

# Otford Primary School

High Street, Otford, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN14 5PG

## Inspection dates

14–15 November 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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Senior leaders and managers, supported by governors, have succeeded in improving the school's effectiveness since its previous inspection.
- The quality of teaching is now typically good throughout the school and enables pupils to learn successfully and achieve well. Results in national tests have risen significantly since the previous inspection.
- Children enjoy a good start to their education in the Reception classes so they quickly become settled and confident learners.
- Pupils have very secure basic skills, including speaking, listening, reading, writing and mathematics. They are effectively prepared for the next schools.
- The headteacher has provided clear and effective direction, and has supported both existing and new members of staff well to ensure that quality of pupils' learning has improved.
- Pupils relate positively to each other and to visitors. They behave well around the school and within lessons. They say they feel very safe, like activities such as trips, and acknowledge how good the teachers are at helping them when needed.
- Parents and carers, with few reservations, are very positive about the school's effectiveness, how well their children are looked after and how well those who are disabled and/or with special educational needs are helped to make good progress.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although improved, not all pupils' achievement is at the highest levels, for example, pupils in Years 1 to 6 do not always apply their accurate number skills or mathematical knowledge to solve practical 'real-life' problems and investigations.
- The highly developed skills of some teachers are not yet fully shared through the school to help boost the quality of teaching still further.
- Pupils are not always able to make use of information and communication technology (ICT) in day-to-day activities to improve their learning.
- In some lessons, pupils do not always get down to activities quickly enough so they can complete their work and have time to develop different ideas independently.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 19 lessons or part lessons. They observed three lessons with the headteacher, and activities related to the teaching of pupils who are disabled and/or have special educational needs were also observed.
- Meetings were held with the staff and the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, and one inspector had a telephone discussion with a representative of the local authority. Inspectors looked at documents, including the school plans for improvement, safeguarding information, assessment records, attendance information and the school's checks and information on pupils' progress. Discussions were held with a number of staff responsible for different aspects of the school.
- Two representative groups of pupils met with the inspectors. Inspectors also heard pupils read in Year 2 and Year 6 and observed playtimes, lunchtime arrangements and two assemblies. They looked at the past work of pupils in Years 2 and 6.
- Account was taken of the responses in 17 questionnaires completed by members of staff and 111 responses to the Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View).

## Inspection team

Kevin Hodge, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Jane Banting

Additional inspector

Jonathan Cooper

Additional inspector

# Full report

## Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average primary school serving pupils from the local rural community, and the vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is below average. This is additional funding provided to schools for children in the care of the local authority, those children known to be eligible for free school meals and those from service families.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by school action is below average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been a number of changes in staffing, including the appointment of a deputy headteacher and new inclusion manager.
- An extension to the hall and new building work to add three new classrooms were completed for the beginning of this term.

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

- Improve pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching to the highest levels through the school by:
  - giving pupils, particularly those in Years 1 to 6, more opportunities to use their accurate number and problem-solving skills in real-life investigative mathematical activities
  - ensuring all pupils always get down to work quickly to complete more tasks, use ICT in day-to-day activities and have more open-ended options in activities to develop their independent learning
  - ensure that senior and subject leaders continue to identify aspects of high-quality teaching that exist in the school to help all staff develop their expertise to the highest levels.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

**is good**

- Pupils now achieve well in English and mathematics. Results in national tests have risen significantly since the previous inspection so that pupils reach levels higher than those expected for their age, and some reach levels more reflective of pupils of early secondary school age. Pupils' achievement is not yet outstanding as not all reach the highest levels of knowledge or understanding in their day-to-day work, particularly in using their skills in mathematics or ICT.
- Children join the school in Reception with levels of skill broadly typical for their age, but the school's recent checks on their abilities when starting identified some weaker aspects to their language and number development. Children enjoy their number, language and physical learning. They were eagerly awaiting the possible arrival of an imaginary beast in the class, and the children's 'beast' models were creative, original and carefully crafted.
- The strong focus on teaching pupils about letter sounds is effective over time and the proportion reaching the expected levels in the national phonics screening check in Year 1 was similar to the national picture. Pupils say they enjoy reading and older pupils readily recall a range of popular authors. They reach better-than-expected standards in reading by the time they leave the school.
- Pupils enjoy writing creatively and at length. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 worked enthusiastically to identify how authors improve their stories and then by learning how to use compound sentences and conjunctions to improve their own writing. Despite excellent learning in these lessons, in others, pupils do not always have sufficient time to choose different ideas or develop their independent learning skills.
- Numeracy skills are taught well, as are pupils' calculation skills. For example, in Year 4, pupils speedily and accurately subtracted three-digit numbers mentally. However, pupils do not readily apply these skills often enough in investigative activities or 'real-life' situations. This hinders aspects of their progress in mathematics.
- Pupils use their articulate speaking skills to explain how much they enjoy using the sports field, competing against other schools and using their recently enlarged hall for physical education activities to boost their levels of fitness.
- The pupils eligible for pupil premium funding achieve well, and gaps between the levels they and others achieve in English and mathematics have been eliminated. Often these pupils exceed the levels reached by their classmates or others nationally.
- Pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs achieve well. Extra adult support, combined with well-planned activities using specialised mathematical resources, enables them to keep pace with others in the class. Pupils' previous work indicates no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls, and this was borne out in lessons and current work.

### The quality of teaching

**is good**

- The quality of teaching through the school has improved to typically good levels. There are increasing examples of outstanding teaching over time and lessons requiring improvement are rare.
- Pupils who may be disabled and/or have special educational needs now achieve well because of the skilful, precise one-to-one support they receive and group activities which are pitched well for their level of ability.
- Teachers carefully weave reminders into lessons about how people should treat others and work together. This helps to promote pupils' spiritual, moral and social development.
- Children in the Reception classes are usually provided with a good combination of activities, some chosen by children and others led by the teacher. Children particularly like singing activities connected to learning different letter sounds and also watching their teacher's cat

puppet asking them to identify letter sounds. This helps boost their interest in reading.

- From time to time, pupils through the school do not always have enough opportunities to shape their own learning by having more choices in the activities they follow, such as using ICT resources to enhance their learning or in developing their own individual ideas.
- Good teaching in other subjects, such as history, however, where pupils in one Year 4 class enjoyed using writing their own names using Egyptian hieroglyphics, helps broaden pupils' appreciation of other cultures and history. Music tuition also figures highly during the week.
- Pupils say they like their targets, both academic and personal, which help them to know how well they are progressing. Pupils also say they like the way teachers mark their work and take notice of their comments in response. Having different levels of challenge such as having a 'hot' or 'scorching' target also helps to stretch thinking of the most able effectively.
- In some lessons that were judged not to be outstanding, teachers' explanations were clear, but pupils said they would like to get down to working sooner on their group or individual activities.
- Good planning usually ensures that those pupils entitled to extra funding to help their learning are catered for effectively, sometimes through extra adult support and sometimes through specific extra resources to enhance their learning.

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

- Pupils' behaviour has been maintained at good levels since the previous inspection. Parents are generally very praiseworthy of how the school fosters pupils' behaviour. Pupils were excited and highly committed to arranging and attending activities connected with the 'BBC Children in Need' event held during the inspection.
- Learning in lessons is rarely disrupted through others' distracting behaviour, but pupils say that the behaviour of a few does occasionally dip around the school. On occasions, pupils are sometimes happy just to do the work given to them, rather than think up different ideas or ways of boosting their own learning further.
- Pupils were keen to point out that any rare cases of bullying, in whatever form, are dealt with swiftly by the school. Pupils' mature attitudes help them to relate well to each other around the school and within lessons as relationships are good.
- The school council are keen to point out how they have helped shape and influence improvements and pupils say they like the range of clubs on offer which help to boost their sporting, musical and artistic talents. Those who attend the 'Early Bird' club benefit from a good range of activities prior to starting the school day.
- Pupils say they feel safe in the school, with the very large majority of parents who responded to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire agreeing. Older pupils like being buddies to younger pupils in order that they too feel safe. Pupils also say they like having 'worry boxes' in each class so that they can express their concerns anonymously if they wish.

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

- Senior leaders, supported by governors, have successfully ensured that the school has improved its effectiveness since its previous inspection. This has been achieved despite a backdrop of managing a number of staff changes, absences and some significant building improvements.
- Regular checks of teaching and the setting of higher expectations have helped teachers be clearer that improvements in pupils' progress are linked to pay progression. Some staff and subject coordinators are comparatively new to their role, so systems and routines to spread good practice are not yet fully developed. Nonetheless, they have a clear desire to pinpoint ways of helping the school to improve still further.
- Staff who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire were very positive about being a member of the school and most agreed that they felt valued and supported. New staff to the school are particularly keen to point out how they feel valued and have a clear idea of senior leaders'

expectations.

- Pupils benefit from well-planned experiences that promote their interests and successful learning in nearly all subjects. The recent additional primary sports funding to promote pupils' physical development is being allocated astutely. For example, the school has appointed a second member of staff to oversee physical education activities following a check on what the school does well. Several different initiatives provide more sporting activities and are helping to boost teachers' levels of skill in teaching the subject. Activities and topics provide well for developing pupils' abilities across different subjects.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity for pupils well. Pupils who may be disabled and/or have special educational needs or who are in receipt of additional government funding have the support they need to enable them to make similar progress to all other pupils. This aspect has been strengthened by a recently appointed inclusion manager who has sharpened assessment and reviewed procedures to ensure that pupils who need help receive it.
- The local authority, recognising the school's improved effectiveness, provides an appropriate and reducing level of support for the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors have been determined to improve the school's effectiveness since the previous inspection and they have successfully supported the headteacher through a period of staff changes and significant building development. They ensure that safeguarding routines are thorough and do not tolerate discrimination in any form. The expertise of governors has been used to good effect to identify where their routines can be enhanced and resulted in changes in the way they organised their committees. This has enabled them to have a clearer understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, how the quality of teaching is linked to pay and progression, and in knowing how the school performs in relation to others both locally and nationally. They check closely on how well additional pupil premium money is allocated and follow up by regularly visiting the school to see how well pupils entitled to this funding, and all other pupils, are provided for.

## 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>	118279
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	426460

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>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	347
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Christopher Woolard
<b>Headteacher</b>	Natasha Caisley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1–2 December 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01959 523145
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