

Queen's Hill Primary School and Nursery

Fieldfare Way, Queen's Hills, Costessey, NR8 5AZ

Inspection dates 20–21 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Too few pupils are reaching the expected levels for their age by the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In Years 3, 4, 5 and 6, there are not enough pupils who are making better than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In a small number of lessons, pupils do not move quickly enough to work by themselves because the teacher talks for too long.
- In mathematics lessons, teachers do not always ensure that pupils tackle new problems once they have learnt a new skill; nor do they check often enough that pupils have fully understood what they are doing.
- By the end of Year 2, pupils are not making as much progress as they could in writing.
- Actions taken by the school to improve progress of all pupils, although appropriate and beginning to make a difference, have not yet led to the rapid improvements which the school is very keen to achieve.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to practice their writing in subjects other than English.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school.
- Staff welcome school improvement advice and support from outside of the school, including from the local authority.
- Governors are effective in supporting and challenging school leaders to improve the school.
- The headteacher has been effective in improving teaching, and this has led to higher standards and faster rates of progress across the school. The headteacher knows there is more to do and has planned appropriately to make this happen.
- Marking and feedback is used very effectively to help pupils know what to do to improve their work and achieve higher levels.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 lessons and also visited classrooms for short periods. Four lesson observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with three members of the governing body, representatives from the local authority, as well as with senior and subject leaders.
- Inspectors talked to parents, received several letters from parents and took into account the 84 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and also talked to pupils about their views of the school.
- The school's information about how well pupils are achieving was examined and inspectors looked at a range of children's work in their exercise books.
- Documents were read and evaluated, including school improvement plans, minutes of governing body meetings, performance management statements, and teaching and learning monitoring records.

Inspection team

Robin Taverner, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Alan Jarvis

Additional Inspector

Christina Gooday

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Queen's Hill Primary is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- Queen's Hill Primary is a rapidly expanding school which serves a new and growing housing estate. The school is radically different to how it was at the last inspection. It has more than doubled in size and very few pupils have been at the school for the whole of their primary schooling.
- A much larger proportion of pupils than average join the school at times other than the beginning of the Reception Year and leave the school at times other than the end of Year 6.
- A range of nationalities are represented in the school but most pupils come from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is above average. This is additional funding for children looked after by the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those with a parent in the armed forces.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action, school action plus or with a statement, is higher than the national average. In last year's Year 6, the proportion of pupils who had special educational needs was well above the national average. The same is true of the current Year 6.
- In 2012, the school did not meet the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of teaching which is good or better in order to raise achievement in English and mathematics by:
 - moving pupils on to the next challenge in lessons as soon as they understand the skill that is being taught
 - ensuring that pupils are engaged in their learning at all times and do not have to sit for too long listening to the teacher
 - checking carefully and often in lessons for errors in pupils' work so that any misunderstandings can be corrected quickly.
- Provide pupils in all years, including Reception, with more opportunities to practise their writing and mathematical skills across all subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- In 2012, the standards reached by pupils at the end of Year 2 were average in reading and mathematics but below average in writing. However, the standards in reading, writing and mathematics reached by the end of Year 2 have nonetheless improved steadily over the last three years and are on track to improve again this year.
- The large majority of children start in the Nursery with skills and knowledge which are below those typically expected for their age. Children make good progress during their time in the Nursery and Reception classes. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make good progress in reading and mathematics. Progress is improving in writing but still lags behind progress in reading.
- The standards achieved at the end of Year 6 in 2012 were well below average in English and mathematics. A very high percentage of these pupils were disabled pupils or those who have special educational needs. Those who were not disabled or who have special educational needs achieved higher standards than the national average for all children.
- In English and mathematics in 2012, the proportion of pupils who made expected progress was average and an improvement on 2011. In reading, writing and mathematics, too few pupils made better than expected progress by the end of Year 6.
- Due to the recent improvements in methods of teaching reading, writing and mathematics, progress is improving in these subjects in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. As a result, pupils are achieving higher standards in these year groups. However, not enough pupils are making better than expected progress.
- In 2012, pupils who receive support through pupil premium funding were around six months behind their classmates in English and nearly a year behind in mathematics. Pupil premium funding is spent appropriately, however, and, because of this, the school has been successful in improving rates of progress for these pupils. For example, a specialist teacher of mathematics is employed to teach pupils on a one-to-one basis, and this is leading to rapid increases in their rates of progress.
- The progress made by disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs in 2012 compared well with national averages in English but not as well in mathematics. However, these pupils are taught well and make good progress in lessons and special groups set up to boost their progress. As a result, rates of progress for these pupils are improving.
- Pupils who join the school at other times than normal settle quickly. Teachers immediately find out the levels at which the pupils are working to make sure that tasks set build upon their knowledge and skills. As a result, these pupils make good progress.
- Pupils of all abilities made good progress in the large majority of lessons observed during the inspection.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because, over time, it has not led to enough pupils making better than expected progress across the school.

- On a small number of occasions, pupils sit for too long listening to the teacher and not enough time is given to the pupils to complete their tasks. Teachers do not always notice that pupils are making errors and are not quick enough to show the pupils how to correct their work.
- In order to raise achievement in reading and writing, the school is using a new resource which helps pupils of all abilities to improve their knowledge of phonics (the sounds that letters make), improve their spelling skills and teaches pupils how to understand and answer questions about passages of writing.
- Many lessons are made interesting and exciting for pupils. In one lesson, for example, Year 1 and 2 pupils were learning how to find fractions of numbers. They collected leaves, twigs and other items from the school gardens to count and organise in groups before dividing them into equal parts. Pupils enthusiastically recorded their findings using chalk on the patio area. In another lesson for children in the Reception class, a Bearded Dragon provided much excitement and proved to be a fascinating subject for the children to write about.
- Marking and feedback is a particular strength. Teachers' marking in exercise books shows pupils what they need to do to improve and then time is given in lessons for this to happen. This is helping to improve pupils' rates of progress.
- Teaching assistants provide good support to those pupils who require extra help with their learning. They explain tasks clearly and ask searching questions to make pupils think carefully about their work.
- Teaching observed during the inspection was very largely good. School leaders have been very effective over the last two years in improving classroom practice and introducing resources and methods of teaching which are leading to improving rates of progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In the large majority of lessons seen, work set made good use of knowledge and skills taught previously and also encouraged pupils to practise new skills. Pupils are shown how to make good progress and challenges are provided for all children according to their abilities.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well in lessons. They work well together when asked to discuss their work or complete a shared task.
- Pupils are keen to learn and enjoy the interesting topics which teachers introduce to them.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They care for the school building and grounds and look after their exercise books so that they remain in good condition. Pupils are invited to apply to be school pupil ambassadors. These school ambassadors are keen to show visitors the good work of the school.
- The school teaches pupils how to stay safe. In particular, pupils have a good understanding of the dangers of the internet and online bullying.
- Pupils are not worried about bullying and are confident that, should it occur, the school staff will help to sort it out quickly.

- The rate of absence is average. The school uses a range of methods to encourage regular attendance and has been effective in reducing the extent of persistent absence.
- The school manages the occasional incidents of poor behaviour well and makes sure that pupils do not stop each other from learning.
- Exclusions from school (periods of time when pupils are not allowed in school due to poor behaviour) are very rare.
- Inspectors received a range of views about the school from parents, some very positive and some less so, with concerns raised, for example, about pupils' behaviour and bullying. The inspectors looked carefully at these concerns but found no evidence to support them.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is a highly effective leader whose constant checking in classrooms and high-quality training has brought about notable improvements in teaching.
- Teachers who lead improvements in English and mathematics are focused upon the challenge of raising standards and have put in place changes to classroom practice to bring this about. For example, a session called a 'maths meeting' is held every day in all classes for pupils to practise and improve their mental arithmetic skills. As a result, standards in mathematics are rising.
- As well as observing lessons, senior leaders regularly check the quality of lesson planning and the work in pupils' exercise books. They provide good advice to teachers to enable them to improve. They set high expectations of teachers through the performance management process and, when necessary, link decisions on teachers' pay to their effectiveness.
- The school works very well with the local authority, which, with direct support and also through arranging partnerships with other school improvement providers, has helped the school to improve the quality of teaching and learning.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate and the headteacher's judgement of lessons observed jointly with an inspector was also accurate. Leaders know what needs to be done to improve the school and their action plans are aimed appropriately at raising standards.
- Leadership of the Early Year's Foundation Stage is good. Pupils receive a good start to their education in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- The school meets all requirements for safeguarding pupils.
- The special educational needs coordinator provides good leadership and ensures that equal opportunities are provided for all pupils. The pupil premium is deployed well to raise standards through, for example, the employment of a specialist mathematics teacher. In addition, a parent support advisor has been employed to help parents to support their children's education.
- The school teaches spiritual, moral, social and cultural education effectively. Pupils work well together in lessons, and they understand and respond well to school rules. The school provides many exciting experiences for pupils which stimulate their curiosity and enjoyment of learning. Pupils are knowledgeable about other cultures and the school is active in making links with other

countries, including China. Music and singing are an important part of the curriculum and the school has the Platinum Singing School Award.

- Pupils enjoy studying a range of different subjects. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills and apply their mathematical skills in subjects other than mathematics and English.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governance is good. Governors are knowledgeable and ambitious, and they have a clear view of the way they want the school to develop and improve. They have a thorough understanding of the challenges the school faces on a day-to-day basis, including the challenge of raising standards of attainment. Their knowledge of the information available about the school's performance data, including the Data Dashboard, which is the summary of the school's performance data published on the Ofsted website, is good and they use this well to question and challenge senior leaders. Governors have supported the school in spending pupil premium funding effectively and are checking to make sure that these additional funds are helping to raise rates of progress. Governors' understanding of teaching quality is accurate and they make sure that pay increases are linked to high levels of performance. Governors do not rely solely on information provided by the headteacher but seek advice from consultants and advisers outside of the school.

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	135148
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	412884

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	283
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Katy Smith
Headteacher	Penny Sheppard
Date of previous school inspection	30 March 2010
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