

# Hamstreet Primary School

Hamstreet, Ashford, Kent, TN26 2EA

**Inspection dates** 2–3 May 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	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.

- Since the previous inspection senior leaders, staff and governors have worked together determinedly to bring about marked improvements to the quality of teaching and the rate at which pupils learn.
- Most teaching is good. It is sometimes outstanding in English and mathematics, especially in Years 2 and 6.
- Teachers have high expectations of what their pupils can achieve. They inspire them to learn through imaginative and creative activities. The use of accurate assessments means tasks are pitched at the right level for pupils' abilities, especially for the more able.
- Attainment in English and mathematics in the current Year 6 is above that found in most schools. This is a noteworthy improvement over previous years.
- Pupils behave well, attend often, and feel safe in school. They are enthusiastic about learning. Work in their books reflects a high standard of presentation and a good style of handwriting.
- An intensive training programme has resulted in better teaching, especially in mathematics. It has developed the skills of governors and subject leaders very effectively.
- Pupils' progress is tracked carefully and staff are held fully to account for their pupils' achievements. All are clear about the school's strengths and what it needs to do to improve.
- The close partnership with three other schools and the appointment of an assistant headteacher shared between these schools have accelerated the pace of improvement.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The expertise of several exceptionally skilled teachers is not yet shared sufficiently across the school. While some teaching assistants are very knowledgeable about the best ways to help pupils learn, this is not always the case.
- Teachers mark pupils' work frequently. They do not always allow time for pupils to discuss ways to bring about further improvement.
- Children in the Reception classes do not have enough opportunities to develop their own ideas and solve problems when playing outside.
- Modern technology equipment is not used fully to aid learning across a range of subjects.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed substantial parts of 20 lessons and made four brief visits to observe pupils working in small groups or individually with an adult outside of classrooms. During some observations inspectors were accompanied by the headteacher.
- Samples of pupils' work in mathematics and literacy were scrutinised.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 read to inspectors. Pupils representing other year groups shared their views about the school. Their behaviour was observed in lessons, at lunchtime and at playtimes.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and with staff with responsibility for English, mathematics, the Reception classes, disabled pupils, and those with special educational needs. Inspectors also met with two headteachers and the assistant headteacher from the Ashford Collaborative Enterprise, representatives of the governing body and local authority.
- The responses of 68 parents who completed the online survey, Parent View, and those who spoke to inspectors were taken into account.
- Documents reviewed included the school's improvement plan, the summary of the school's checks on how well it is doing, arrangements for safeguarding, records of pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance, and minutes of governing body meetings and notes of their visits to the school. Reports written by local authority representatives following their visits to the school to check improvements were considered.

## Inspection team

Kath Beck, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Patricia MacLachlan	Additional Inspector
Barbara Saltmarsh	Additional Inspector

## Full report

*In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.*

### Information about this school

- This school is larger than most primary schools. About one fifth of pupils live in outlying villages and come to school by bus.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium (the additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked-after children and those with a parent or carer in the armed forces) is below average. There are currently no looked-after or service family children in the school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above that found in most schools. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below that found in most schools.
- The school is one of four schools that make up the Ashford Collaborative Enterprise. These schools employ an assistant headteacher whose responsibilities include training, raising the quality of teaching, and strengthening the skills of leaders and managers at all levels.
- A privately run nursery shares the same site. It is inspected separately and the report can be found on the Ofsted website.
- At the time of the previous inspection, leadership and management and the pace of school improvement were found to require significant improvement. Leaders and managers were asked to set higher expectations for pupils' achievements, to hold staff to account for pupils' progress, and check that the action taken to resolve matters was having a positive impact.

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

- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching by making sure that:
  - all staff benefit from their exceptionally skilled colleagues and become even better in helping pupils to learn as much as they can
  - all teaching assistants have the skills to offer the best possible support to the pupils they are working with
  - pupils have time to discuss and correct mistakes in their work, and share their ambitions for further improvement.
- Improve the programme of activities in the Reception classes by putting into practice the plans to develop the outside play area to challenge children to use their critical thinking skills to develop their own ideas to solve problems.
- Review the range of the school's equipment for modern technology and plan for its fuller use across other a range of subjects.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- There have been marked improvements in pupils' achievements in English and mathematics since the previous inspection. Many more pupils now in Years 2 and 6 are on course to reach the levels that are expected, or higher than expected, for their age group. The reasons for this rapid rise include:
  - improvements in the quality of teaching so that progress is good in all year groups
  - an increase in the level of challenge in pupils' work, especially for the more able
  - frequent checks on pupils' progress by subject and senior leaders
  - pupils' good attitudes to learning.
- There has been a steady rise in pupils' achievements in English over the last three years. Their writing is lively and imaginative. From a young age they develop a good style of handwriting and are mostly accurate in their use of spelling and grammar. In Key Stage 1, pupils now have a good grasp of the sounds letters make and use this to help them read unfamiliar words. Older pupils enjoy a good range of high-quality children's literature.
- Pupils' achievements in mathematics throughout the school are much higher this year because they learn a variety of mental methods to calculate accurately. Their good knowledge of number bonds and multiplication tables helps them to work quickly. Work in pupils' books shows their confidence in selecting appropriate mathematical strategies to solve everyday problems.
- From their varied starting points, children in the Reception classes make good progress, especially in learning to read, to write and to count in sequence and carry out simple calculations. There are not sufficient opportunities for them to develop their own ideas and to think critically when problem solving in activities in the outside area.
- Staff ensure that all pupils have an equal chance to succeed. The needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are met in small groups and in lessons. In 2012 those supported at school action did much better than their peers nationally. An after-school homework club ensures that all pupils have access to the help and resources they need to complete their tasks.
- In 2012, pupils for whom the school receives additional funding achieved as well as their classmates in reading and mathematics, but were one term and a half behind in writing, as measured by their average point scores. This is a much narrower gap than found nationally.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is mostly good, and in Years 2 and 6 it is outstanding in English and mathematics.
- Detailed lesson plans take into account what pupils have learned before so that work is pitched at the right level for their abilities. These plans are evaluated each day so that over time, pupils acquire the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to achieve well.
- As far as possible, reading, writing and mathematics skills are planned into different subjects. Pupils in Year 5 worked on a travel project calculating the distances between many different places in the world. They researched information about countries that interested them and recorded the information confidently in their 'travel log'.
- Pupils learn quickly when they experience outstanding teaching. It is characterised by:
  - the use of a wide range of innovative methods that inspire and capture their enthusiasm and help them to remember what they have learned. For example in Year 6, pupils were learning how to create 'tension' in their stories. Following a discussion about how an author does this, pupils listened to atmospheric music and drew a picture of the scene they wished to include. This led to exceptional levels of concentration and vivid, imaginative writing
  - excellent subject knowledge that is shared extremely well with pupils
  - high expectations of what pupils know and can do, and setting work that challenges them to

- achieve as well as they can
- first-rate resources that allow pupils to apply their developing reading, writing and mathematical skills independently
- high-quality questioning and conversations with pupils that help them to think through their ideas and which push their learning along quickly.
- Staff make effective use of the interactive whiteboard to set out what pupils are to learn, and how they will know they have been successful. They develop pupils' understanding, for example, by showing them how to multiply and divide numbers easily by moving objects around the screen. In some lessons staff use other forms of modern technology to aid learning, but it is not often used across a range of subjects.
- In the Reception classes many activities in the classroom and out in the community develop children's confidence in reading, writing and mathematics well. Activities that pupils can do on their own are engaging, but those outside do not always offer them the chance to develop their critical thinking and explore their own ideas.
- Most teaching assistants offer good levels of support, especially to pupils with particular needs, throughout lessons and in small groups outside of the classroom. On occasion, however, when they are showing pupils what to do, they do not model the correct style of handwriting or demonstrate mathematical ideas and numbers correctly.
- Staff assess pupils' progress frequently. Work is marked regularly and clear pointers are given about what they have done well and what needs to be improved. Some give pupils time to correct their mistakes and have a discussion with them to identify the challenges needed to improve their work. Where this does not occur, the rate of pupils' progress is hindered.
- Pupils are encouraged to think about how they can improve their work. In some classes they assess the work of their friends and suggest ideas for how they too could improve. They are also motivated to do well by agreeing with their teachers the targets they need to meet to reach higher levels of attainment, and their deadlines.
- Homework in reading, spelling and mathematics, and projects that link other subjects together in a practical way, add to what pupils have been learning in school. These too make important contributions to pupils' increased rate of learning.

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

- Parents, staff, governors and pupils are right to say that behaviour is typically good. An effective behaviour management system that rewards the good behaviour of all pupils has had a marked positive impact on the behaviour of those with particular behavioural needs.
- Pupils are polite, well mannered and courteous to adults and to one another. They collaborate well when working in small groups. They enjoy sharing their ideas before writing them down and willingly help each other if they get stuck when solving a mathematics problem.
- Behaviour during breaks from lessons and at lunchtime is good. Pupils who are 'Playground Champions' help others of all ages to play happily together.
- Most pupils participate fully in lessons, listening carefully and answering their teachers' questions sensibly. They concentrate and cover a great deal of work in the time set. Many take pride in presenting their work neatly and to a high standard. This is a substantial improvement since the previous inspection.
- Pupils are safe in school. They are taught about different kinds of bullying and that the school does not tolerate any form of discrimination. They know that they can ask any member of staff for assistance if they are worried. The family liaison officer works closely with some families and their children to help them overcome anxieties that hinder learning.
- Attendance is above average. Pupils, including those who live some distance away, arrive on time so that lessons can start promptly.

**The leadership and management are good**

- Senior leaders, staff and governors responded extremely well to the challenges set at the time of the previous inspection. They also rose to the challenges set by the local authority and by Ofsted in other monitoring visits in their determination to improve. The rate at which pupils make progress and their levels of attainment are rising rapidly.
- Strong teamwork and high-quality training have raised the ambitions of staff and pupils about what can be achieved. Staff have high expectations of their pupils, and relish the challenge for the school to become outstanding.
- An intensive training programme and a fair system for accountability and pay rewards mean that teaching is now good and sometimes outstanding. Senior leaders check the quality of teaching frequently for its impact on pupils' learning. Staff receive coaching and guidance, but not all have benefitted fully from the expertise of exceptionally skilled staff in school.
- Subject leaders take full responsibility for achievement in their subjects. Each half term they check pupils' progress in every class. They review what pupils have learned and the quality of work in their books. Targets for improvement are set and robustly followed up quickly to check they have been met.
- The school's procedures for checking how well it is doing are accurate and allow clear priorities for improvement to be identified. These are usefully based on a review of school and national data, and the views of parents, staff, pupils, governors and the local authority. An evaluation of pupils' achievements in mathematics led to the introduction of innovative approaches to teaching the subject. Consequently, pupils are achieving at a faster rate and are becoming confident mathematicians.
- A precise school development plan is driving improvements strongly. Everyone knows what needs to be done, by when and how the improvements are making a difference to pupils' progress. Recently revised policies to ensure that pupils make good progress in reading and writing are well thought out.
- The variety of taught activities throughout the school makes learning lively and engaging. In the words of one pupil, it is 'irresistible'. It promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. It also inspires pupils to do well, especially in English and mathematics.
- The school has a range of modern technology that supports pupils' learning, but it is not used fully. Opportunities are missed to develop pupils' skills further across a range of subjects.
- In the Reception classes the outside area is part of the playground. Current playtime arrangements and use of space outside limit the opportunities for staff to challenge the youngest children to solve problems and think through their own ideas.
- The strong partnership with three other schools and the shared appointment of an assistant headteacher have strengthened the leadership team. Staff in these schools contribute their expertise in raising the quality of leadership, management and teaching and in training. This has resulted in high levels of confidence to try new ideas and has accelerated the pace at which the school is improving.
- The partnership with parents is also strong. They support their children with homework, and visit the school to help improve pupils' skills in reading. Through the Parents' Council they liaise closely with the governing body, identifying strengths and areas for improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Through training, governors have developed the knowledge and skills they need to be fully effective in asking challenging questions and holding the school to account. They are now skilled in the interpretation of national and school data. They make visits to check the progress and impact of developments, outlined in the school improvement plan, on pupils' achievements. Governors hold regular meetings with subject leaders. Some have roles as data, English or mathematics 'champions'. This gives them an accurate picture of the important improvements made to the quality of teaching, and in leadership and management, over the past 16 months.
  - Governors monitor the budget carefully. They know how additional funding is spent and that it is having a positive impact on the progress of the pupils involved. A family liaison officer and

the Parents' Council led by parent governors are strengthening the school's partnership with parents.

- Governors are involved appropriately in pay and review systems that are linked to the quality of teaching and pupils' progress.
- Arrangements to safeguard pupils meet requirements. Governors make sure that the building is maintained to a high standard and that displays are attractive, valuing pupils' efforts.

## 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>	118378
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	399697

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>	315
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sue Davison
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jane Macey
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12–13 January 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01233 732577
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