

# Netherfield Church of England Primary School

Darvel Down, Netherfield, Battle, East Sussex TN33 9QF

**Inspection dates** 10–11 October 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		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Achievement is good. Pupils make good progress throughout the school, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils achieve extremely well in reading.
- Attainment in all areas has risen considerably since the last inspection and is improving rapidly in writing and mathematics.
- Pupils have extremely positive attitudes to learning. Behaviour is exemplary. Pupils say that they feel very safe in school and understand how to keep themselves safe.
- Teachers assess pupils very thoroughly and marking gives pupils excellent guidance on the next steps in their learning.
- The broad and rich curriculum includes excellent provision for the creative arts.
- High-quality leadership and management, including those of the governors, mean that school self-evaluation is very accurate and identifies clearly the considerable strengths and where further improvement can occur.
- The school development plan sets out very ambitious but realistic targets for improvement that are met successfully. All actions are very well focused either upon maintaining high standards or upon bringing about a rapid and sustained improvement in areas where achievement is comparatively lower.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding
- The school has very strong links with parents and carers and other local schools.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils start school with skill levels that are generally below those expected. Although they make good progress in writing to reach average levels of attainment by Year 6, their progress through the school is not as strong as in reading and mathematics. The quality of teaching in these areas is good and improving rapidly but it is too early to see the full impact of recent significant improvements.
- Too few opportunities are provided for extended pieces of writing in a wide variety of styles and genres.
- The school has additionally identified the need to provide more opportunities for using other subjects to support learning in mathematics, especially in Years 1 and 2, where progress, although good, is less than in reading.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 12 lessons or parts of lessons involving six teachers, a visiting coach and a volunteer teacher. Some of these were undertaken jointly with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. Samples of pupils' work were scrutinised with members of the senior management team. A sample of pupils was heard reading.
- The inspector held meetings with staff, members of the governing body and groups of pupils, and spoke with a representative of the local authority. He also spoke to pupils and lunchtime staff during break times and lunchtimes.
- The inspector observed the work of the school and considered additional information gained from an examination of the school's self-evaluation and the associated school development plan.
- A wide range of school documents was looked at, including those relating to safeguarding and child protection, records of pupils' attainment and progress, records of behaviour and information relating to the monitoring of teaching.
- The responses of the 59 parents and carers to the online questionnaire, Parent View, were analysed and inspectors spoke with a large group of parents and carers at the start of the school day.
- Responses to inspection questionnaires received from 19 members of staff were analysed.

## Inspection team

Stephen Lake, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This school is smaller than most primary schools but has increased in size considerably since the last time it was inspected. The majority of pupils come from outside the immediate area.
- Almost all pupils are White British, with a very small number from Traveller families.
- Many more pupils than usual leave or join the school other than at the normal times.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for funding through the pupil premium (extra government funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children of service families and children in local authority care) is broadly average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have 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.
- Until very recently the headteacher was also acting as executive headteacher in supporting a local school in special measures.
- Several teachers have joined the school in the last year.
- The school holds a number of awards including: Artsmark Gold, International School Award and the Healthy Schools Award.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching further and raise achievement in mathematics in Years 1 and 2 and attainment in writing across the school to match that in reading by:
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to write at length in a variety of styles and genres, linking some of these opportunities more closely to the rich creative curriculum
  - building upon the outstanding practice seen in some parts of the school in providing stimulation for writing and embedding this securely in all classes to ensure consistency across the school
  - providing more opportunities, especially in Years 1 and 2, for work in other subjects to support learning in mathematics.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children usually start school with skills that are below the levels normally expected at that age. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage but at present their low starting points mean that they start Year 1 well prepared for learning but with broadly average skills.
- Pupils achieve well, especially in reading, but achievement is not yet outstanding because progress in mathematics in Years 1 and 2 is not as good as progress in reading and, although pupils make good progress in writing, attainment is broadly average. Attainment in reading and mathematics is above average at the end of Year 6
- Attainment has been rising steadily in Years 1 and 2 following the efforts made to improve the quality of teaching, especially in reading. Progress in mathematics is improving as a result of a much more rigorous system of assessing pupils' progress and setting ambitious targets for their attainment, but it is too early to see the full impact in national assessments.
- Excellent professional development and training in the teaching of phonics (the linking of letters and the sounds they make) have led to the improvement in reading over the last three years across the school. An above-average proportion attained the required standard in the Year 1 phonics check in 2012, including all of those who started at the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Progress in reading is outstanding, ensuring the well-above-average attainment by the end of Year 6.
- The progress of pupils entitled to support through the pupil premium has improved in the last year as a result of very effective additional support. In the most recent national assessments at Year 6, the gap in the attainment between these pupils and other pupils has closed in reading and mathematics, but their attainment in writing remains around six months behind that of other pupils.
- The many pupils who join the school other than at the normal time include a large proportion of pupils with special educational needs or who have not learnt well enough in their previous settings. They are all supported very well to enable them to be fully included in lessons and make accelerated progress. Pupils with disabilities and special educational needs make very good progress with the extra support that they receive and the gap between their attainment and that of other pupils has closed. Pupils from a Traveller background make very good progress because of the very good support that they receive.
- The very high-quality art work in the school is reflected in the recent award of ArtsMark Gold.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching over time is not outstanding because the teaching of writing across the school and of mathematics in Years 1 and 2 has not been as good as that in reading. This situation is improving rapidly as a result of the high-quality professional development provided for teachers, especially those new to the school, and the very robust monitoring of the effectiveness of the training. As a result, a large amount of good and outstanding teaching was observed. Teaching is consistently of high quality in the Year 4/5 and Year 6 classes.
- A key change affecting the improving picture in teaching is the very much-improved system for assessing pupils' knowledge and understanding and the use of this information to set the next steps in their learning.
- Marking is very detailed and refers to the targets set for pupils. Clear areas for improvement are shared with pupils and all lessons contain short-term targets set out as 'steps to success'. Although these changes have proved effective in improving attainment in mathematics at Year 6 over the last two years, it is too early to see the full impact upon pupils' attainment in writing or in pupils' attainment in mathematics at the end of Year 2.
- The improvements in mathematics in Years 3 to 6 were demonstrated very clearly in a Year 4/5 lesson where pupils made outstanding progress as they investigated two-dimensional shapes

and tessellation patterns.

- Teachers plan carefully to provide lessons that make very effective use of information and communication technology to support learning and stimulate and motivate pupils to learn.
- Many lessons provide well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through activities such as 'creative Friday' when a very strong emphasis is placed on art and music.
- The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also helping pupils' speaking skills and preparing them for writing. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils made outstanding progress as they discussed how they would solve dilemmas, such as telling someone who was a poor musician that entering 'Britain's Got Talent' may not be a good idea. The very high-quality oral debate that resulted was then used to help pupils write about similar situations. Nevertheless, this sort of high-quality stimulation to write at length is not consistent through the school. Teachers' assessments of pupils' work have also indicated that pupils' grammar and punctuation skills are holding down attainment in writing a little.
- The teaching assistants provide good and, at times, outstanding support for pupils who have special educational needs and those who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium. They work in close partnership with teachers to record pupils' progress in lessons.

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

- Very good behaviour management and encouragement to learn by all adults ensure that pupils have extremely positive attitudes to learning that are helping the improvements in achievement. Pupils are keen to learn and are fully engaged in lessons.
- The vast majority of parents who responded to Parent View agree that behaviour is good and that their children are kept safe. Pupils are adamant that the school looks after them very well and helps them feel and stay safe. They speak enthusiastically about those who come and talk to them about such topics as road safety. They have a very good awareness of the dangers of drugs that is balanced with a secure understanding that pharmaceutical drugs can be beneficial, for example, drugs taken to combat diabetes.
- Pupils say the school is a calm and friendly place to be and they all agree that behaviour is usually very good. Pupils play together very well. They take care not to injure others and are very aware that the playground is a shared space. Pupils say that very good behaviour in lessons is normal. In fact, few could remember a lesson being disrupted.
- Pupils have a very strong understanding of the different types of bullying, including cyber bullying and that related to discrimination. They say that bullying does not really happen beyond a little gentle teasing and they trust adults to deal with it if it occurs.
- Pupils are polite and courteous and show respect to each other and to adults. They have consistently positive attitudes to learning and work together extremely confidently.
- All adults have very high expectations of how pupils should behave and use consistent strategies for managing behaviour that are based securely upon praise. This ensures a very harmonious and friendly atmosphere in the school. Pupils are confident, articulate and talk freely with adults about their work and how they are feeling.
- Attendance is above average. The school monitors attendance carefully. As a result, it has improved over time and only a very small number of pupils have poor attendance. This is monitored extremely closely and parents, including those who may be hard to reach, are engaged with and encouraged to ensure that their children attend school regularly.

### **The leadership and management are outstanding**

- The senior leaders and governors all share a very strong ambition to improve the school further. They have a clear vision of how this can be achieved that is shared by all working in the school and communicated effectively to parents through the regular and effective meetings and through the very good school website.

- The headteacher manages very effective professional development of teachers linked closely to performance management and the national Teachers' Standards. Teachers speak highly of the support and professional development available. Close links with other schools in the local cluster allows sharing of expertise and good practice to support professional development. Additional support is provided by the local authority, which recognises that the school has demonstrated very clearly the ability to bring about improvement through its own efforts and requires only light-touch support.
- The very well-planned curriculum makes excellent provision for the creative arts and for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Links with schools in Africa, Europe and different parts of the United Kingdom are broadening pupils' experience of different cultures. Art and music are linked to areas of learning to make subjects meaningful for pupils but comparatively fewer opportunities are taken to develop mathematics or extended writing through the rich creative aspects of the curriculum.
- The school is meticulous in ensuring that pupils are looked after very well. Procedures for child protection and safeguarding meet requirements. The school looks after pupils very well and takes all reasonable steps to keep them safe. Training in safeguarding and child protection is up to date for staff and governors.
- Detailed records of the attainment and progress of individual pupils are used extremely well to check the progress of pupils and to identify those who need additional support. The recently revised system of setting individual targets for pupils and monitoring the progress against these targets ensures equality of opportunity and successfully prevents discrimination. This is a major factor in the improvements taking place.
- Very good use is made of the grant to improve primary school sport to provide both extra lessons for pupils and training for all teachers from the visiting coaches in order that the impact can be sustained once the grant period ends. Governors are checking on the impact of the training through visits to the school and reports from the headteacher and are aware that this provision is already having a very positive impact upon pupils' physical well-being.
- The school has a very accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses. Areas for improvement from the previous inspection have been addressed extremely well. Areas for further development are clearly identified and the school development plan sets out very well how these will be addressed. The steady improvement in attainment in mathematics over the last few years, together with the maintenance of high-quality teaching and learning in reading, indicates a strong capacity to improve further.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body provides very clear direction to the work of the school. Governors visit the school very regularly and ask direct questions about how well pupils are learning and why. The information gained by governors on their visits is supported by regular reports from the headteacher about the quality of teaching. As a result, governors have a very strong understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement in teaching and are very well aware of how teachers are rewarded for good performance and what is being done to tackle areas for improvement. Budgets are monitored very well. Governors check on the impact of spending, especially the pupil premium funding, and hold the headteacher and staff to account for raising pupils' achievement. Governors frequently sample school meals and check that they are providing pupils with a healthy diet. They check rigorously the impact of all spending decisions, for example, the expenditure of the pupil premium grant. Governors analyse the results of national assessments and school data on pupils' achievements to obtain a clear view of school performance and to inform their contributions to the very accurate school self-evaluation. As a result, governors have a very good understanding of where improvement is required. The information on school performance is linked closely to the performance management of the headteacher. Governors undertake reviews of the skills of the governing body and make good use of the training offered by the local authority to improve their skills.

## 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>	114514
<b>Local authority</b>	East Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	428847

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>	144
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jenny Dudgeon
<b>Headteacher</b>	Barbara Gill
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 March 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01424 83823
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