

Minterne Community Junior School

Minterne Avenue, Sittingbourne, ME10 1SB

Inspection dates 1–2 April 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	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' progress and standards have improved over previous years. Most pupils now make rapid progress in all subjects, including those in the speech and language unit.
- Most teaching is at least good across the school. Pupils learn well during the very large majority of lessons because their teachers and teaching assistants offer skilled explanations and use questioning well.
- Pupils are eager to learn and are proud of their learning and work. They are courteous and behave well towards one another. Pupils feel safe and well looked after in school.
- Leadership is good because the new senior leadership team, supported by governors, has swiftly raised expectations and rapidly improved the school's work to ensure that pupils make fast progress.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Too few pupils achieve good results in English grammar, punctuation and spelling at the end of Key Stage 2.
- A few pupils do not make enough progress.
- Teachers' written feedback to pupils does not consistently advise them how to improve their work and presentation, particularly in mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors saw teaching in every class and in the speech and language unit. They observed one assembly, 13 lessons and pupils' behaviour in the playground and at lunchtime. Ten lessons were observed jointly with the executive headteacher, head of school or deputy head of school.
- Discussions were held with pupils, two members of the governing body, the acting executive headteacher and other members of staff.
- The inspectors observed many aspects of the school's work, including 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 premium 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 62 responses to the online Parent View survey, and through discussions with several parents and carers.
- Staff views were taken into consideration by looking at questionnaires completed by 43 staff members and through discussions with several members of staff.

Inspection team

Steven Popper, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jan Edwards

Additional Inspector

Carol Vant

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a larger-than-average-sized junior school. It includes specially resourced provision for pupils with speech, language and communication needs in the form of a speech and language unit, which has 28 pupils aged between seven and 11 from the junior school, as well as 13 pupils aged between four and six currently on roll.
- 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 much higher than the national average. This extra money is provided for children known to be eligible for free school meals, in local authority care, or with a parent or carer in the armed services. There are no pupils with a parent or carer in the armed forces and two pupils in local authority care currently on roll.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, including pupils supported through school action or school action plus and those with statements of special educational needs, are well above average. Some pupils have speech, language and communication needs, while others have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties or other needs.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The executive headteacher, head of school and deputy head of school took up their responsibilities in January 2014 after the previous headteacher's retirement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all pupils make consistently good progress across the school, and attain high results in English grammar, punctuation and spelling at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Ensure that teachers' written feedback to pupils consistently advises them how to improve their work and presentation, particularly in mathematics.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' progress and standards have improved over previous years. Most pupils currently in the school now make good progress in all subjects, and are on track to attain higher results than pupils in previous years. This is why the achievement of pupils is good.
- Pupils' results at the end of Key Stage 2 in previous years have been mixed, with some results in reading and mathematics higher than nationally expected and other results in reading and mathematics lower than nationally expected. Pupils' results in writing are consistently above average, but their results in English grammar, punctuation and spelling are too low. This is why the achievement of pupils is not outstanding.
- All groups of pupils, including pupils eligible for pupil premium funding, the most able pupils, and disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, make faster progress than in previous years. All groups of pupils now typically make faster-than-expected progress in all subjects across the school. However, there are still a few pupils who do not make enough progress. This is another reason why the achievement of pupils is not outstanding.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, including those on roll at the speech and language unit, consistently make rapid progress from their starting points. This is because the school identifies their needs well and gives them well-tailored support.
- The gap in progress between pupils eligible for pupil premium funding and other pupils is being closed successfully by the school. In the 2013 national assessments for Year 6 pupils, pupils supported by the pupil premium were approximately three terms behind their peers in mathematics and reading and two terms behind in writing. Evidence shows there is a much narrower gap of about one term throughout the rest of the school.
- A large majority of parents and carers who offered an opinion expressed positive views about their children's progress.

The quality of teaching is good

- Most teaching across the school is at least good. Pupils typically make good progress in all subjects as a result.
- The work of the new senior leadership team has enabled teachers to use data about pupils' performance more effectively. As a result, teachers expect, and ensure faster progress from their pupils than in previous years.
- Teachers know their pupils well and plan their lessons to ensure that pupils make the progress that is expected of them. Teaching assistants are used effectively to support particular individuals and groups of pupils who need support.
- Teachers are experts in their subjects and communicate this knowledge clearly and effectively. Pupils learn well during the very large majority of lessons because their teachers and teaching assistants offer skilled explanations and use questioning skilfully..
- Teachers offer pupils, including the most able, a high level of challenge. Pupils enjoy being set challenges and respond to them well. One Year 6 pupil said, 'I like using my brain', to explain why she enjoyed her mathematics lessons.
- Teachers offer pupils clear verbal advice about how to develop and make progress, and pupils are set clear targets for their achievement. The written feedback that pupils receive, however, does not always advise them how to improve their work and presentation, particularly in mathematics. This is why the quality of teaching is not outstanding.
- Teachers in the speech and language unit give pupils carefully structured support and encouragement. Pupils on roll at the speech and language unit make rapid progress as a result. Staff ensure that pupils supported by the speech and language unit integrate well into their main

schools.

- A very large majority of parents and carers who offered an opinion thought that their children were taught well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are eager to learn and are proud of their learning and work. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary when outstanding teaching inspires them to challenge themselves to a very high level and aim as high as possible. However, pupils' positive attitudes towards learning have not yet led to all pupils making enough progress. 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. Pupils are courteous and respectful towards each other and to adults, and work and play happily and cooperatively with each other.
- The school has enabled pupils to develop their understanding of bullying, possible reasons for it, and how to keep themselves safe from bullying, including cyber bullying and bullying using mobile phones. Pupils who talked to the inspectors said that they felt that there was very little poor behaviour in the school, and that staff would deal effectively with any incidents.
- School records show that there have been few incidents of poor behaviour over time and that bullying has been rare. Incidents that have occurred have been dealt with effectively by the school.
- Attendance has improved over time and is higher than nationally expected. The attendance of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding has also improved. This is because the school is quick to act if the attendance of any pupils causes any concern. The school's fostering of good relationships with parents and carers also helps it encourage high attendance.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in different situations, including when online and when using mobile phones and other communication devices. Pupils who talked to the inspectors said that they felt safe and understood how to keep themselves safe.
- A very large majority of parents and carers who expressed an opinion thought that behaviour in the school was well managed, and that their children felt safe and were well looked after.

The leadership and management are good

- The new executive headteacher, head of school and deputy head of school have quickly raised expectations in the school. They have acted swiftly and effectively to bring about improvements, notably to the monitoring of the quality of teaching and the teachers' use of data about pupils' performance. These improvements have helped pupils' standards to rise and their progress to become faster. This is why leadership and management are good.
- However, the new senior leadership team has not yet been in place long enough to ensure that enough pupils attain high enough results in English grammar, punctuation and spelling at the end of Key Stage 2, or that every pupil makes enough progress. This is why leadership and management are not yet outstanding.
- The school's self-evaluation contains a very thorough and accurate analysis of where the school needs to improve. If anything, it underplays the school's strengths in favour of an approach which concentrates on the improvements that are needed. The school's plan for bringing about improvements is well judged and reflects the new senior leadership team's high expectations.
- Teachers are properly held to account for their pupils' progress and the quality of their teaching, both of which have improved. Performance management arrangements ensure that strong performance is rewarded appropriately and that any weaker performance is not accepted.

- Senior and subject leaders ensure that teachers receive training to enable them to improve and develop their skills and knowledge. Subject leaders are preparing the school well for the implementation of the new National Curriculum.
- Leaders of the speech and language unit ensure that the unit is well run, and that pupils receive well-structured support and make fast progress.
- Pupils learn a broad range of well-planned subjects. The school organises learning through exciting topics and experiences, such as the school's Aztec day and its regular production of operas composed and produced by the pupils. The school's work in sport and music is strong, and a wide range of clubs provide musical, creative and sporting opportunities.
- The school takes full advantage of opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, as seen through their work supporting Sport Relief and other charities, and in regular assemblies led by pupils themselves. One such assembly that took place on World Autism Day featured a pupil's messages about art and people with autism, and moved staff and other pupils greatly. Equality of opportunity is promoted well through such activities and the school actively works against discrimination.
- Sports premium funding is spent effectively on enhancing pupils' engagement in sports through the provision of a range of sports clubs and on developing teachers' knowledge and skills in this area.
- Pupil premium funding is spent on effective use of teachers and teaching assistants to provide additional support in English and mathematics for eligible pupils and on support for pupils whose families are in difficult circumstances. These measures have contributed to the improved attendance of eligible pupils and to the typically rapid progress that they now make.
- 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 strongly supported the school in establishing its new senior leadership team and given the school good advice about how to improve. It has given training to teachers and governors and helped monitor the quality of teaching and the achievement of pupils.
- A large majority of parents and carers who offered an opinion considered the school to be well led.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have supported senior leaders in raising expectations in the school. Some governors have received training about pupil performance data, safeguarding and other aspects of school provision, and there are plans for the rest of the governing body to receive similar training. Governors have a good working understanding of pupil performance data and are developing their ability to challenge the school appropriately about key areas of its work, such as pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching. They set the head of school performance management targets that reflect the key priorities of the school. Governors monitor the quality of teaching through visits to the school, and there are plans to develop this work further. They check that expectations of teachers are high, that good teachers are rewarded properly, and that any weak teaching is not allowed to continue. They scrutinize school finances carefully, including the use and impact of pupil and sports premium funding. Their impact on the school's drive for improvement is good, particularly because of their wise decision to appoint the new senior leadership team to their positions.

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	118455
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	441039

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	391
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stephen Freeman
Headteacher	David Whitehead
Date of previous school inspection	17–18 March 2011
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