

Tollgate Community Junior School

Winston Crescent, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN23 6NL

Inspection dates 15–16 January 2014

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

- Pupils' results at the end of Key Stage 2 have improved over time and are higher than average. Pupils' results in writing are particularly high.
- Most teaching is at least good and some is outstanding across the school. Pupils learn well during a large majority of lessons because of the high level of challenge and teachers' good subject knowledge.
- Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes towards learning. They work together well and are polite and well behaved. Pupils feel safe and well cared for in school.
- Leadership is good because the high expectations of the headteacher, other leaders and governors have ensured that teaching and pupils' achievement have improved.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Feedback to pupils does not always tell them how they can improve their work and make progress.
- The school's tracking of the progress made by different groups of pupils is not frequent or precise enough. It does not support the school sufficiently in ensuring that all groups of pupils make rapid progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited every class. They observed one assembly, 16 lessons and pupils' behaviour in the playground and at lunchtime. Three lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with pupils, three members of the governing body, the headteacher and other members of staff.
- The inspectors observed many aspects of the school's work, including supervision and support for pupils who need extra help. They heard pupils read and examined pupils' work in their exercise books and on classroom and corridor wall displays.
- The inspectors looked at a number of documents, including plans for what pupils will learn in each subject, plans for the school's future development, the school's use of sports and pupil premium funding, the school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe, pupils' attendance records, minutes of governing body meetings, records of how pupils' learning is checked and tracked, and records of how the quality of teaching is checked.
- The views of parents and carers were taken into account through taking note of the 22 responses to the online Parent View survey.
- Staff views were taken into consideration by looking at questionnaires completed by 18 staff members and through discussions with several members of staff.

Inspection team

Steven Popper, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Ken Bryan

Additional Inspector

Julie Sackett

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized junior school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for additional government funding, known as the pupil premium, is lower than the national average. This extra money is provided for children in local authority care, children with a parent or carer in the armed services and those known to be eligible for free school meals. There are no pupils with a parent or carer in the armed forces and one pupil in local authority care currently on roll.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is lower than average, although the proportion of pupils supported through school action plus is above average. There are seven pupils with a statement of special educational needs. Some pupils have speech, language and communication needs, whilst others have behavioural, emotional or social difficulties or other needs.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The number of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the usual times is lower than most other schools.
- The school is currently consists of 12 classes. Three classes are provided for each year group.
- The school does not currently operate any alternative provision for pupils.
- The school changed its leadership structure in September 2013. The leadership team now includes staff with specific responsibilities for leading reading, writing and mathematics and supporting pupils eligible for pupil premium funding.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that feedback clearly advises pupils how to improve their work.
- Track and record the progress made by all groups of pupils frequently and with precision.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' results at the end of Key Stage 2 are above those expected nationally, especially in writing and at the higher levels. This is why the achievement of pupils is good.
- The proportions of pupils making good progress are in line with national averages. The most able pupils make progress in line with national expectations. However, the proportions of pupils making excellent progress are not high enough for the achievement of pupils to be judged as outstanding.
- Pupils' progress in writing is particularly fast. This is because teachers communicate very clearly about what makes writing good.
- The test results of pupils eligible for the pupil premium are higher than those achieved nationally. Eligible pupils' test results in mathematics at the higher levels are particularly strong due to teachers' subject knowledge and clear teaching strategies.
- The gap in progress between pupils eligible for the pupil premium and other pupils is being narrowed successfully by the school. The gap in performance is now between one and two terms across different subjects compared to a gap of over two terms in the previous academic year.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make fast progress across the school. This is because the school identifies and meets their individual needs well.
- Pupils' rates of progress have improved over time. This is as a result of school leaders' high expectations and improved teaching.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about reading. Pupils who read to the inspectors demonstrated fluent and expressive reading and good understanding.
- Pupils take pride in their achievement. Their presentation of work is good.
- A very large majority of parents who offered an opinion considered that their children made good progress in the school.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching has improved over time. A large majority of teaching across the school is now good, with some that is outstanding. The improved quality of teaching is the main reason for the high results attained by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2. However, improved teaching has not yet led to fast enough progress being made by all pupils. This is why the quality of teaching is not outstanding.
- There is no inadequate teaching currently in the school.
- In the stronger lessons, teachers' expectations of pupils are high, and the most able are challenged well and are encouraged to achieve as well as they can.
- Teachers know their subjects well. They ensure that pupils develop good understanding and learn well.
- Classrooms are tidy. Displays include lots of helpful advice that pupils make good use of.
- In the small amount of weaker lessons, teachers are less clear about what they expect from pupils. The most able pupils are not always challenged enough in these lessons.
- Teaching assistants support learning well. They make sure the pupils they support know how to improve their work.
- Teachers offer pupils clear advice about how to make progress during lessons. However, the feedback given to them about their finished work does not always make clear how it can be improved. Also, teachers do not always provide opportunities for pupils to act on advice given.
- All pupils spoken to by the inspectors praised the quality of teaching and said they enjoyed their lessons.
- All parents who offered an opinion considered that their children were taught well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning, although they can sometimes go off task and have private conversations during the few times when teaching is less effective or teachers' expectations are too low. This is why the behaviour and safety of pupils are not outstanding.
- Pupils' conduct in lessons, in the playground, during lunchtime and when travelling around the school, is good. They are well behaved, play sensibly and demonstrate good consideration for others. Pupils are well mannered, courteous and respectful. Pupils work well together in lessons. The inspectors did not witness any low-level disruption in the school.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, and effective advice about keeping safe online is present throughout the school. Pupils are taught how to resolve conflicts and why bullying and extreme behaviour such as racism are not acceptable.
- Pupils who talked to the inspectors felt that there was very little poor behaviour in the school. Pupils said that bullying was not an issue and felt that staff dealt with any incidents swiftly and well.
- The school's management of pupils' behaviour is effective. School records confirm that the few incidents of poor behaviour are responded to very effectively and that the school is improving the behaviour of pupils involved.
- Attendance, including the attendance of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding, has improved over time and is now in line with national expectations. This is because of the school's clear attendance policy and success in engaging parents with the school.
- A large majority of parents who expressed an opinion thought that behaviour in the school was well managed and that their children were well looked after.

The leadership and management are good

- The high expectations of the headteacher, senior and middle leaders and governors have brought about improvements to the quality of teaching and ensure that results at the end of Key Stage 2 remain above average. However, the proportions of pupils making better than good progress are not high enough for leadership and management to be judged as outstanding.
- Leaders actively encourage and expect teachers and pupils to have high aspirations. This is illustrated by the 'Be the Best You Can Be' ethos that is strongly promoted throughout the school.
- The quality of teaching is scrutinised regularly and accurately by senior and middle leaders and governors. Teachers are set rigorous targets relating to improvements in the quality of teaching and in pupils' results and progress. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved over time.
- The school's evaluation of its strengths and priorities for development is accurate. However, the school's tracking of the progress made by different groups of pupils is not frequent or precise enough to ensure that all groups of pupils make rapid progress.
- Actions designed to improve the school are clearly identified in the school's development plan and staff are clear about how success in bringing about improvements will be judged.
- The school's performance management arrangements are rigorous. Teachers have to demonstrate pupils' performance is of high quality before any pay award or promotion can be considered.
- Middle and subject leaders are actively involved monitoring the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. They lead training for other staff and are effective in improving the quality of teaching in their areas of responsibility.
- Pupil premium funding is spent effectively on the employment of one-to-one teachers, a specialist phonics (the sounds letters make) teacher and provision of clubs for eligible pupils.

This use of this funding has led to improvements in the attendance and progress of eligible pupils.

- Pupils learn a good range of subjects, such as French, music, art and sports. The school provides memorable experiences, such as a topic about Tutankhamun's tomb and the school's own radio station. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported very well in many ways, such as the school's links with a school and village in Uganda, exploration of different faiths, taking care of animals and 'Golden Achievement' books which show how highly the school values each individual pupil. Equality of opportunity is promoted well.
- Sports premium funding is used effectively to develop teachers' skills in teaching physical education, particularly gymnastics. The school also successfully encourages pupils who might otherwise not participate to engage in sports. An example of this is the school's early morning hockey club for girls.
- The school ensures that all pupils are safe. It keeps appropriate and up-to-date records of its work in this area and meets statutory requirements.
- The local authority has supported the school well. It has contributed training for teachers and governors.
- A very large majority of parents and all staff who expressed an opinion thought that the school was led and managed well.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are strong and effective. They have received training about school data and effective safeguarding. Governors have a good understanding of information about pupils' achievement, and how it compares with similar schools nationally and, as a result, are confident in challenging leaders about provision and results that need to be improved. Governors actively monitor the quality of teaching for themselves and check that performance management results in improvements to teaching and achievement. They check that teachers are given the support they need to improve and are properly rewarded for good performance. Governors scrutinise school finances carefully, including the use and results of sports and pupil premium funding. Their impact on the school's drive for improvement is good.

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	114458
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	431808

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	380
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Howard Wardle
Headteacher	Stephen Dennis
Date of previous school inspection	9–10 March 2011
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