

# John Mayne Church of England Primary School

High Street, Biddenden, Kent, TN27 8AL

**Inspection dates** 27–28 February 2014

<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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The school is a caring and happy place. It is popular with parents and pupils and is at the heart of the village community.
- Pupils behave well. They enjoy coming to school, feel safe and have good attitudes to learning. They are polite, friendly and courteous to each other and adults.
- Pupils achieve well and make good progress from their starting points, especially in reading and mathematics.
- Teaching is good. Teachers provide interesting and engaging tasks so that pupils work hard, want to do well and learn new things quickly.
- The school is well led. The headteacher and governors have maintained the good achievement and teaching which was reported in the previous inspection. They have successfully attended to the issues for improvement. The school is well placed to improve further.
- Leaders check the school's work, teaching and pupils' progress regularly and thoroughly to ensure pupils achieve well.
- The governing body supports leaders well and holds them to account for the school's performance.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Achievement in writing is not as good as it is in reading or mathematics, particularly for boys. Some boys are not always fully engrossed in certain writing tasks and don't have enough opportunities to apply their skills to create inspiring writing.
- Pupils are not always clear about the purpose of their writing, which can restrict the success of their work.
- Pupils are confused by the approach to spelling, which is not consistent across the school.
- On a very few occasions, expectations are not high enough and so pupils do not make consistently rapid progress.
- Subject leaders' action plans are not always linked clearly enough to pupils' achievement. This makes it difficult for leaders to check the success of their work.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed seven lessons and part lessons, talked to pupils about their work and listened to pupils read from Year 2 and Year 6.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the assistant headteacher and other staff with key leadership responsibilities. Discussions were also held with groups of pupils, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of documentation, including the school's own check on its performance, including the quality of teaching, the school improvement plan, information on pupils' progress and documents relating to safeguarding.
- The inspector took account of 31 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and spoke to some parents at the start of the day. She also looked at 14 questionnaires returned by staff.

## Inspection team

Margaret Coussins, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is above average, as is the proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives additional funds (pupil premium) is below average. This is additional funding for those known to be eligible for free school meals, in the care of the local authority or from service families.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school makes provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage in a mixed Reception and Year 1 class.
- The school provides a daily breakfast and after-school club.

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

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by ensuring that:
  - expectations are high enough so that pupils consistently make rapid progress
  - the approach to spelling is used consistently across the school.
- Raise achievement in writing for all pupils, especially boys, and ensure they are always fully engrossed in writing tasks in order to make more rapid progress by ensuring that pupils are clear about the purpose for their writing and are given more opportunities to apply their real-life experiences and skills to create inspiring writing.
- Ensure that subject leaders' action plans clearly indicate what the impact of their work will be on raising achievement.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- The results of the 2013 national tests and assessments at the end of Year 2 were above average, and average at the end of Year 6. Achievement in reading and mathematics is better than in writing.
- Small and fluctuating numbers in each year group mean that published data needs to be interpreted with caution because one pupil can represent a high percentage of the total. This can sometimes mask the fact that most pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- The school provides well for pupils of all abilities so that they make good progress, including those with a range of additional needs. The most able pupils are encouraged to do as well as they can. For example, in 2013 the proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 was above average in reading and mathematics.
- In the 2013 national tests, the attainment of pupils in Year 6 who receive additional funds (pupil premium) was similar to that of their classmates in reading and writing. Attainment in mathematics for this group was around six months behind their classmates' because, despite all of them reaching the expected Level 4, fewer achieved the higher levels. However, their attainment was better than that for similar pupils nationally. The school is successfully narrowing the gap in attainment between eligible pupils and others in the school in all year groups.
- Children start at school with very varied skills and knowledge and recently these have been a little below the expected level for their age overall. Children's achievement by the end of the Reception Year in 2013 reflects this variation. They all, however, made good progress from their varied starting points.
- In 2012 there was a higher proportion of pupils at risk of not doing well in Year 2 and Year 6, including some with very complex needs. Despite the best efforts of the school to provide extra support, a small number did not make rapid progress.
- Pupils say they learn best when they are clear about the purpose of their learning. This is evident in mathematics, where pupils' skills in problem solving and investigation have improved.
- In writing, pupils' progress and engagement is sometimes hampered when they are not clear about the purpose of writing tasks. Pupils, particularly boys, say they would like more opportunities to apply their real-life experiences and skills to enhance their writing. The school has correctly identified writing as a focus for improvement and is already taking effective action to speed up pupils' progress, particularly that of boys, who are not doing as well as girls. The impact of this focus is beginning to be evident in pupils' writing books.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because they receive well-targeted additional support and teaching assistants support their learning well.
- In the 2013 phonics screening (the sounds that letters make) check, the proportion of pupils in Year 1 reaching the expected result increased from 2012 but was still below average. Additional support was provided in Year 2 for the pupils who did not gain the expected result, which helped most of them to catch up. Reading for enjoyment is promoted well, and by Year 6 the most able readers are fluent and expressive. Pupils are encouraged to read at school and at home and are keen to receive an 'Owl Club' certificate when they read and respond to three books.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils learn well because teaching is consistently good and sometimes outstanding. The school's checks on teaching show that this is typical of the quality of teaching over time.
- Pupils clearly enjoy learning and want to do well. They are able to concentrate well and most become absorbed in learning because teaching is stimulating and captures their interest; however, for some boys in writing this is not the case.
- In discussion with some pupils from Year 4 and Year 5 after a mathematics lesson, pupils

demonstrated that they had learned well and made good progress in calculating differences in linear scales. They all said they enjoyed learning because 'the teacher made it interesting and related the learning to real life so everything has a purpose'.

- Pupils enjoy 'having a go' at tasks and if they are not sure of something they ask for help. On a very few occasions, however, pupils' learning slows because expectations are not high enough and so this limits their progress.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are given activities that promote their reading, writing, communication and number skills well. Children could demonstrate how they were using skills they had learned in lessons when making their own choices. For example, after learning how to fold paper into halves and quarters, a child explained how she had attached feathers to a bracelet she was making: 'I used sellotape to make it stick and folded it over in half.'
- There are some excellent examples of marking that help pupils know what they need to do to improve their work. There is a system for correcting spellings but this is not yet consistent across the school, which pupils report is a little confusing.
- Teachers make sure that their classrooms are attractive and tidy, and motivating displays support teaching and learning well. Information and communication technology is used well, for example to help teach phonics in a fun way. Teachers expect pupils to take pride in their work, which is generally neat and tidy and presented well.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are caring, considerate and respectful and get on very well with each other. They were happy to talk to the inspector about how much they liked their school. Pupils and most parents agree that pupils are well behaved.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and conduct themselves well in lessons and around the school. They behave equally well when working with teachers, teaching assistants or other adults.
- Sometimes behaviour is exemplary, as for example during a whole-school assembly, during which pupils celebrated successes in academic and personal achievement and attendance.
- School records show that behaviour has improved considerably over time, with a huge reduction in the number of recorded incidents. This is due to the school's concerted and relentless efforts to promote its values and expectations clearly. There is a consistent approach with an emphasis on rewards for good behaviour and attitudes. Behaviour is not yet outstanding because, on occasion, a few pupils do not apply themselves fully to their work.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe and well cared for. Most parents agree that their children are happy in school, feel safe and are well looked after. Attendance is above average.
- Pupils say they are not aware of any bullying but should any incidents arise, they are confident that staff would listen and resolve problems fairly and promptly. Pupils are well informed about the different types of bullying, including cyber bullying.
- Both the breakfast club and after-school club provide a good, safe and sociable start and end to the day for those pupils who attend.

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

- The headteacher provides determined and very effective leadership. Subject leaders and other staff with key leadership responsibilities are well supported and provide skills and expertise in their particular areas of responsibility.
- Accurate checks on the school's work and pupils' progress inform the overall school plan, which gives a clear steer for the future. The impact of good leadership is seen, for example, in the action being taken which is beginning to raise attainment in writing. This demonstrates the school's strong capacity for continued improvement. However, leadership and management are

not yet outstanding because, despite an improving picture for pupils currently in the school, achievement and teaching are not yet outstanding.

- The plan to improve writing clearly links what the school is doing to the effect this will have on raising standards. Other subject plans are not so clear or tightly linked to improving standards and so the success of the actions taken is more difficult to monitor.
- Parents are very supportive and extremely positive about the school. They have every confidence in the headteacher and particularly appreciate the fact that she greets them and their children every morning and that their views are listened to and acted upon. The overwhelming majority of parents said they would recommend the school to another parent.
- Checks on teachers' performance ensure that the quality of teaching is at least good. Where any weaknesses in teaching are noted, effective support is given. Information is used from lesson observations, looking at pupils' work and pupils' progress to set teachers' targets for improvement. There is a clear understanding that decisions about promotion and pay will be based on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and progress.
- The broad range of subjects and topics taught meet pupils' interests well and promote positive attitudes to learning and good achievement. There is a good focus on the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics and opportunities for pupils to use their skills in these subjects in other areas, which helps them learn well.
- Sports, the arts, including choirs, music and instrument tuition, and special event days and weeks are given a high profile in the school and enrich pupils' learning and achievements. The school offers pupils a wide range of after-school and lunchtime clubs. These are well attended and offer pupils the chance to learn new skills.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through the school's values and the strong links with the church and the community. The school ensures equal opportunities for all and all pupils have access to the full range of subjects and learn in a supportive, caring atmosphere without fear of any type of discrimination.
- Primary school sports funding is being used to employ a specialist sports teacher. He works alongside teachers so that they improve their skills to better help pupils. The school has increased the range of sports available in after-school clubs and school teams take part in competitive sports. These initiatives contribute positively to pupils' well-being and health.
- The school works well in partnership with 12 other local schools and this collaboration enables staff and governors to share good practice.
- The local authority provides 'light-touch' support to this good school.

■ **The governance of the school:**

Under the new chair, the governing body has reviewed the way in which it works and determined how best to increase its effectiveness. Governors strongly support the school and value the leadership of the headteacher. The governing body is well informed by the headteacher and governor visits to school. Governors know the school well and have a good knowledge of the school's strengths and improvement priorities. They have a clear understanding of how well pupils achieve in relation to those in other schools. This enables them to ask questions and to hold the school to account for pupils' achievement. There is a good awareness of how the school is using its additional funds and the impact this has on pupils' achievement. All governors have been trained in child protection matters and safeguarding arrangements meet government requirements so that pupils and staff are safe.

## 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>	118662
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	441044

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.

<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>	128
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	David Horn
<b>Headteacher</b>	Melanie Williams
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9–10 December 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01580 291424
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