

# Britannia Primary School and Nursery

Britannia Road, Ipswich, IP4 5HE

**Inspection dates** 12–13 September 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- The latest school data shows that the above-average standards of previous years are being sustained, preparing pupils well for the next stage in their education.
- Most pupils, including minority ethnic pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make good progress through each key stage because teaching is good.
- Reading is taught well.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes make good progress, especially when learning phonics (linking letters and sounds) and in early writing skills.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They feel safe, are well looked after by staff and enjoy school.
- There are excellent opportunities for pupils to take part in a wide range of sporting activities.
- Leadership and management are good. The new headteacher has joined an effective and well-established senior leadership team. Together they are identifying areas for development to further improve the school's performance.
- The governing body is helping the school to improve. Governors' regular visits and careful analysis of performance data mean that they know how well the school is performing.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Lower ability pupils are not making sufficient progress in mathematics because teaching in some lessons is not appropriate for them.
- In Nursery and Reception, it is not always made clear to children what they are expected to achieve when working independently.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 28 lessons taught by 22 teachers and teaching assistants. Three lessons were seen together with the headteacher and assistant headteacher.
- Meetings were held with a group of six Year 6 pupils and the pupil council, the Chair of the Governing Body and one other governor, the headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher and other senior leaders.
- A discussion took place with a representative from the local authority.
- There were 93 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View) by the end of the inspection. The inspectors took account of these, and also sought the views of parents as they arrived at school with their children.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including the school's own information on pupils' recent and current progress, planning for school improvement, and checks on teaching, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- During this inspection, inspectors asked additional questions designed to ascertain the school's view of the impact and effectiveness of local authority services to support school improvement. This information will contribute to work being carried out by Ofsted to assess the use, quality and impact of those services.

## Inspection team

Joseph Peacock, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Liz Kissane	Additional Inspector
Maria Rees-Johnson	Additional Inspector
Mary-Jane Edwards	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- A significant proportion of pupils travel to the school from beyond its normal catchment area.
- It has a Nursery class for five mornings each week in its own separate accommodation. The three Reception classes share a spacious indoor area divided into zones and the recently improved outdoor area. There are three single-age classes in each year from Year 1 to 6. Numbers in school are fairly static.
- Most pupils are White British. One in five pupils is from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds, the largest group being of Indian origins. One in ten of all pupils are learning English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported by additional government funding through the pupil premium is about half the national average. In this school, the pupil premium almost entirely applies to pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is broadly average. The proportion who are supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is just below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- A new headteacher started at the beginning of this term.
- The school funds sports coaches and has a history of successful sporting achievements for its teams and individual pupils.

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

- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, ensure that children are clear about what they are expected to achieve when working independently, in order to accelerate their progress.
- Raise attainment in mathematics for lower attaining pupils by:
  - matching their learning more closely to their ability
  - ensuring that a higher proportion of teaching in mathematics lessons is good or outstanding.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start in the Nursery with skills and understanding that are typical for their age. A few are at the early stages of learning to speak English. Teaching is good and, occasionally, outstanding, helping all to achieve well. Routines have already been established and children respond quickly to teachers' instructions for attention or to tidy up after activities.
- Good teaching continues in Reception. Staff in the Nursery and Reception classes encourage children to ask and respond to questions, helping to improve their speaking and listening skills. Nursery children listened carefully to sounds outdoors and identified them to adults. Most make good progress in learning letters and the sounds they make (phonics) because of the effective daily sessions and individual support for those who speak English as an additional language.
- Staff carefully assess children's progress as they tackle activities indoors and outside in the well-resourced learning areas. There are plenty of opportunities for children to gain early reading and writing skills. Planning makes good links between indoor and outdoor activities, ensuring a good progression in learning new skills. However, in some activities, children were not sure what was expected of them and these activities, such as the slime, painting or building with large blocks, though enjoyed by the children, did not hold their attention for long.
- Staff are continuing to develop the new Early Years Foundation Stage assessment for each curriculum area and this is giving them a clear picture on how well children are doing, and the skills that need to be further developed. Data shows that children are well prepared for Key Stage 1, as most attain the levels expected, and some exceed expectations, particularly in their writing and mathematical skills. Learning English remains a priority for some.
- Pupils' good progress in reading, writing and mathematics continues in Key Stage 1 and 2 because teaching is usually effective. When marking work, teachers provide clear guidance on how pupils can improve. Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by Year 2 has compared well with national results for the past four years and is showing signs of rising further in the school's 2013 performance data. Attainment is consistently above the level usually found by Year 6 with most achieving expected standards and an increasing proportion attaining above the level expected. More-able pupils invariably achieve their potential.
- Pupils make good progress in reading because of the strong emphasis on teaching phonics and the special sessions to advance reading skills, which are successfully encouraging reading. Those who speak English as an additional language make rapid progress because of the opportunities to discuss learning with 'talk partners' and the individual help they have from well-trained teaching assistants.
- Effective links are made between different subjects and these give pupils good opportunities to practise writing skills. Year 5 used skills from literacy lessons to write metaphors and similes about the Blitz in a history lesson, for example.
- Success in sporting competitions and the high participation in physical education and sport is helping all pupils to develop healthy lifestyles and promoting positive attitudes towards school and their learning. Standards across the board continue to rise as a result.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are mostly provided with appropriate tasks and supported closely in lessons by teachers and teaching assistants. They

make good progress from their starting points.

- In mathematics, tasks are usually challenging and fun. Nursery children enjoyed using their counting tools (fingers) and pupils in Year 6 demonstrated a good understanding of graphs as they analysed patterns and variables. More and more pupils are achieving the standards expected of pupils aged 13 by the end of Year 6. A scrutiny of pupils' progress data, however, shows that some lower attaining pupils are not making sufficient progress and are achieving below the level expected in mathematics.
- Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals were almost a year behind their classmates in English and mathematics in Year 6 in 2012. The school has trained some teaching assistants to provide effective individual help for pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium. School records show that this is helping to improve their attainment in English and mathematics and is closing the gap in learning between them and other pupils. However, many are not making the same good progress in mathematics as they are in English by Year 6.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- In the Nursery, adults support children well, giving them all the encouragement necessary to learn English and develop new skills. The outdoor area for the Nursery provides children with a wealth of enjoyable opportunities for adventurous play or to practise early reading, writing or counting skills.
- In Reception, the emphasis on learning to speak and understand English continues. Children work well together, both indoors and out, supported closely by adults who encourage speaking and listening. Children make particularly good progress in phonics, and this prepares them well for reading and writing when they move into Year 1.
- Teachers accurately assess pupils' rates of progress in reading, writing and mathematics over time, so any pupils who are falling behind are quickly identified and supported, often individually, by well-trained teaching assistants. A teaching assistant with expertise in supporting pupils who speak English as an additional language ensures that these pupils make the same good progress as other pupils.
- Staff manage behaviour consistently well, and normally deal with any rare incidents of inappropriate behaviour immediately and effectively.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because their individual learning needs are recognised and planning ensures that they have tasks relevant to their ability level. Well-trained and attentive teaching assistants support pupils learning effectively in lessons.
- Reading and writing are taught well to most pupils, so they build effectively on their phonic knowledge to read accurately, spell simple words correctly and punctuate sentences appropriately. In mathematics, teachers usually plan challenging, problem-solving tasks to engage and interest most pupils.
- Former Olympians and those representing their sport at a national level are recruited by the school to provide role models for pupils and to teach skills and techniques in a wide range of sporting activities to pupils and staff. This policy has resulted in highly motivated and talented athletes and team sporting successes. Currently, the girl's cricket team are champions for the county.

- In the lessons where teaching requires improvement, it is usually because lower attaining pupils' needs are not being effectively met. This is particularly the case in mathematics lessons. Overly long lesson introductions cause this group of pupils to lose concentration and, occasionally, tasks are not matched closely to their level of ability. Pupils' progress slows in these lessons and, over time, this group of pupils do not make the same amount of progress in mathematics as they do in reading and writing.

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

- Pupils are proud to belong to Britannia school and proud of its sporting and other successes, such as best farming school in Suffolk from their creative entry in the competition. Achievements in sport at individual and team level give pupils confidence and are promoting positive attitudes towards school and learning.
- Behaviour is good in lessons and around school. Only occasionally, when learning or long lesson introductions are not relevant for some, do pupils lose concentration.
- School records show that there have been no exclusions since the previous inspection. This reflects how well most behave.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and that 'people are friendly and look after you'. This correctly reflects the impressive level of care and support that pupils receive.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying. They know that name-calling and hitting others are wrong. All were clear about internet safety. School records show that incidents of bullying or racist behaviour are rare.
- Attendance is broadly average. It has been improving for the past three years but not quite keeping pace with national improvements. There is very little persistent absence.
- Parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire had, justifiably, very positive views about the school. 'School makes pupils aim high and believe in themselves' was a typical comment. They fully agreed with almost every question and virtually all said that they would recommend the school to others. Those spoken to during the inspection were equally positive about the school. 'Very impressed' and 'friendly approachable staff' were some of their comments.

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

- The new headteacher has joined a well-established senior leadership team who have a clear focus on strengths and areas still to be improved. Responsibility for assessing how well pupils are doing and analysing data to measure progress is a team effort involving senior and subject leaders. The underperformance of lower attaining pupils in mathematics has been identified as an area to improve. Similarly, last year, data pinpointed the need to improve speaking and listening skills in Reception.
- The leadership of the teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes, and for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good. The school makes good use of outside specialists to support disabled pupils and those who are vulnerable.
- There are well-established procedures for the headteacher and the governing body to make sure

that teachers' pay rises are closely linked to their performance. National standards are used effectively to judge the quality of teaching, so accurate judgements are made on how well teachers are doing their jobs.

- The headteacher and leadership team check teaching in termly lesson observations. However, these checks have not succeeded in ensuring that all teaching is good or outstanding. Matching tasks to pupils' abilities in all parts of lessons and checking the quality of each pupil's learning are aspects identified for improvement.
- The curriculum is well planned and generally meets the learning needs and aptitudes of pupils. There is a strong emphasis on developing literacy and numeracy skills. Learning opportunities beyond the normal timetable, such as a choir and sport, contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Learning Spanish, topics about ancient civilizations and links with a school in India help pupils to understand different cultures and values, such as tolerance and respect.
- The additional funding allocated to increase sporting opportunities has further enhanced the quality and breadth of physical education and sport provision. It has significantly increased participation by enabling professional coaches to teach pupils skills in a diverse range of sports.
- The welfare and safety of pupils has a high profile. All parents and carers hold positive views about the school. They rightly endorse that staff treat every pupil equally, their children are safe and looked after well, and that discrimination is not tolerated in any form. Pupils are well prepared for life in Britain and a global society.
- The local authority knows this school well because every summer it conducts a close scrutiny of its performance data to identify where pupils or groups of pupils are not meeting expected standards. This is followed up with a termly check of data for each key stage, including the Early Years Foundation Stage. There is an appropriate light-touch approach to this good school, where pupils make good progress throughout and are well prepared for the next stage in their education. However, when necessary, the school knows it can rely on the local authority to provide high-quality support and advice to help overcome specific weaknesses. Last year, for example, support and advice contributed to the improvements in the outdoor learning area for Reception and the quality of teaching for speaking and listening. The school was also fully supported with the appointment of the new headteacher.
- Governors have benefited from the wide range of training programmes provided for them by the local authority. These have helped them to develop their skills and expertise. As a result, governors have the knowledge and confidence to analyse data and hold the school to account for the performance of different groups of pupils, increasing their effectiveness. Their financial management, following training, is effective and informed checks ensure the school meets requirements for safeguarding.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The regular visits by governors give them a good understanding of the quality of teaching and how well pupils are achieving. They challenge the school on its performance data for different groups of pupils and are able to compare how well pupils are doing in comparison to others nationally. Governors are beginning to focus much more on helping the school to check how well it is tackling its identified priorities for improvement and to evaluate the impact of their own work. The performance of the headteacher and other teachers is reviewed each year to determine pay and promotion. Governors regularly attend local authority training events each year in order to improve their skills. Their personal expertise is used to good effect to support their work. All current national requirements relating to employment and safeguarding are

met. Governors carefully check the impact of the pupil premium and the funds allocated to provide additional sporting opportunities on the achievement and behaviour of pupils.



## 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>	124653
<b>Local authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	425391

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	629
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Marie Finbow
<b>Headteacher</b>	Tracy McKenzie
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 September 2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	01473 728566
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