionnaires returned by staff.

## Inspection team

Margaret Coussins, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Harcourt is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage; the next largest group are of Asian or Asian British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is above average, as is the proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives additional funding (the pupil premium), because they are known to be eligible for free school meals or are children of service families, is above average. There are no children who are looked after.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school makes provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage in a Reception class.
- A Nursery occupies two of the classrooms in the school. It is managed by a private provider and therefore not included in this inspection.
- The school provides a daily breakfast club.

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

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching in order to raise attainment and sustain good progress by:
  - ensuring there are more opportunities to share the most effective practice
  - ensuring that within the planning of subjects there are even more opportunities for pupils to apply their skills across different subjects, especially mathematical skills
  - making sure that teachers take advantage of pupils' good attitudes and behaviour by giving them more opportunities to take the initiative and be more resourceful and creative in their learning.
- Raise expectations for the quality of pupils' handwriting and the presentation of their work.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils achieve well because they make good progress from their starting points, which are well below expectations for their age when they join the Reception Year, and reach average attainment by the time they leave school at the end of Year 6.
- Pupils get a good start to school in the Reception class. Achievement in reading and writing, however, remains below expectations despite the good progress they make. They do particularly well in their disposition and attitudes, calculating and their physical development.
- Most pupils continue to make good progress throughout Years 1 to 6, although it is sometimes a little uneven. Inspection evidence, including the school's information about pupils' progress and pupils' work, shows that more pupils are now on track to exceed national averages in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6 in 2013.
- Small and fluctuating numbers in the year groups mean that published attainment data need to be interpreted with caution.
- In 2012, attainment by the end of Year 6 shows an improvement over time. Gaps between the attainment of all groups compared to attainment found nationally have narrowed considerably. The large majority of pupils reached the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics, and a higher-than-average proportion reached the higher Level 5 in mathematics.
- All groups, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, minority ethnic groups and the few pupils who speak English as an additional language, generally make similar good progress and achieve well over time because support is carefully tailored to meet individual needs.
- Pupils who benefit from the pupil premium reach similar levels of attainment to other pupils in the school in English as measured by their average points scores in 2012 at the end of Key Stage 2. Their attainment in mathematics, however, is four months behind other pupils in the school.
- In the Year 1 phonics (the sounds made by letters) screening check in 2012, taken by the current Year 2 pupils, the proportion achieving the expected result was below that found nationally. The school has taken effective action and has established a programme for children in Reception and Year 1 and 2 pupils where they work in small groups according to their ability every day. This is having a positive impact on their achievement. Reading is promoted well across the school, and pupils enjoy reading and talk with enthusiasm about a range of authors. Many pupils are confident, fluent readers by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils enjoy writing and are creative and imaginative in their work. Handwriting and the presentation of their work in all subjects, however, is often untidy and can hold them back, and teachers accept work that is not of a high enough standard in these areas.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Most parents and carers agree that their children are taught well.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of how well they are doing and know their targets for learning. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, mostly giving good pointers on how pupils can improve their work.
- A notable strength in teaching across all classes is teachers' skilled questioning and the opportunity pupils have to discuss their thoughts with each other, which helps them to share ideas and extend their thinking and learning.
- Teachers plan lessons that are fun and interesting, and progress at a good pace; as a result, pupils want to do well, and work hard. They enjoy tackling challenging work and show great determination and concentration.
- This was seen to good effect in mathematics where Years 4, 5 and 6 pupils were practising basic

number skills. Pupils worked extremely well to deadlines, consolidated their use and understanding of mathematical vocabulary, and the most-able pupils were tackling suitably demanding work. All pupils persevered with their tasks, and the teacher made instant checks on pupils' understanding and corrected any misconceptions. As a result, pupils made excellent progress.

- While there is some outstanding teaching, there is not enough to make the most of pupils' progress, good behaviour and attitudes, and in a few lessons, pupils are not actively involved enough in taking the initiative, and being more resourceful and creative in their learning.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, teaching engages children well. They are happy and settle well into the routines of the day. There is a good balance of activities directed by adults and those where children can make their own choices, which encourages their confidence and independence. They thoroughly enjoy the activities outside, from investigating fossils with a magnifying glass to creating music; and there is a good focus on developing their language, communication and number skills.
- Phonics teaching to children in Reception and Years 1 and 2 is precise and carefully adapted to suit different ability levels, so that pupils learn quickly.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are supported well by teaching assistants and the learning mentor so that their needs are generally well met.

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

- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They understand and respond well to teachers' expectations and displays around the school that promote good behaviour.
- Most parents and carers who used the online questionnaire agree that behaviour is good, and all agree that their children feel safe in school and are well looked after. Inspection findings support this view.
- Pupils say they are not aware of any bullying in school but they are confident that should any incidents occur, staff would deal with them swiftly and fairly. In discussions, however, they show that they have good awareness of the different ways in which bullying could occur, including cyber-bullying, name-calling and physical bullying.
- Pupils are polite and friendly, and enjoy coming to school, as shown by above-average attendance by most pupils.
- Behaviour is not outstanding because, while the vast majority of pupils behave well, on a few occasions some pupils who find it harder to moderate their own behaviour need more adult supervision to behave well.
- Pupils enjoy the responsibilities they are given, for example as members of the school council. They are particularly enthusiastic about promoting healthy eating and lifestyles.
- The breakfast club provides a calm and positive start to the day for those pupils who attend.

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

- The headteacher provides very effective, positive leadership and, with the governing body, has raised expectations and improved the school since the previous inspection. Parents and carers, and staff, express great confidence in the leadership and management of the school.
- The headteacher has built a strong staff team and there is a shared drive for further improvement.
- Pupils' progress is checked thoroughly and leads to the school's accurate self-evaluation, and a clear picture of what the school does well and the priorities for improvement. The headteacher has correctly identified that there should be more opportunities to share more widely the best practice in teaching.
- Targets are set for teachers that are linked well with the progress pupils make, and teachers

know they are accountable for pupils' progress and that this is linked to pay and salary progression.

- Key leadership roles are well defined and leaders at all levels make a positive contribution to whole-school improvement as well as providing skills and expertise in their particular areas of responsibility.
- There is appropriate emphasis to learning basic skills and, in an effective response to the previous inspection, all subjects are now covered in sufficient depth. However, subject plans do not always show or provide enough opportunities for pupils to use and apply their skills across subjects, particularly mathematical skills. Visits and visitors to school and a range of extra activities enhance pupils' learning and experiences and help pupils to develop personal and social skills that prepare them well for their next schools.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well and underpins all that the school does. The school's ethos of care and support, and valuing and including all pupils, demonstrates its commitment to securing equal opportunities for all.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet all statutory requirements, and are well known and implemented by all staff.
- The local authority provides good support to the school and works well with the headteacher and staff to drive forward improvement, for example by providing funding for teachers to attend training to improve teaching to outstanding.

■ **The governance of the school:**

– Governors know the school well. They are well informed, have a good understanding of how the school's performance compares with schools nationally, its strengths and areas to develop. The governing body shares the headteacher's high expectations and is determined to secure the best outcomes for pupils. Governors provide experienced and valued support for the school and an appropriate balance between support and challenge for senior leaders. There is a good understanding of the quality of teaching in the school and the links between teachers' performance and decisions about salary progression. Governors have a good knowledge of the use and impact of the additional pupil premium funding and agree how it is spent, for example in additional support from teaching assistants, the learning mentor and family liaison officer, and to ensure that pupils are not disadvantaged by funding trips, holiday clubs and attendance at the breakfast club. Governors undertake regular training to help increase their effectiveness and their ability to hold the school to account for its performance.

## 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>	118871
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	401792

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>	115
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Kevin Golding
<b>Headteacher</b>	Alison Dakin
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24–25 November 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01303 275294
<b>Fax number</b>	01303 279176
<b>Email address</b>	headteacher@harcourt.kent.sch.uk



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