

Ghyllgrove Community Infant School

The Gore, Basildon, SS14 2BY

Inspection dates

27–28 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
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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.

- Teaching is mostly good and some of it is outstanding, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Attainment has improved since the previous inspection.
- Rates of progress are good in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1.
- Partnerships have been effective in improving the quality of teaching.
- Actions taken by leaders, managers and governors have led to improvements in the quality of teaching and in rates of progress, especially in mathematics.
- Behaviour around the school and in lessons is good. There are good relationships between pupils and adults.
- Teaching assistants are used well and this helps pupils to make good progress.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils do not make sustained and rapid progress, especially in writing, because tasks are not always set at the right level for them, especially the more able.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to write for longer periods and use their own ideas in writing.
- Marking is not always used to help pupils know how they can improve their work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 11 lessons, four of which were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work and listened to pupils from Years 1 and 2 reading.
- Meetings were held with pupils and school staff, including senior leaders and subject leaders. A meeting took place with two representatives from the local authority. A meeting was also held with the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors.
- School documents were also examined, including those relating to safeguarding, information on pupils' achievement and school improvement plans.
- The inspector took account of the views of 22 parents through the Parent View website. The views of staff were considered through the responses to an inspection questionnaire from 13 staff.

Inspection team

Peter Lacey-Hastings, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Susan Cox	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Ghyllgrove Infant School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- A very few pupils spend part of their education in a unit for hearing-impaired pupils attached to the junior school on the same site.
- The school has specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs in the form of a nurture group for up to ten pupils. They attend either for mornings or afternoons for a period of two terms.
- 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 above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is average. This is additional funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care and those from families in the armed services.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so more of it is outstanding, especially in writing at Key Stage 1, by making sure that:
 - writing tasks are always matched to pupils' different abilities, particularly for the more able
 - the marking policy is consistently applied and pupils are clear about how they can improve their work
 - pupils have more opportunities to write for longer periods and use their own ideas in writing.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Progress is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1. This is because teaching is mostly good or better across the school.
- Children start the school with skills levels that are significantly below those expected for their age. Their skills are lower in their reading, writing and in their personal, social and emotional development. They also make quicker progress in these areas of learning.
- By the time children finish the Reception Year their attainment is still lower than that expected for their age. However, from their starting points, this still represents good progress. This is because teaching is consistently good or better.
- Pupils make good progress at Key Stage 1 in reading and in mathematics. Their progress in writing is at expected rates. Their attainment in all subjects has been broadly average for the last two years. This shows an improvement compared to previous years. This is because the quality of teaching has improved.
- Pupils read books that are generally well matched to their abilities. They are able to apply their phonics skills (linking letters with sounds) to unfamiliar words. Sometimes they rely too much on this method.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium overall make similar progress to other pupils. Last year they made better progress than other pupils in reading. Their attainment is also similar to other pupils.
- In 2012 the attainment of pupils eligible for the pupil premium was one term behind other pupils. Last year it was half a term behind. This was true in English and in mathematics. This is because the learning of these pupils is carefully checked and supported in lessons and through interventions.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils. Pupils with statements of special educational needs sometimes make better progress. Pupils who attend the specially resourced provision also make similar progress to other pupils. This is because the help for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is well led and well taught by staff.
- Pupils make good progress in a range of sports' skills. For example, they receive specialised coaching in dance, gymnastics and squash. This contributes well to their health and well-being.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching at Key Stage 1 is mostly good and some of it is outstanding. Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is consistently good and much of it is outstanding.
- Teaching is well planned and takes account of different ability groups. This is especially so in mathematics and reading activities. The careful selection of resources and high expectations mean that in reading and mathematics pupils are able to progress more quickly because work is more closely matched to their learning needs.

- In writing activities work is sometimes too similar for different ability groups and this does not challenge the more able. Pupils do not have enough opportunity to write extended pieces or to express their own ideas.
- In lessons, there are high expectations on pupils to apply themselves to the task and of what most pupils are capable of. This is helped further by the pace of learning in most lessons and teachers ensuring that little time is wasted.
- Other adults are used well in lessons and in intervention groups. They use explanation and questioning to both support and challenge pupils. They are active in whole-class sessions and this helps pupils with learning needs both understand and contribute to lessons.
- Teaching assistants are effective in supporting all groups of pupils. For example, in some lessons they work with less-able pupils and in other lessons they work with more-able pupils. They are also good at supporting those with specific needs such as hearing impairment and those with emotional, social and behavioural difficulties.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are taught well. Along with pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, they benefit from well-planned interventions and one-to-one support. This includes carefully planned and timed periods, both in the hearing impaired unit attached to the junior school and the specially resourced provision within the infant school.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and this helps them know how well they have done and how to improve their work. Teachers mostly give pupils feedback on how they can improve their work but this is not always the case and there is some inconsistency in the application of the school's marking policy.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Pupils are polite to each other and to staff. In lessons they are attentive and low-level disruption is uncommon. They apply themselves to the task at hand and there are good relationships between pupils and staff.
- Pupils are aware of different forms of bullying. They know that they should follow rules and also understand how rules are there to keep them safe. For example, they know not to talk to strangers on the pavement by the school fence in the playground. They are also aware of computer security such as the need for passwords.
- Pupils themselves say that behaviour is good and the very large majority of parents agree that the school makes sure that pupils behave well. All staff strongly agree that behaviour in the school is good. Occasionally pupils lose concentration when they are not sufficiently challenged, for example in writing, and this stops behaviour from being outstanding.
- This is supported by observations during the inspection. For example, at playtime pupils play well together, co-operate and show consideration to each other. This includes showing care when playing running and chasing games.
- When lining up and walking around the school pupils are orderly. They respond well to guidance and direction by all adults, for example, when walking back into school from the playground and coming into assembly.

- Pupils supported through the specially resourced provision also behave well. This helps them make good progress in their personal targets and in their learning. Their behaviour is well managed and they show a positive attitude to their work.
- Attendance has improved in the last two years. In the past it has been no better than average. However, last year it was slightly above average and so far this year it has also been above average. This has been helped by the use of rewards and certificates for pupils and classes, as well as more administrative time being devoted to attendance issues.

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders work well with staff, each other and the governing body. They have a clear set of plans that are bringing about improvements. For example, the actions of the headteacher and other leaders have increased rates of progress in mathematics.
- The school's view of its own effectiveness is accurate, and focuses on important areas such as the quality of teaching. It identifies areas for improvement and these are carefully checked.
- Improvements to the quality of teaching are being well led by the headteacher. This includes tackling weaker teaching so that the quality of teaching in the school improves and recruiting good teachers from elsewhere.
- Performance targets for teachers are closely linked to pupils' achievement, the national 'Teachers' Standards', pay progression and school improvement plans. Lesson observations are also used to check how much teachers are improving against their targets.
- Training for staff is good. Teachers visit other schools within the local group of schools to observe best practice. They also attend nationally recognised courses to improve their teaching. Senior and other leaders are becoming more effective through taking nationally recognised courses.
- The school works hard to include all pupils and is successful in meeting a wide range of pupils' needs. This includes those with learning needs, behavioural needs and medical needs. The specially resourced provision for pupils with behavioural, social and emotional needs is also well led.
- The local authority provides half a day each term of advice and support on school improvement, and regularly checks the achievement of pupils in the school. The school also purchases extra support from the local authority. The partnership with the local authority has led to a whole-school review which has helped the school to evaluate itself and to improve.
- Funding is used carefully, such as the new primary school sport funding. This is directed at training for staff, sports equipment and the use of qualified sports coaches to work directly with pupils. For example, specialist gymnastics, dance and squash coaches have been used. The school has plans to measure the effectiveness of this work.
- Subjects are taught through themes and topics, and this helps pupils to learn about their own lives as well as the lives of others. For example, there are topics such as 'The Owls' and 'The Great Fire of London'.

- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. For example they learn about other cultures through making different kinds of houses. They also have opportunities to reflect on deeper issues such as what 'home' means to them.
- The government's current safeguarding requirements are met. For example, the school carries out regular risk assessments and checks on adults working with pupils.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Members of the governing body know the school well and are successful in checking its effectiveness. They know about how well pupils are performing and the quality of teaching. They attend training regularly including courses on health and safety, safeguarding, finance, and performance management. They work with school staff through being linked to different subjects and subject leaders. They know what the pupil premium is for, agree its use for interventions and are aware that those pupils make at least the same progress as other pupils in the school. The governing body also evaluates its own effectiveness, which has identified training needs and led to improvements in checking the school's actions. It challenges the headteacher through the use of performance targets. These targets are linked to pupils' achievement, improvement plans and pay progression. The governing body makes sure that the performance management of teachers is rigorous and that good teachers are rewarded, while underperformance is tackled promptly.

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	114919
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	425223

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	188
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ken Howard
Headteacher	Jean Clark
Date of previous school inspection	8 February 2012
Telephone number	01268 521987
Fax number	01268 522113
Email address	admin@ghyllgrove-inf.essex.sch.uk

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