

Ropley Church of England Primary School

Church Street, Ropley, Alresford, SO24 0DS

Inspection dates 20–21 March 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		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- By the time pupils leave the school, their attainment in English and mathematics is high and they are well prepared for secondary school. Their speaking and listening skills are exceptional because of the very many opportunities they have to share and explain their ideas.
- Teaching is consistently good across the school enabling all groups of pupils to make good progress. The progress of pupils in Year 6 is rapid due to very strong teaching.
- Pupils behave extremely well and respond keenly to the high expectations that are placed on them and that they set for themselves. They have exemplary attitudes to learning.
- Leaders routinely consult pupils, parents, carers and staff about the school's policies, practices and plans for the school's future. As a consequence, everyone is totally committed and pulling in the same direction.
- The school works in complete harmony with its parent community who subscribes totally to what the school is doing and to how it is led and managed.
- The curriculum is well designed, providing lots of stimulating activities for pupils which adds to pupils' very positive attitudes.
- Governors provide highly effective support, challenge and strategic direction for the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching. In some lessons pupils do not get to work on their own quickly enough. They are also not given enough opportunities to reflect how they can improve their work.
- Learning opportunities outside do not match those inside in the early years and limit the gains children make in their learning.
- The management of performance for teaching assistants is not as systematic as for teachers.
- The school's plans for the future do not include milestone targets to enable leaders to measure regularly if its actions are working to raise achievement.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons, of which two were joint observations with the headteacher and one was with the pupil learning council. In addition, inspectors made a number of other short visits to lessons and observed a singing assembly. They also looked at pupils' books and observed other aspects of the school's work.
- Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body and another governor, teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 took the inspectors around the school and a group of Year 6 pupils met with an inspector. The inspectors also spoke to pupils about their reading and listened to them read. A meeting was held with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 27 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and spoke to parents and carers at the school gate. Inspectors reviewed six questionnaire responses from staff.
- A number of documents were looked at, including the school's own data relating to pupils' achievement in the school year 2011/12 and since September 2012, the school's self-evaluation summary and school development plan, planning documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, policy documents and documents relating to safeguarding. The inspectors also looked at the school's website and reports on the school from the Diocese of Winchester and the local authority.

Inspection team

Martin Marsh, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Marion Hobbs

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is smaller-than-average-sized primary school and most pupils are of White British heritage.
- Less than one in twenty pupils is eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding which in this school supports pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after pupils and pupils from service families), which is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportions supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational need are below that found nationally.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the last inspection the school has appointed a new Chair of the Governing Body and, in September 2012, appointed a teacher who is new to the profession.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that a greater proportion of pupils make outstanding progress in lessons by:
 - making sure that pupils get to work independently more quickly
 - planning more time for pupils to reflect on how their work could be improved
 - providing more opportunities for learning in the outside area in Reception.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - incorporating milestone targets into plans for the future to enable leaders to check on the impact of their actions on pupils' achievement during the course of the year
 - following up more regularly on the targets set for teaching assistants to improve their performance.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the school in Reception with social and physical skills above those typical for their age, but with literacy and numeracy skills that are more in line with those expected for their age. They make good progress through Reception and Key Stage 1 and attain above what is expected nationally by the end of Year 2. This good progress continues into the early stages of Key Stage 2 and becomes rapid through Years 5 and Year 6, so that their attainment is high in English and mathematics by the time they leave the school.
- Progress in reading is good throughout the school. In Reception and Key Stage 1, pupils learn their letters and the sounds they make (phonics) very well because there are well taught programmes in place. Pupils have a love for reading and some pupils were even seen walking into school in the morning and after breaks reading books. The very small numbers of pupils who are not good readers in Year 3 and Year 4 do not regularly benefit from being heard to read by a teacher and opportunities to consolidate consistently and improve their understanding of letters and sounds are missed. This hinders their achievement in reading. Pupils develop good calculation skills.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is typically good. There are many that make more rapid progress because of well focused support in and outside the class. The few pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding receive good support and tuition to make similar and often better progress than other pupils. As there was only one pupil eligible for pupil premium in Year 6 in 2012, no comparison can be made to the attainment of their peers or pupils nationally.
- In Reception, the opportunities for pupils to learn outside are limited, which results in children making slower progress than they could from this environment. Relationships between adults and children are excellent. Children respond by showing great interest, enthusiasm and concentration, whether it be in making an alien or talking about how a power cut might have affected the possibility of chicks hatching from eggs in an incubator.

The quality of teaching is good

- Excellent relationships between adults and pupils and between the pupils themselves are typical of all lessons. Pupils listen intently to their teachers and to each other. When they are given the chance to explain something to the class they do so with great confidence and clarity. They show great concentration and work very hard when asked to work on their own or in small groups. Teaching assistants provide good additional support, enabling those who are disabled or have special educational needs to engage fully in lessons.
- Teachers plan lessons well, designing activities which interest the pupils and that are based on good knowledge of the pupils' interests and levels of ability. They teach new skills well during the sessions with the whole class and carefully explain to pupils what they are going to learn and do. Questioning to check on understanding and correct mistakes and misconceptions is good. In a few lessons, pupils' progress is hindered as the pupils are not given the chance to start working independently quickly enough because the explanations take too long.
- Pupils' work is corrected well and gives pupils a good idea as to how well they are doing and what could be better. In lessons, adults regularly check on understanding and give good feedback to pupils to help them make faster progress. However, pupils do not routinely respond to teachers' marking and there are not enough lessons where pupils are given sufficient time to reflect on what they have learnt and how their work could be improved.
- There are many opportunities planned to promote pupils' social, spiritual, moral and cultural development. For example, in a Years 5 and 6 religious education lesson, pupils were totally absorbed in using art, drama and music to explore the beliefs that Christians hold about Easter. The teacher's skilful questioning probed their thinking and stimulated group discussions. As a result, the pupils made outstanding progress towards a better understanding of the significance

of this religious festival.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils behave extremely well and are very proud of their school. They display high levels of courtesy and good manners towards adults, are welcoming and were very keen to show the inspectors their work. Adults have high expectations of children, but the pupils have equally high expectations of themselves. They enjoy coming to school and attendance is above average.
- Pupils feel valued and very well cared for. They respond to this by showing high levels of care towards each other, especially the older pupils towards the younger children. All parents and carers spoken to during the inspection, or who responded to Parent View, said their children were happy in school, were safe and well looked after.
- The attitudes to learning that pupils develop in their time in school are exceptional. This was typified during a Years 5 and 6 physical education lesson which took place outside in freezing cold conditions. Every child was totally absorbed in developing their skills in lacrosse and listening carefully to instructions given by the teacher.
- Pupils take a full part in school life. The well trained learning council regularly observes lessons and gives feedback to the teacher and the class on the learning that has taken place. During the inspection the council did a joint observation with the inspector and correctly identified what was good about the learning and what could be improved. Pupils willingly contribute to, for example, curriculum planning, the writing of the home school agreement, the school website and plans for the future. They highly value this involvement.
- Pupils understand about bullying, including cyber bullying, but incidents are extremely rare and quickly dealt with. Pupils have a highly developed understanding of right and wrong and respect people's different faiths, religions and cultures. There are no racist incidents or other prejudice-related incidents. This shows that the school is successful in promoting equality of opportunity and fairness, fostering good relations and tackling discrimination.

The leadership and management are good

- 'This is a lovely school' were words used by several parents. Everyone who responded on Parent View said they would recommend this school to others. Leaders and teachers know all the children as individuals and the school's ethos is like the best of families where everyone pulls together to help each other.
- Leaders have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and where the school needs to improve. This enables them to make plans for the future which are appropriate and identify correct actions. The full involvement of pupils, parents, carers and staff makes sure that everyone understands what the school is trying to do and are fully supportive of the school's leaders. Leaders regularly check that actions on the school's plans have been completed, but are unable to measure the difference these have made because plans do not include milestones for pupil achievement.
- The school has a good system in place to manage the performance of both teachers and teaching assistants. This identifies challenging targets as to how they can improve, closely linked to actions within the school's plans for the future. The programme of support and checking for the teacher new to the profession is exemplary. However, the progress teaching assistants are making towards their targets is not checked on regularly enough to raise the quality of their support further.
- 'It's great. We get to do lots of amazing things.' This was one pupil's thoughts on what the school offers. The school's curriculum is well planned and supports pupils' good achievement. It is enhanced by a good range of day and residential visits and by visitors to the school. All pupils learn a musical instrument and pupils enjoy singing both in the school choir and in singing assemblies. There is a good range of opportunities for sport, especially lacrosse.
- The local authority provides light touch support for this good school.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body is very effective. Governors visit the school regularly and have a good knowledge about the school which they use to challenge in a very supportive way. They correctly judge the school to be a good school and know the quality of teaching, where it is stronger and where it needs to improve. They are fully involved in the decision making process and in creating plans for the future and regularly review school policies and practices. There is an excellent range of skills within the governing body which makes sure that, for example, finances are well managed, personnel matters are dealt with appropriately and the school meets safeguarding responsibilities, particularly regarding the safety of pupils and the appointment of staff. Governors make sure they keep up to date through attending appropriate training. The governors are fully aware of the impact of the pupil premium funding and how it has been used to narrow the gap in attainment both within the school and nationally. The school's policy as to how teachers are rewarded for performance is well understood and processes for reviewing the performance of the headteacher are rigorous.

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	116312
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	403294

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	176
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Claire May
Headteacher	Clare Molyneux
Date of previous school inspection	18 June 2008
Telephone number	01962 772381
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