

# Singlewell Primary School

Mackenzie Way, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 5TY

**Inspection dates** 18–19 April 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.

- Pupils' attainment is rising rapidly and is above average in both English and mathematics by the end of Year 6. Many more pupils attain the higher Level 5 than is the case in most schools.
- Children in the Reception class and Key Stage 1 make good progress from their starting points. Standards are high by the end of Year 2.
- Teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. Teachers have clear expectations and are effective in helping pupils improve their work through their marking.
- The behaviour of pupils is good and they feel safe. Pupils enjoy coming to school, as seen in their high attendance. Pupils are eager to learn and work enthusiastically together. There are very positive relationships between pupils and staff.
- The headteacher leads the school effectively. Supported by senior leaders and staff, she has improved systems for checking teaching and learning which have led to improvements in the progress of all groups of pupils.
- The governing body knows the school well and is fully involved in supporting the school. It is active in challenging leaders to improve achievement further.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils are not always reminded to use the skills they have learnt in English when they write in other subjects.
- Teachers do not always adjust planning to ensure pupils of average ability make better than expected progress in reading.
- Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to become more independent in their learning by reflecting on their progress.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons, four of them jointly with senior leaders. In addition, inspectors observed parts of lessons, listened to pupils read and looked at the work in their books.
- Inspectors met with pupils and talked about their work. Meetings were held with middle leaders and three members of the governing body.
- Documentation covering safeguarding, the management of performance of staff, records of behaviour and safety, attendance, the checks of pupils' attainment and progress were reviewed.
- Inspectors took account of 57 responses from parents and carers in the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the school's own survey of parental views. Questionnaires from staff were also considered.

## Inspection team

Howard Jones, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Susan Senior	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, there is one Reception class.
- The proportion of pupils receiving support from the pupil premium funding, which is the extra government support for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and those from service families, is average.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported at school action is above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The majority of pupils come from a White British background. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic heritages and those who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The school exceeds the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision for any of its pupils.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by:
  - ensuring pupils have effective opportunities for the application of the skills they have been learning in English to their writing in other subjects, especially in Key Stage 2
  - planning tasks that increase the pace of learning for pupils of average ability so that more of these pupils achieve the higher Level 5 in reading
  - provide time for pupils to reflect on their work and explain their thinking in order to develop their independent learning skills.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Attainment is markedly above average in both English and mathematics for pupils in Year 6. More able pupils make particularly good progress in English and a number of these pupils also achieve the higher Level 6 in mathematics. While progress overall is good, some pupils of average ability do not make as rapid progress from their different starting points, especially in reading. However, the school is addressing these gaps.
- Children make good progress in Reception. They enter Reception with below expected skills and understanding and leave with expected levels of development so they are well prepared for the next stage in their learning.
- Pupils who took the Year 1 phonics screening check in 2012 achieved above the national average. Pupils in Year 2 achieve especially well in writing and mathematics because of the high expectations of their teacher and the additional support provided by other adults.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make progress similar to that of their peers. Some of these pupils do especially well in English and achieve the higher Level 5. This is because of the personalised guidance and support they receive from both their teachers and other adults which builds confidence and self-esteem. Parents and carers are especially well involved in their child's learning.
- Pupils from different ethnic groups and for whom English is an additional language achieve as well as their peers. The school is well adept at providing for these pupils' needs and pupils talk confidently about their learning and have high expectations.
- Pupils supported through pupil premium make good progress. This is especially so in mathematics, where they make better progress than their peers by as much as two months. Progress in English shows they have been behind by eight months by the end of Key Stage 2. However, gaps are closing rapidly across year groups for these pupils because of the additional support put in place by the school.
- Pupils enjoy expressing their ideas in writing. The school rightly has ensured there is a high profile given to writing, as seen in the many displays of pupils' work in classrooms and corridors. However, while there are a variety of approaches to develop pupils' confidence, they are not always reminded to use the skills they have learnt in English when they write in other subjects. Leaders have made this a priority for development.
- Parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire are highly positive about the achievement of their children.

### The quality of teaching is good

- There is a positive climate for learning in the school. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Teachers are skilled in developing opportunities which serve to sustain pupils' engagement across all subjects.
- Children in Reception engage purposively in activities that lead to a good level of development. For example, adults are skilled in extending children's ideas and their use of language by providing settings in which to think carefully and talk with each other before moving into their chosen activities. Consequently, children's learning experience is deepened, leading to good outcomes.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs do as well as their peers. Provision across the school is strong and teachers and adults use approaches which are effective. For example, one group of pupils in a literacy lesson in Year 6 used key vocabulary and applied their skills with confidence to make good progress because of the extended questioning and encouragement of the adult working with them.

- Pupils appreciate their teachers' written comments about their work. Success is celebrated, while guidance through specific next steps provides pupils with opportunities to respond to the comments, enabling them to make better progress. However, during lessons, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to become more independent in their learning through talking about their work to explain their thinking and how they might improve even further.
- Teachers plan activities which are matched well to the ability levels of pupils. Teachers share the lesson's objectives with pupils and explain what is required for learning to be successful, as seen in a Year 5 literacy lesson. Teachers often reshape lessons in the light of pupils' understanding, for example during a Year 6 mathematics lesson where skilful questioning was used to review learning. However, across the school, tasks are not always adjusted to increase the pace of learning for pupils of average ability so that they may make even better than expected progress, especially in reading.
- Teachers skilfully use activities to structure learning. For example, in a physical education lesson, pupils were challenged to use subject vocabulary and apply their skills through a sequence of collaborative activities. During their assessment of each other's activity, they were challenged to make links to their work in art to further extend their learning experience.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. This ensures the accurate use of subject vocabulary and concepts which builds on prior learning to provide appropriate levels of challenge. For example, in a Year 3 mathematics lesson, pupils made good progress as misinterpretations identified in a previous lesson were addressed and new learning placed within a real-life context.

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

- Pupils are polite and courteous to visitors and show respect for one another. During break times and lunch times, pupils enjoy being together and talk of the many friends they have at school. Older pupils take on responsibilities as play leaders and look after games equipment to ensure younger pupils are occupied.
- Pupils say they feel safe at school and that behaviour is typically good. Pupils have a strong respect for each other's opinions and are accepting of one another's differences. They know about all forms of bullying and are aware of the dangers of cyber bullying and how to keep themselves safe when using the internet. They do not tolerate racism and say that bullying does not occur.
- Behaviour is good during lessons and pupils work collaboratively when their tasks require. There is a purposeful climate for learning across the school and relationships between pupils and teachers are positive. Teachers have high expectations and pupils' engagement is sustained across a range of subjects. Children in Reception confidently talk about their ideas and happily spend time thinking about how to develop their activities to work more independently. However, older pupils do not always have time to reflect on their work in order to develop their independent learning skills.
- Attendance is much higher than average. The school has worked hard to ensure pupils want to come to school and pupils say how much they enjoy their lessons. The online questionnaire and other evidence from parents and carers show they think children are happy and well behaved. The school is very much a part of the local community and partnerships are strong.

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

- The headteacher demonstrates strong yet supportive leadership. Supported by the deputy headteacher and other leaders, there is a clear drive for improvement which has moved the school forward since the previous inspection. Consequently, their focused approach has ensured

the school is now well placed to make further improvements.

- There are strong systems in place to check the school's performance. Action is taken when required but, equally, leaders at all levels carefully monitor the quality of teaching and progress of all groups of pupils. Subject leaders provide good guidance on how to ensure learning is of a good quality, and the progress of pupils is improving consistently across the school as a result.
  - Decisions on teacher career progression and pay are closely linked to improving outcomes for pupils. Teachers are set appropriate targets and effective training is developing their skills and expertise within the classroom. Teachers say they greatly appreciate the support they receive and how well all staff work together and are equally ambitious that pupils do well and enjoy their learning experience.
  - The local authority has provided a light touch approach in its support of the school. This is because the school has demonstrated, since the last inspection, its capacity to improve and to sustain this drive for improved performance.
  - The large majority of parents and carers who responded to Parent View agree the school is well led. A high percentage of parents and carers attend consultation events about their child's progress.
  - Gaps are closing rapidly across year groups for pupils supported through the pupil premium funding. This is because leaders have been successful in providing additional support that has led to improved progress for these pupils.
  - Pupils with special educational needs and those who require additional support do well and have equal opportunity to be as successful as other pupils. This is because provision for their needs is comprehensive and well managed. The involvement of parents and carers means they are fully involved in sharing in the additional approaches in place for their children.
  - The subjects taught provide appropriate coverage for pupils to learn basic skills. Themes help pupils link ideas across subjects and pupils say they especially enjoy their numeracy lessons. There are opportunities for pupils to use their skills in other subjects although they are not always careful to apply the skills they have been learning in English to their writing in other subjects. The school encourages reading and has introduced opportunities for families to share in reading together. However, progress in reading for some pupils is not as strong as it could be and the school is addressing this.
  - The provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is comprehensive. Pupils share in a range of sporting and cultural events and have a keen understanding of how people in other cultures celebrate key events. Pupils are adamant they do not tolerate any form of discrimination and have a developed awareness of how events from the past have influenced communities today. Pupils use their artistic skills to explore ideas and to express themselves creatively.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - Governance is strong. Since the previous inspection, governors have taken very effective actions to develop their role and have equipped themselves to be in a position to engage with the school. They have a clear understanding on the quality of outcomes for pupils and what the school needs to do to build on its successes. They ensure teachers are held to account for the improved progress of pupils and they are actively involved in checking how new teaching methods are impacting on the learning of pupils. Governors are well informed and use their knowledge to hold the headteacher to account. They have a comprehensive understanding of how the extra funding the school receives through the pupil premium is being used. They carefully check how the additional approaches this has provided have improved the achievement for these pupils. The budget is overseen effectively and safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements so that pupils are kept safe.
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## 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>	118479
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	405773

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>	209
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Paul Fenning
<b>Headteacher</b>	Michelle Brown
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14–15 March 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01474 569859
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