

# Hollycombe Primary School

Wardley Green, Liphook, GU30 7LY

## Inspection dates

8–9 October 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	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.

- This is a happy and caring school where pupils are known very well. As one parent said, 'At this school children are not just a number they are a real person.' Pupils achieve and enjoy learning in a calm and purposeful environment.
- Pupils throughout the school achieve well. From their individual starting points, pupils make at least good progress.
- Teaching is good. Teachers use a range of interesting resources to engage pupils' interests, which motivates them to learn.
- Pupils greatly enjoy school and show exceptionally positive attitudes to learning. Behaviour is outstanding and pupils say they feel very safe at school.
- The breadth of the curriculum and some of the experiences offered to pupils are outstanding. Pupils are encouraged to take part in a wide range of sporting activities and achieve considerable success.
- The leadership and management of the school, including governance, are good because they challenge staff and hold them to account for pupils' progress.
- The headteacher has very successfully motivated the staff to aspire to develop their practice even further. Robust checks on teaching by senior leaders, followed by intensive training and support, have helped them improve the quality of their work.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet outstanding. Teachers do not always plan tasks that challenge pupils or check closely enough to pick up misunderstandings by pupils in lessons.
- Achievement in mathematics is not as strong as it is in reading and writing because pupils do not have enough opportunities to solve problems and marking does not consistently help pupils to improve their work.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in eight lessons. He carried out seven joint observations with the headteacher and observed the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) and listened to readers in Years 1 and 2. The inspector also observed support provided for those who have a special educational need and looked carefully at the work in pupils' books.
- The inspector held meetings with subject leaders, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and talked to a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of documentation including: the school's self-evaluation summary and development plan; policies and procedures for safeguarding; information about attendance and behaviour; records of monitoring teaching and learning; information about pupils' achievement; minutes of meetings of the governing body; and the headteacher's reports to the governing body.
- The inspector looked at summaries of school questionnaires sent out to parents. There were also 48 responses on Parent View, the online site for parents and this generated a summary of parents' views. Inspectors took account of 14 questionnaires from school staff.

## Inspection team

Richard Blackmore, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- There are four classes, all of which are organised in mixed-age classes.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (funding provided by the government to support the learning of pupils who are known to be entitled to free school meals) is well below average.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

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

- Improve achievement, particularly in mathematics, by:
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to solve problems and use and apply their mathematical skills
  - making sure that the school's clear marking policy is applied by all teachers in mathematics and that pupils are given time to respond to their teachers' comments.
- Improve the quality of teaching by:
  - using the assessment system to plan work that always challenges pupils
  - making sure teachers more closely check for any misunderstandings by pupils in lessons.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- The majority of children start in the Reception class with skills and knowledge that are typical for their age. Lively resources and well-planned activities, both indoors and outdoors, mean they are excited and eager to learn. Children are encouraged to talk about what they are doing and this typically helps them to make good progress.
- Attainment is above average at Key Stage 2. Current school data for Year 6 pupils indicate a similar picture with stronger outcomes in reading, showing a trend of improvement. During the inspection this was confirmed by lesson observations, hearing pupils read and scrutiny of work.
- Achievement in reading and writing is particularly strong because the school has placed a significant emphasis on phonics (the sounds that letters make). This has included training for all staff, sharing of information with parents about how reading is taught and timetabling high calibre daily phonics and reading sessions.
- Despite achievement in mathematics being good, it is behind English because opportunities for pupils to solve real-life problems and use and apply their skills are sometimes limited.
- Progress for all pupils, including more-able pupils, is good and has accelerated more rapidly as teachers match the work more precisely to meet the needs of pupils and extend the more able to the full. The more regular and robust tracking of pupils' progress has made sure that any pupil whose progress slows is identified quickly and helped to catch up. This shows the school actively promotes equality of opportunity, fosters good relationships and tackles discrimination effectively.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress and are keen to learn in small groups and whole-class lessons. This is because the school is very aware of the needs of these pupils and makes sure that the necessary support enables them to succeed in their learning.
- The pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium make similar progress and achieve similar standards to those of other pupils in the school. This is because of the well-planned additional support they are able to access.
- Inspection evidence shows that progress in reading is good. This is as a result of a key focus on sounding out letters to help pupils read words and the introduction of a daily structured system which links letters, reading and writing on a more frequent basis. Pupils enjoy books and are keen to show their reading skills.

### The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is consistently good, with some that is outstanding. There are regular checks on the work of teachers with an increased and frequent focus on the progress pupils make. The sharing of expertise across the school and other local schools has helped to increase the rate of improvement in teachers' practice.
- Pupils pay very keen attention towards classroom activities and experiences outside in the 'Mud Kitchen' and when looking after the chickens. These develop pupils' curiosity, alongside their academic skills and personal qualities.
- The marking of pupils' work is regular and very helpful in English but it is not always as effective and consistent in mathematics. Some pupils are unclear about how to improve their calculations. They are not always given time to act upon the points for improvement identified by their teachers.
- Teachers make good use of rigorous tracking to set challenging targets and to check on pupils' progress over time. In outstanding lessons, teachers plan creative and stimulating activities and pupils are encouraged to use their newly learnt skills independently. For example, in an outstanding lesson pupils used their recent knowledge of writing instructions to create excellent pieces of work to tell others how to make a Roman mosaic tile. This robust system of

assessment enables teachers to plan precisely to close any gaps in attainment.

- However, at times teachers do not use this process to plan activities that sufficiently challenge all pupils and teachers do not monitor closely enough how well pupils understand new or previously misunderstood ideas during lessons.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage children have access to a wide range of opportunities to explore and find things out for themselves. This has been further developed through outdoor learning where children enthusiastically enjoy learning through play and cooperate well with each other. Relationships are very strong and parents appreciate the care and support provided.
- Lessons are prepared and organised well. Pupils settle quickly and concentrate on what they have to do, allowing teachers and support staff to work with groups without interruption. Support staff are used well and make sure that all pupils can participate fully.
- Teachers are confident in their knowledge of what they are teaching and this means that more-able pupils progress very well. In the best lessons, questioning is used skilfully to challenge pupils' thinking, and pupils make choices as to how they approach tasks. In these lessons, all pupils learn very well including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.

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

- Pupils have exceptionally good attitudes to learning. They want to do well and work extremely hard in small groups and whole classes.
- Behaviour observed during the inspection was exemplary, in different places around the school including at break times. Pupils show a caring attitude to others, as illustrated by pupils who help other pupils on the field at playtimes and during lessons. From the school's records it is clear that this standard of behaviour is typical for the school.
- Pupils are very clear about different types of bullying, for example, physical and verbal. They say that incidents are rare and adults always sort out this problem very quickly if it happens.
- Pupils feel very safe at school and that they are helped very well to keep safe outside of school. For example, they have an exceptionally clear understanding of safety on roads.
- Parents and staff who expressed a view all agree that pupils behave very well. This is because pupils of all ages routinely demonstrate excellent manners around the school and are happy to help one another and willingly offer praise to other pupils.
- Pupils play a very active role in the life of the school and wider community. For example, in school pupils showed great responsibility when leading an assembly using an excellent presentation on their recent work in literacy and further afield they very keenly raise money for a range of charities including a children's hospice and the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC).
- Pupils' attendance is broadly average and they are very punctual to school. There are no pupils who are persistently absent. The school works very diligently with parents to make clear the importance of regular attendance and the link with pupils' achievement.

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

- The headteacher leads and manages the school very effectively. She has promoted a strong sense of teamwork and is open with all about the school's work and as a result leaders at all levels have the capacity to improve further. All responses to the staff questionnaire and parents' views on Ofsted's online questionnaire rightly showed much confidence in the headteacher.
- All teaching staff, in their roles as subject leaders, are included in checking the school's work. They make sure that pupils' progress continues to improve over time. They have valued the opportunities provided by the school for their own training, including in assessment.
- Whole-school topics offer a rich range of learning experiences. These include speaking and listening in the role-play areas in the Early Years Foundation Stage such as 'Creepy Corner', where children make up lists of ingredients for potions, through to opportunities for extended writing in the older age groups. The highly diverse curriculum is also a key factor in the

promotion of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils.

- Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage makes sure that valuable information is collected prior to children joining school and this helps them to settle quickly. Careful planning and regular support make sure that all children's needs are fully met and that they get off to a very good start to school and learning.
- Pupils benefit from exciting visits that enhance learning and personal development. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the stimulating opportunities they enjoy including exploring woodlands and doing adventure activities such as 'bushcraft' skills. There is a wide variety of sporting opportunities, including swimming, funded through the primary school sport funding. This is carefully assessed by senior staff and governors to confirm its effectiveness and long-term impact on raising teachers' skills.
- The local authority provides light-touch support as needed for this good school.
- The school has several strong partnerships that support learning to complement the expertise within the school. Strong links with local schools have enabled pupils to participate in sport projects. Links with the local community including the 15 schools making up the Rother Valley Schools' Partnership have enriched the teaching of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the quality of real-life experiences that develop the pupils as responsible and thoughtful individuals.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Members of the governing body play a significant role in driving the school forward. Governors and leaders have a shared vision and ethos. Governors use information from the school's self-review to challenge and support leaders well. They make sure the performance of teachers is appraised and what the school is doing to tackle any underperformance. They have a good knowledge of the quality of teaching and know precisely how well pupils are achieving in relation to national expectations of progress and attainment. Governors monitor pay awards carefully to see they are justified and have a very good grasp of performance management and use this to improve teaching quality and pupils' achievement. Finance is well managed and they make sure that the pupil premium is used effectively to improve achievement of eligible pupils. Governors are well trained and make sure all statutory requirements are met, including those for safeguarding.

## 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>	125832
<b>Local authority</b>	West Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	426663

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>	104
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Elle Hubbard
<b>Headteacher</b>	Tamsin Austoni
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15–16 September 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01428 741332
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