

# Tiger Primary School

Boughton Lane, Maidstone, Kent, ME15 9QF

## Inspection dates

18–19 March 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils who have fallen behind, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, do not catch up quickly enough in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The more able pupils are given few opportunities to practise writing at length. This holds them back from reaching higher levels.
- Teachers do not consistently set work at the right level of challenge.
- Teachers do not use feedback well enough to help pupils make progress.
- Until recently, governors relied too much on reports from school leaders to tell them how well the school is doing. They did not challenge school leaders robustly or sufficiently hold them to account.
- Pupils are not always clear enough about what they are expected to do in lessons or how to succeed.

### The school has the following strengths

- The Principal has an unwavering determination to move the school forward. Earlier difficulties in staffing have been overcome and the stable and committed staff team is fully supportive of the Principal's ambitions for the school.
- Leaders have developed a consistent approach to managing behaviour so that it is good. Pupils are safe and happy.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance is good.
- Parents are happy with the school. They appreciate the help the school provides to enable them to support their children at home.
- Leadership and governance have been strengthened so the school is now in a good position to make rapid improvements.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 10 lessons taught by eight teachers and teaching assistants. The headteacher and deputy headteacher joined the inspector to observe eight of the lessons.
- The inspector heard pupils reading and reviewed their workbooks.
- Meetings were held with: the Principal; Vice-Principal; subject leader for mathematics; special educational needs coordinator; four governors; a group of parents and representatives from the trust. A telephone conversation was held with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector met with pupils and observed playtime and lunchtime.
- The inspector took account of 75 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and of one letter received from a parent. Responses to the staff questionnaire were also analysed.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documents, including those related to the tracking of pupils' progress, the school's records of checks on the quality of teaching, improvement plans, the school's self-assessment, and minutes of meetings held by the governing body. The inspector reviewed the checks made on staff about their suitability to work with children.

## Inspection team

Amanda Gard, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school opened in September 2012 as a free school, taking pupils into the Reception and Year 1 classes.
- It is smaller than the average-sized primary school, but the number on roll is set to grow by an additional 60 pupils each year.
- Pupils are taught in single age classes. There is one class in Year 2, and two classes in Year 1 and Reception.
- There is a higher proportion of boys than girls in the school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action is similar to other schools. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus is below average. There is one pupil with a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is well below average. This is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children in local authority care and pupils with a parent in the armed services.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds with a range of other ethnic groups represented in the school. The proportion of pupils whose first language is other than English is just below the national average.

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

- Improve the effectiveness of teaching by:
  - showing pupils precisely what they are expected to do in lessons so they know how to succeed
  - setting tasks at the right level of challenge so that all pupils, including those who have fallen behind, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics
  - using feedback effectively to help pupils improve their work.
- Raise standards in writing so that more pupils, especially the most able, attain at the higher levels by setting tasks which allow pupils to write at length to extend their ideas.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because not all pupils make good enough progress from their different starting points.
- While many make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics, progress is not good enough for pupils who have fallen behind, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Newly introduced support is starting to help these pupils to catch up, but senior leaders recognise there is more to do for these groups to make good progress in line with their peers.
- More able writers have insufficient opportunity to write at enough length to demonstrate their capabilities.
- Children in Reception make good progress. Those who start school with skills below the expected level for their age catch up with their peers. Children are generally well prepared for Year 1.
- Boys and girls make similar progress to each other, as do pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- Pupils eligible for additional funding through the pupil premium achieve in line with their peers. There is little difference between their progress and attainment and that of their classmates.
- There is a real buzz of learning during reading sessions because pupils relish the wide selection of books the school provides. Reading is taught more effectively than it was in the past, so pupils are developing the skills to tackle both stories and non-fiction texts with success. They enjoy talking about their books.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because not all pupils across the school make enough progress over time. Pupils who have fallen behind are not catching up quickly enough. Sometimes, pupils are given work that is too easy or too hard for them.
- All teachers tell pupils what they will be learning in the lesson. Where the quality of teaching is better, teachers set clear expectations and show pupils how to achieve well. In these cases, pupils approach tasks purposefully to make good progress. Where teaching is less effective, some pupils do not do as well as they could because they are not sure what to aim for.
- Teachers review pupils' work regularly and offer feedback. However, they do not always ensure that pupils act on their advice. As a result, pupils sometimes repeat the same error, which holds them back.
- Learning moves on at a good pace where teachers assess regularly how well pupils are doing and correct errors. Where teaching is less effective, adults do not check pupils' understanding well enough to help them make sufficient progress.
- Teachers plan exciting opportunities for learning topics which pupils enjoy. Pupils use their writing skills in a variety of subject areas, for example setting out their findings about how seeds grow in science or writing acrostic poems about space. However, the worksheets used often provide only a small space for pupils to set down their ideas. This stops pupils from extending their writing and holds the more able pupils back from producing enough work to meet the expectations for higher levels.
- Teaching assistants are well trained to target specific pupils and promote their learning effectively. Much of this work is very new.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils

### are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils generally show very positive attitudes to learning. They

say teachers make learning fun and they want to take part. However, very occasionally, teacher explanations are overly complicated and they lose a few pupils along the way.

- Adults set a good example and there is a calm and purposeful atmosphere for learning throughout the school. The recently reviewed behaviour policy is applied consistently and pupils know exactly what is expected of them so that the number of incidents of poor behaviour has reduced considerably.
- Pupils generally play happily together at break time. As part of the school's drive to teach independence, pupils are encouraged to sort out any disputes on their own. This works well because pupils know that an adult will step in and help them when needed. They understand what bullying means. School records show no incidents of bullying; however, teachers have taken effective action to address some friendship issues which caused pupils some concern.
- Pupils listen very well to instructions in the playground and when moving around the school, supported by the high expectations of adults and well established routines. This helps them start lessons calmly and ready to learn.
- Senior leaders check rates of absence carefully and regularly, and alert parents quickly if there are concerns. As a result, attendance rates have improved and are above the national average.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Other aspects of safety are taught effectively, for example pupils know they should not play in areas where adults cannot see them.
- Parents are confident their children are safe and well cared for at school. One parent remarked, 'I cannot fault the school for looking after my child's needs, they really know my child.'

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

- The dynamic Principal is determined and ambitious for the school. After some initial hitches with staffing, she has successfully built a strong leadership team which is now well placed to move the school on to being good. The staff team is right behind her.
- The Principal and Vice Principal have been stretched until recently because of the complexities of setting up a new school and because the senior leadership team was not fully formed. Despite these difficulties, they accurately assessed what work was needed to improve the school. They have taken effective action in the most pressing areas of the school's development work, such as improving behaviour and the teaching of letters and sounds.
- The recent appointment of a skilful special educational needs co-coordinator has strengthened the leadership team. An existing teacher in the school has taken on the responsibility for mathematics. These appointments have provided greater capacity and are enabling leaders to focus more closely on improving teaching and standards. For example, the special educational needs co-coordinator has reviewed the way in which support is given to pupils who have fallen behind. The subject leader for mathematics is checking how well teachers adapt lessons to meet pupils' different needs in order to raise standards. These leaders have clearly made a determined start.
- The Principal sets each member of staff clear development targets to help improve their work. Targets are linked closely to the national Teachers' Standards and standards for support staff, and are well supported by an effective programme of training which helps staff achieve their goals.
- The lively curriculum is a strength of the school. Pupils thoroughly enjoy the 'stunning starts', such as the discovery of a dragon's egg, which hook them into their learning. Teachers' creative approaches to learning throughout the topics ensure pupils remain motivated. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is promoted effectively through the well-balanced curriculum. The opportunity to learn Mandarin develops additional confidence and an awareness of the wider world. Pupils enjoy attending the wide range of clubs offered by the school.
- The school promotes equal opportunities effectively, ensuring that all pupils have access to the full range of subjects and activities, and learn without fear of any type of discrimination.
- Relationships with parents are good. The Principal sets high expectations, for example asking parents to read with their child at home at least three times a week. Parents appreciate the

useful workshops, such as mathematics and letters and sounds, which the school runs to help them support their children.

- The school is making good use of additional funding from the government to promote sports and physical education. Pupils have the opportunity to work with specialist coaches to develop their skills and the newly-purchased equipment is enhancing sports lessons. It is too early to see the impact of this work. However, school leaders sensibly noted pupils' skill levels at the start of the year in order to measure the effect of the funding at a later date.
- The school fully meets all requirements regarding safeguarding.
- School leaders make good use of the local authority to develop links with other schools and access staff training.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors were initially slow to respond to the challenges and complexities of creating a new primary school and did not provide enough support for the Principal to develop teaching and learning. The trust has strengthened the governing body by appointing new governors with important skills and experience. Governors have sensibly identified a project manager to oversee the new school building, allowing the Principal to focus on improving standards. A nominated governor has made useful, regular visits to classrooms to see the school in action and provide advice, challenge and guidance. Governors have made appropriate arrangements to set performance goals for the Principal. They correctly make decisions about teachers' pay linked to their targets. They track pupil premium and sports funding carefully to make sure it is used effectively.

## 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>	138232
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	428860

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>	Academy free school
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	143
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Future Schools Trust
<b>Chair</b>	Ray Harris
<b>Principal</b>	Emma Bryant
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	01622 745166
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