

# Trottiscliffe CofE Voluntary Controlled Primary School

School Lane, Trottiscliffe, West Malling, Kent, ME19 2BQ

**Inspection dates** 11–12 June 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		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Most leave Year 6 having attained at least the level expected for their age. A steadily growing proportion of pupils is on track to reach higher levels of attainment.
- Pupils are making faster progress than in the past because teachers are better at using assessment information to plan work that meets the needs of most pupils.
- The headteacher has focused successfully on improving the quality of teaching. Monitoring information clearly identifies further areas for improvement and there is a determined drive to make all teaching outstanding.
- All pupils have outstanding attitudes to learning and their resilience and perseverance when tackling their work are impressive. They get along with each other very well and have an excellent relationship with the adults who support them.
- The highly determined governing body has played a significant role in securing the future of the school and in supporting the headteacher to implement a rigorous programme of checking teachers' performance. The governors are committed to ensuring the school continues to improve.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding. Not all teachers tell pupils exactly what they need to do next when marking their books. Time given for pupils to respond to the marking is not frequent enough. As a result, progress for some pupils is not rapid enough.
- Some teachers wait too long before stepping in and offering support for pupils who are stuck. As a result, learning is not always moved forward quickly.
- Planning is not detailed enough to ensure all pupils make as much progress as they can.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed parts of eight lessons across all four classes. All observations were held jointly with the headteacher. She also observed an assembly and undertook other short visits to classrooms to look at learning.
- The inspector talked informally with pupils around the school and formally with the worship committee drawn from all year groups. She examined pupils' books and listened to some pupils read.
- The inspector spoke with the headteacher, leaders of literacy and mathematics, the special educational needs coordinator, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the 18 responses from parents to the on-line survey (Parent View) and the 11 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- She observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents including records of behaviour and bullying, development plans, records of visits from external consultants, records of monitoring of the quality of teaching and minutes of governing body meetings. She also analysed the school's information on standards and the progress of pupils currently at school and for the past three years.

## Inspection team

Penny Spencer, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. All pupils are taught in mixed ages classes, with the exception of Year 2 who are taught individually for part of the week.
- Most pupils are White British.
- There are no pupils currently in school who are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides extra funds for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, who are looked after by the local authority or whose parents serve in the armed forces.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or those with special educational needs, supported at school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the current government floor standard which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the previous inspection there has been a number of changes of staff at senior level. A new headteacher took up her post in January 2013.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so much is outstanding and so further raise achievement, by making sure:
  - tasks match individual pupils' needs even more precisely to enable pupils to make even better progress
  - marking always includes the next steps pupils should make to improve their work and time given for pupils to respond to this feedback is more regular in all classes
  - teachers do not wait too long before intervening, supporting and adapting the task for pupils who may be stuck and whose progress may be slowing down.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the Reception class with skills and abilities that are broadly typical for their age. However, the range in the small intakes is often wide. Improved provision in the Reception and Year 1 class ensures all pupils make good progress from their starting points. Current assessments show children in the Reception class are achieving well in all areas of learning, especially in reading, writing and mathematics. A group of children were observed independently making signs for their 'clubhouse' that were of a high standard in both spelling and presentation.
- All pupils are currently making good progress across the school. Pupils in Years 1 to 4 are now making accelerated progress from their starting points.
- Standards are rising, and are higher now in Year 6 than in 2012, as improving rates of progress lead to higher levels of attainment. This is especially so in writing which has been a focus for whole school improvement and which now matches reading and mathematics.
- Pupils who read to the inspector showed a real love of reading and were keen readers at home as well as in school. The teaching of phonics (linking letters to the sounds they make) is effective and pupils used these skills well to read unfamiliar words. Older readers spoke confidently about their chosen books and read with fluency and expression.
- In mathematics, pupils do well because teaching uses investigative methods where possible, underpinned by a strong emphasis on developing the basic skills. This was observed during a lesson for the older pupils where they were successfully using their knowledge of fractions and decimals to solve word puzzles.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress and achieve as well other pupils because lessons are planned for different ranges of ability. This reflects the school's successful promotion of equal opportunities. However, progress is not outstanding because there are some occasions when work and support are not precisely matched to individual needs.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently good and teachers are always striving to improve. They plan lessons that excite the pupils and there is a strong focus on investigative approaches to learning in all lessons.
- Teaching in the Reception and Year 1 class is effective and the team of adults who work in this area has a deep understanding of their pupils' abilities. Good use is made of both indoor and outdoor spaces with pupils confidently moving from one area to another to undertake their tasks. Very good questioning techniques and high expectations for pupils to be able to discuss their learning ensure teachers accurately assess pupils' understanding throughout the day.
- All teachers mark pupils' books regularly and in depth so pupils know exactly what they have done well. However, some teachers do not always tell pupils what they need to do next to make their work better. Opportunities for pupils to respond to feedback are too varied and progress slows for some pupils as a result. In the best examples of marking there is an outstanding dialogue between pupils and the teacher and clear evidence of accelerated progress.
- Scrutiny of pupils' books shows how teaching has improved over time, with evidence of increased progress for pupils. Writing has been a main area for improvement, especially focusing on phonics to support better spelling, correct grammar usage and the introduction of a standardised style of handwriting. The impact in a relatively short period of time is impressive, with even the youngest pupils using joined up handwriting and being increasingly accurate with full stops.
- Assessment information on progress and standards is used effectively by teachers to plan work that caters for groups of pupils of different abilities. However, some pupils, especially disabled pupils and those with special educational needs or those who find learning easy, do not neatly fit

into these groups and so do not always make the progress they might if work was planned more precisely to take account of individual needs.

- Teaching assistants are used very effectively to support pupils in the classroom. Those who work specifically with individual pupils are skilled in teaching specific programmes of physical development or individual learning sessions that support good progress.

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

- Pupils enjoy coming to school and, during discussions with the inspector, could find nothing they wanted to change. They love being part of a small community where everyone knows each other. As one pupil commented, 'I can make really good friends here because we all get on.' As a result, attendance is above average.
- Parents who responded to Parent View all felt their children were happy and kept safe at school.
- Pupils' attitudes are excellent and teachers support this by creating a positive climate for learning. Clear rules, many made in conjunction with the pupils, coupled with very high expectations for good behaviour, mean disruptions to learning are extremely rare.
- Pupils are fully aware of different types of bullying, including cyber bullying, and were adamant that bullying does not happen. They said if anyone did fall out with their friends adults would quickly sort it out.
- Records kept by the school support pupils' and parents' positive views and show very few instances of poor behaviour. Should any occur they are recorded fully and all parties, including parents, are kept fully informed of any consequences.
- The close-knit nature of the school creates many opportunities for pupils to work together as a team and pupils love working alongside each other to solve problems and investigations. Older children support younger pupils routinely in the playground, especially when playing in the wooded area. The worship committee, drawn from all classes, is proud to be involved in taking assemblies and in promoting the school's ethos of equality and fairness to others.

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

- The headteacher very successfully demonstrates determination to make the school an outstanding place for children to learn. She has the full support of the staff and the governing body. She recognises that leadership and management are not yet outstanding because they have not ensured that enough teaching is outstanding.
- Everyone understands exactly what needs to be done to make the school even more effective, because the headteacher has communicated her accurate self-evaluation and detailed development plans successfully to the whole community.
- Staff development is based securely on the needs of the school, particularly raising achievement further. Strong partnership with a local cluster of schools is supporting this development with opportunities to observe best practice and moderate pupils' work samples.
- Opportunities for subject leaders to attend nationally recognised courses in leadership are having a positive impact on their ability to support the headteacher in driving up standards.
- Teachers' salaries are closely related to their performance, which is rigorously monitored by the headteacher.
- The curriculum meets the needs of all pupils, but is being reviewed to include more opportunities for pupils to have first-hand experiences of life outside the rural location in which most of them live.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strongly supported through the school's approach to collaborative learning, the regular opportunities for pupils to reflect during daily assemblies and an increasing opportunity to visit places of interest in areas with wider and

more varied cultural diversity.

■ Safeguarding meets statutory requirements.

■ The local authority offers an increasingly light touch to this good school.

■ **The governance of the school:**

– Governors are experienced and committed to improving the school further. They benefit from training that improves their understanding of how to interpret assessment information and ensure safeguarding policies are secure, which means they are well placed to challenge the leaders and hold them to account for the school's performance. Governors understand the school's performance data and how the school compares with other similar schools. They have a good understanding of the quality of teaching. They keep a careful check on how teachers' pay and promotion are closely linked to standards. Governors ensure money is spent wisely. This reflects their determination to tackle discrimination and ensure that all pupils will have equal opportunities to succeed. There is a strong focus on ensuring the best staff possible are employed to support the drive for excellence.

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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>	118630
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	401772

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>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	70
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Anita Parkins
<b>Headteacher</b>	Elizabeth Stevens
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16–17 September 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01732 822803
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