

Heycroft Primary School

Benvenue Avenue, Eastwood, Leigh-on-Sea, SS9 5SJ

Inspection dates 12–13 June 2013

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		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Teachers know their pupils well and teaching is consistently good or better. Teachers help pupils to think for themselves, so that they make good progress.
- Pupils have good attitudes to their work and enjoy the activities that teachers prepare for them.
- Despite a dip in attainment in 2012, standards have improved strongly and pupils make good progress.
- Around the school, pupils are polite to one another, and to teachers and other adults.
- Additional government support (the pupil premium) is well used to help eligible pupils to make good progress.
- Pupils take part in a key skills lesson each morning to make sure that their literacy and mathematical skills are good. They apply their skills well in other lessons.
- Pupils are proud of the opportunities they have to take responsibility, and contribute well to the progress of the school.
- Parents greatly appreciate what the school does for their children, and especially in helping them to grow into confident young people who relate well to others.
- Governors understand the work of the school first hand, and support the headteacher and senior staff well. The school is well led and managed.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always give the most able pupils work that is sufficiently challenging for them, to help them to progress as well as they could.
- Teachers do not always give pupils enough opportunity to respond to their comments to help them to improve after marking their work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a total of 24 lessons, and all teachers who were available during the inspection were seen. Five observations were conducted as joint observations with senior members of staff. Inspectors also saw several smaller groups where pupils were either being supported or learning the key skills in reading and mathematics.
- Inspectors looked at data on pupils' progress up to the summer of 2012, and the school's own data moderated against national standards, for 2012-13. They made comparisons with national data, looked at progress in pupils' books, and talked to pupils about their progress.
- Inspectors held discussions with the Chair of Governors, the headteacher and senior leaders, and local authority representatives. They also spoke with subject coordinators, and those responsible for pupils' welfare.
- Inspectors talked to pupils about their work in lessons, and with members of the student council.
- Inspectors spoke with parents when they brought their children to school, and took account of the 132 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and staff questionnaires.
- Inspectors looked at information provided by the school, including its self-evaluation and policy documentation, minutes of meetings, records of behaviour and attendance, and data relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

David Lewis, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Philip Scull

Additional Inspector

Christine Newell

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average sized school. There are more boys than girls in most classes, and sometimes nearly twice as many. Almost all the pupils are White British and very few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is below average, and the proportion who are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- There is a very small number of pupils looked after by the local authority, and about one pupil in twelve, who is in danger of not doing well, receive additional support funded by the pupil premium. This is additional government funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care and those with a parent in the armed services.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
 - developing teachers' use of feedback so that pupils know what the next steps in their learning will be, and allowing them more time to respond to teachers' comments
 - designing tasks that are more challenging for the most able pupils, so that they learn to think for themselves more effectively and make even better progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- About four in every five pupils enters the school with attainment that is broadly as expected for their age. By the time they enter the Year 1 class, the proportion whose attainment is as expected has increased. Not only is this good progress, but the trend in the number of pupils reaching the attainment expected for their age has been increasing steadily over the last three years, and their writing and number skills are above average.
- Pupils in Key Stage 1 continue to make good progress. Their attainment is above average in reading and mathematics, and significantly above average in writing. The school tracks the progress of its pupils well, and moderates the outcomes well against other schools, and against national standards. Up to date tracking data show that results in 2013 are on track to show improvements over 2012 with both mathematics and writing skills above average.
- By the end of Year 6 in 2012, the number of pupils gaining Level 4 in English and mathematics was just above average with a cohort in which nearly a quarter had special educational needs. The number reaching Level 5 for this group was below average.
- This issue has been robustly addressed by the school, and results of assessments linked to national standards for the current Year 6 indicate that the proportion of pupils reaching Level 5 or above in 2013 will almost double, and will no longer be below average.
- Evidence from lesson observations and from a scrutiny of books across all year groups, shows that pupils in Years 5 and 6 are already working at levels well above those indicated by data from 2012 and both attainment and progress are strongly improving. Even the lower attaining pupils in Year 6 are now enthusiastic readers, for example, and in discussion were able to show good understanding of what they have read, and to identify their favourite authors.
- In discussion with parents when they brought their children to school, there was a consistent view that the attainment of pupils has improved considerably over the last few years, and that parents are satisfied that their children are well supported.
- Those pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium were typically working about four to six months behind their peers at the start of the academic year. The support provided is making a good contribution to their progress, however, and the gap is now narrowing, as they progress more rapidly than their peers.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is almost always good or better with about a quarter of lessons judged to be outstanding. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure, and they know how to communicate well with children so that they learn well. Teachers constantly check their pupils' progress.
- In the best teaching, pupils work together in groups to share ideas when solving problems, and in doing so gain in independence and provide support for one another. For example, in an excellent Year 6 lesson, a group of able pupils worked with the company reports of football clubs to decide which they should invest in, while the rest of the class worked on a market research activity, gathering and analysing information.
- In a good lesson in the Reception class, pupils chose their own learning activities. They engaged

in role play, for example, working together to develop their ability to communicate with one another effectively, to write lists, and take telephone messages. They were able to link letters of the alphabet to the corresponding sounds, developed their vocabulary, and were able to blend sounds for reading and writing.

- The school focuses on the key skills of literacy and numeracy each morning, with pupils working in small groups, each with adult support. They learn well, and enjoy their achievement.
- The school makes use of visiting teachers to provide pupils with additional spiritual and cultural experiences. In a Year 3 workshop leading up to a local art exhibition, for example, they produced some beautiful work by printing on muslin. Spiritual development was seen in a religious education lesson with Year 3, who reflected on the place of prayer in different religions.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, and nearly always add comments to help pupils to improve. However, these comments do not always tell pupils how to follow them up. Discussion with pupils suggests that they often have limited opportunities to act upon them.
- Assessments are used well to identify where pupils are in danger of falling behind, and to allocate additional support to them. Learning in these groups is consistently good, and enables pupils in them to make progress that is often better than that of their classmates.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive, both in lessons and around the school. In situations when they are responsible for their own behaviour, such as when moving between areas of the school, they move quietly, and are sensitive to the needs of others.
- They look after one another well, and pupils who are new to the school are well looked after. In good weather, pupils sit in the playground chatting amicably to their classmates while they have their lunch. Some pupils are proud to take on the responsibility of being playground buddies.
- In lessons, pupils are keen to learn, and their behaviour is appropriate for their age. They are attentive, and contribute well in discussions. They behave well in assembly.
- Pupils say that poor behaviour very occasionally prevents them learning as well as they could, but that teachers quickly intervene when necessary. They behave just as well with support staff and supply teachers as they do with their class teachers.
- In discussion, pupils showed a maturity beyond their age, and showed an excellent respect for others and the conventions of civilised behaviour. As one pupil said, in a lesson to design a mathematics challenge: 'That could not happen, because it would be cheating'.
- The school is passionate about the need to keep its pupils safe. Pupils are very aware of this concern for their well-being, and greatly appreciate the way the school helps them to identify potentially unsafe situations.
- Pupils are very tolerant of the views of others, and bullying is extremely rare and effectively dealt with. Pupils are aware of the needs of others, and contribute to the school's procedures as members of the behaviour and safety sub-committee of the student council. The school does not tolerate inappropriate language of any kind.
- Parent View, shows that the great majority of parents believe that their children are happy and

feel safe at the school. No parents disagreed that the school makes sure that its pupils are well behaved, and 98 per cent would recommend the school to other parents.

- The school has good procedures to encourage good attendance, which has improved consistently, and is now above average. The number of pupils who are persistently absent is close to the national average. There have been no exclusions in the past year.

The leadership and management are good

- Discussion with parents when they bring their children to school shows that nearly all agree that the school is well led and managed. This is confirmed by Parent View in which 97 per cent of parents agree or strongly agree the leadership and management are good.
- Governors, the headteacher and senior staff have a highly professional approach to the management of the school in which the welfare of pupils is paramount. Evaluation of pupils' progress is outstanding, and the schools overall self evaluation is rigorous and comprehensive.
- Monitoring of teaching is regular, and teachers are held to account for the progress of their pupils, including those with disabilities or special educational needs. Pupils and their parents are very satisfied with the education provided by the school.
- In this highly professional environment, pupils, parents and staff are highly committed to the vision and ambition of leaders, managers and governors. In particular, the school manages its links with parents well.
- The curriculum caters for the needs of all pupils, including those who have disabilities or special educational needs, and is effectively planned and taught. However, just occasionally the challenge for the most able does not enable them to progress as much as they could.
- A wide range of extra curricular activities, including residential visits to London and abroad, enhances pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural experiences; and helps to prepare pupils for life in modern democratic Britain, and the global society.
- The school's drive for improvement has led to good progress over the last three years, especially for pupils with special educational needs, and those eligible for support through the pupil premium. The school is well placed to bring about further improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is fully committed to the school's vision for its pupils' success, and governors understand their role in holding the school to account. They understand their responsibilities and have received training in the use of data. They work closely with senior staff and other leaders and managers to ensure that they have first hand knowledge of the school's work. They ensure that the headteacher and his staff are held to account for the success of the school, and make sure that performance management is managed effectively. Performance management of staff is linked to pupils' progress and reflected in their remuneration. The school's finances are managed effectively, including pupil premium funding. All statutory requirements for child protection and safeguarding of pupils are met.

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	114789
Local authority	Southend-on-Sea
Inspection number	401464

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	415
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kevin Malone
Headteacher	Andrew Palmer
Date of previous school inspection	21–22 June 2010
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