

Hawes Down Infants' School

The Mead, West Wickham, BR4 0BA

Inspection dates 16–17 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 achieve well and increasing proportions of pupils are achieving higher level scores in mathematics and writing by the end of Key Stage 1.
- Teaching over time is good because most activities are carefully planned to meet pupils' needs. Their work is regularly marked, and teachers give helpful suggestions for improvement.
- Governors are well informed and understand how well the school is doing. They are prepared to challenge as well as support school leaders.
- The headteacher and her leadership and management team understand what needs to be done to further improve the school. Their priorities include increasing further the number of higher level scores at the end of Key Stage 1 and improving the scores in reading. Staff and governors share this vision and ambition.
- Pupils speak very positively about their school, feel safe, behave well and treat adults and each other with great courtesy.
- Provision in the school for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Teaching is not yet outstanding because not all teachers' planning includes opportunities for the most able pupils to be given challenging questions that make them think deeply about topics and support rapid progress.
- Scores in reading have not yet improved as rapidly as achievement in writing and mathematics.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to evaluate their own progress and discuss the next steps for improving their attainment.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 16 lessons taught by eight teachers. Additional activities included three shorter visits to classrooms to look at interventions for those with specific needs. In addition there were observations during break times, a school assembly and during a series of mathematics activities led by students from a nearby secondary school.
- A lesson was observed jointly with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher accompanying an inspector in checking the work in pupils' books to see how well groups of pupils are now progressing in a range of subjects.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, representatives of the governing body, subject and school leaders and a telephone conversation was held with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of 106 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) as well as a letter and informal discussions with parents and carers. The views of the staff were taken into account through meetings and 25 responses to staff questionnaires.
- The inspectors listened to pupils read and discussed their choice of reading books.
- The school's own attainment records for the current as well as previous academic years were scrutinised in addition to published information on pupils' achievement. Planning documents were examined, as well as records relating to pupils' safety and welfare, including the school's single central record of security checks on staff, the behaviour logs and attendance records.

Inspection team

Patricia MacLachlan, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Fatiha Maitland

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized infant school. It has 10 full-time places in a unit for children drawn from across the borough who have severe and complex needs. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of two Reception classes.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support from the pupil premium (extra money provided by the government for pupils who are eligible for free school meals, children in public care and those from service families) is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is slightly below the national average. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage with Other White and Mixed Asian heritage groups as the next largest. The proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language is well below the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action is below the national average. The proportions supported at school action plus and with statements of special educational need are above the national average. Statements of special educational needs or support at school action plus are mostly for speech, language and communication needs or autism.
- The school has, since the previous inspection, experienced some changes of leadership team with the appointment of the new headteacher in September 2013 and two acting deputy headteachers this term.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that more is outstanding by:
 - building on the established marking routines to make sure that all staff consistently give guidance to pupils about how to improve their work and meet their targets and involve the pupils more in checking their own progress
 - making sure that all teachers plan consistently challenging activities and open-ended investigations, particularly for the most able pupils.
- Improve achievement further by:
 - continuing to set and check challenging targets for all pupils so that from their different starting points they make good progress, particularly in reading, in all Key Stage 1 year groups.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils join Reception with the skills that are expected of four-year-olds nationally. In the Early Years Foundation Stage the trend is for pupils to make good progress, particularly in communication, language and literacy and mathematics. They go on to join Key Stage 1 at or exceeding expected levels of achievement.
- There is a rigorous focus on phonics (letters and the sounds they make) that is sustained during the Key Stage 1 years and a higher than average proportion of pupils in the mainstream classes in the school meet the standard in the phonics screening check.
- Commitment to equal opportunities is evident in the specialist unit because progress is good, particularly in mathematics.
- By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 2 there is a trend of attainment in writing and mathematics that is significantly above the national average because teaching is good and expectations are high. Attainment in reading is good and progress has improved markedly for the current Year 1 as a result of changes to the stock of reading books and more precise checking of pupils' understanding of the meaning of new words.
- School records of current progress as well as a scrutiny of pupils' work in English and mathematics books show that this trend is likely to continue because targets are ambitious. Achievement is not yet outstanding because pupils are not making consistently fast progress in all year groups and fewer pupils reach Level 3 scores in reading than in writing and mathematics.
- There is little difference in the progress made between those for whom English is an additional language, those from minority ethnic groups or those with special educational needs and their classmates. The most able pupils in the current Year 1 have made rapid progress since joining Key Stage 1 and specific activities have been arranged to stimulate faster progress among the most able Year 2 pupils.
- Money from the pupil premium is used effectively to pay for small-group activities for pupils eligible for this funding in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, many of these pupils are now achieving as well in English and mathematics as their classmates. Although this group of pupils in the current Year 1 are about four months behind their peers, the school has focused strategies that aim to narrow these gaps. Last year, by the end of Year 2, the attainment of pupils in receipt of this funding was similar to that of their classmates.
- Pupils enjoy reading and receive good guidance to help improve their skills. Pupils enjoy visiting their well-stocked and comfortable library to borrow books and can discuss their favourite authors, making observations about plot and character.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is good because strong and supportive relationships are established between all adults and pupils in the classroom and pupils are consequently keen to learn. Usually, well-planned and interesting tasks offer pupils good opportunities to make progress. However, there are a few occasions when teachers do not always set and check challenging targets for all pupils.
- In the best lessons the pace is brisk. For example, during a Year 1 session, pupils' organisational and observational skills were developed through practical activities about the qualities of light and darkness. Different pupils were given the responsibility of collecting their group's written observations and adults circulated prompting pupils with questions such as, 'What happens if you hold the tube up to the light?' Pupils learned about different aspects of light and darkness because the tasks were well matched to their different abilities and previous learning. As a consequence, all groups of pupils made good progress. However, not all teaching enthuses and stretches pupils so skilfully.
- Pupils understand the accuracy of their answers because teachers mark their work regularly.

However, teaching is good rather than outstanding because teachers are not consistently checking that pupils are subsequently responding to the marking nor are they always involving the pupils in checking their own progress towards their target levels.

- Where teaching is best, adults reshape tasks quickly if pupils are not succeeding, to help them learn at their own pace. Skilled and versatile teaching assistants give extended support to pupils who need additional help to complete tasks.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage skilfully blends adult-led and child-initiated activities to support confident self-expression. Adults provide a stimulating choice of indoor and outdoor activities for the children. In one lesson their careful questioning drew out descriptions and calculations about symmetry while the children were happily engaged in physical or creative tasks.
- In the specialist unit, the staff work effectively to create a happy environment with stimulating activities that help the pupils to trust and interact positively with those around them and develop their skills of observation and communication.
- Pupils, particularly those capable of making faster progress, are given extension tasks but these do not always include the open-ended challenges or targeted questions that support deep and extended thinking.
- Pupils enjoy applying their reading, writing and mathematical skills to well-planned science topics and the school has identified interesting ways in which the creative arts are stimulated by science investigations.
- The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View) believe that their children are well taught and receive appropriate homework.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. This is because pupils work very cooperatively with each other, sharing resources and concentrating to complete tasks. The behaviour of pupils is good rather than outstanding because pupils are not always able to identify their next steps for improving their work and as a consequence are not always able to demonstrate exemplary attitudes to learning.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Safety is good because pupils believe that they are kept safe in school and are well looked after by the adults around them. The climate of friendship and positive support from adults lead to pupils acting considerately and respectfully towards each other and to adults.
- Pupils understand about different types of bullying and they say that bullying is rare. They trust adults to help them and deal effectively with any problems that might arise. Adults express satisfaction with the school's good management of behaviour.
- Pupils behave very well outside lessons, interacting politely with adult helpers in the dining room and playground. They act responsibly and share the exciting playground areas like the 'ship' sensibly and safely.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage enjoy strong relationships in a secure environment and follow well-established routines supervised by staff who are well trained to cope with minor mishaps.
- Attendance is improving because effective strategies are used to encourage good attendance and punctuality.
- Parents and carers believe that the school provides a safe and caring environment and inspectors agree. Pupils enjoy coming to school because they look forward to varied activities and interesting lessons. Pupils know right from wrong and have opportunities to serve as school councillors and to earn recognition with ribbons or golden leaves for good behaviour. These opportunities reinforce moral and social development well.

The leadership and management

is good

- The dedicated headteacher and her newly appointed leadership team have successfully addressed the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection. They have brought about improvements to the quality of teaching that have resulted in rising achievement, particularly in the current Year 1. Leadership and management are not outstanding because the pace of progress is not yet consistently rapid among all year and ability groups.
- This committed leadership team, including the school's middle leaders, has developed a robust system for sharing lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' books so that teachers' classroom practice has improved. The performance management system ensures that only those teachers who meet required standards move up the salary scale. The headteacher does not avoid difficult conversations about teaching performance if these are necessary.
- Leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage are good and rigorous assessment procedures are followed consistently. Children's needs and interests are well met and helpful information is given to parents and carers to help their children to learn outside school hours. Arrangements for transition from home and for teaching in the outdoor area are good. The specialist unit is well led because progress is good and constructive relationships with parents and carers are fostered.
- Provision to encourage spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Pupils reflect on the differences between right and wrong in assemblies and religious education lessons. A particularly effective demonstration of the ways in which white and brown eggs are the same when broken underpinned moral education about racial equality. Opportunities to experience dance and music lessons and forest school – 'the best part of the week' according to some pupils – are well received, as are visits to cultural centres such as the National Gallery. In addition celebrations of the festivals of different faiths extend pupils' spiritual understanding.
- Physical education classes are supplemented with a wide range of games and stimulating activities at break times. The primary school sports funding is used to hire dance, tag rugby and cricket coaches who are training the class teachers to improve their skills. Membership of after-school sports clubs has increased as a consequence of this initiative.
- Effective safeguarding systems meet statutory requirements and policies are scrupulously applied, with governors taking an active role in training for safer recruitment. Leaders promote equal opportunities and are assiduous in tackling any discrimination that may arise.
- Leaders work effectively with other schools. Shared assessment sessions with the junior school teachers are used to clarify marking criteria and Year 10 students from the local secondary school are enlisted to act as positive mathematics role models for girls, whose achievements have improved as a result. Partnerships are being forged with outstanding schools so that teachers can visit and adapt their methods.
- The local authority has provided 'light touch' support to this good school by moderating teachers' assessments of pupils' work and by providing networks of meetings for subject leaders.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body knows the standards of achievement and teaching in the school because the headteacher's summary reports provide clear information that is subject to challenging questions in meetings. Governors have an accurate understanding of how pupils are performing compared with national standards because they use the data dashboard reports and receive information comparing pupils' progress with national figures. Governors understand the link between teachers' pay progression and pupils' progress and receive summaries of teachers' performance from the headteacher. Checks are made that the pupil premium funds are spent on the intended groups and oversight of safeguarding is scrupulous. The governing body ensures that the budget is very carefully managed and supports strategic planning by joining the school leaders for annual conferences on key themes.

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	101591
Local authority	Bromley
Inspection number	43125

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	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	221
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Marian McGuigan
Headteacher	Janet Sturley
Date of previous school inspection	12 February 2009
Telephone number	020 8777 4420
Fax number	020 8777 1076
Email address	admin@hawesdown-inf.bromely.sch.uk

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