

Hillside Primary School

Dyke Drive, Orpington, Kent, BR5 4LZ

Inspection dates 18–19 June 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- The achievement of pupils is not yet good, despite some recent rapid improvements in pupils' progress.
- Pupils of average ability are not sufficiently challenged to enable them to be successful at the higher levels.
- Teachers' written guidance does not consistently help pupils understand how to improve their work.
- Pupils' achievement in writing is hindered because they do not have enough opportunities to write at length in their literacy work.
- Subject leaders have yet to fully assess the impact new initiatives are having on pupils' progress.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher's actions are effectively improving the quality of teaching and pupils are now making accelerated progress from their individual starting points.
- Pupils are safe in school. Pupils' behaviour is good. They show consistently positive attitudes toward their learning.
- Governors provide strong support. Their restructuring of the school leadership and checks on the school's performance are leading to rapid improvements in pupils' achievement.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 25 lessons, of which four were jointly observed with the headteacher. Inspectors also observed an assembly, listened to pupils read and looked at pupils' work in their exercise books.
- Inspectors met with pupils and talked with them about their work. Meetings also took place with governors, subject leaders and representatives from the academy trust.
- Inspectors reviewed documentation covering safeguarding, the management of performance of staff, behaviour and safety, attendance and checks on pupils' attainment and progress.
- Inspectors took account of 27 responses from parents to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and 38 questionnaires from staff. An inspector also talked with parents informally during the inspection.

Inspection team

Howard Jones, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Janet Tomkins	Additional Inspector
Nicholas Rudman	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Hillside is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- There are two reception classes in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The school has specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs which is local authority funded. The special opportunities unit has places for 18 pupils. Currently there are 11 pupils who have statements for severe and complex learning needs, and social and communication difficulties.
- When compared to national figures, the proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is low. The proportion at school action plus and who have a statement of educational needs is high.
- The proportion of pupils receiving support from the pupil premium funding is high. This is additional government funding to support those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or those who are in care. In this school, it is applicable to pupils eligible for free school meals and those who are in care.
- In 2013, the school did not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school became part of the Priory Academy Trust in September 2012.
- The current headteacher took up position in September 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better in order to further raise the achievement of pupils by:
 - ensuring teachers' written guidance in their marking enables pupils to understand how to improve their work
 - regularly checking the understanding of pupils of average ability so they are more effectively challenged to achieve the higher levels
 - providing more chances for pupils to write at greater length in their literacy work.
- Increase the impact of school leaders by:
 - ensuring that subject leaders check that new initiatives are having an impact on improving pupils' progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

Requires improvement

- The achievement of pupils is not yet good enough. Attainment at the end of Year 2 has been below average. The progress made by pupils from their individual starting points across Key Stage 2 has been uneven so that by the end of Year 6, not enough reach the levels expected.
- Pupils of average ability are not consistently successful at the higher levels. Once they show they have a secure understanding in their learning, they are not always moved on to more challenging work.
- The achievement of the most able pupils is variable. Although their progress in mathematics is strong, their achievement in writing is hindered because, as with other pupils, there are too few opportunities to write at length and practise the skills they have learnt.
- Pupils' performance in the 2013 phonics check (linking letters and sounds) was below the national average. School checks show this is now improving. Older pupils enjoy the work from a range of authors, including Roald Dahl, and by the end of Year 6, a good proportion of pupils make better progress in their reading.
- The gap between the attainment of pupils supported through the additional funding and that of other pupils is wide. In 2013, by the end of Year 6, eligible pupils were behind by approximately eight months in mathematics, reading and writing. School evidence shows these pupils are now making rapid progress across the school.
- Children in Reception begin school with skills below those expected for their age. Because of effective work in developing their speech and basic literacy skills, they are appropriately prepared for the next stage in their learning in Year 1.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good. These pupils are increasingly successful in their learning. Pupils within the special opportunities unit do well because of the versatile and personal support they receive.
- Actions by school leaders are effectively closing gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. Pupils' competency in their numeracy and literacy skills is improving so that within all year groups, their progress is rapidly increasing.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it has not consistently promoted good achievement. Therefore, as pupils move through the school, their progress has not been consistently good.
- Pupils do not always receive helpful feedback on their learning. Pupils are clear how to become successful in a particular task, as seen in several literacy sessions. However, teachers' written guidance does not consistently help pupils understand how to improve their work.
- Pupils of average ability are not always effectively challenged. Their learning is not regularly checked in order that once they can demonstrate they have a secure understanding, they are enabled to become even more successful in their work.
- Pupils are not sufficiently proficient in their writing. Their achievement in writing is hindered because pupils are not given enough opportunities to write at length, and this hinders their progress.
- Additional adults within the classroom take actions that are ensuring that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are making good progress.
- Pupils attached to the special opportunities unit are increasingly successful. This is because of the support they receive within the specialist provision and the range of learning experiences they participate in across the school.
- Children within the Reception classes are confidently developing their basic literacy skills. The variety of activities they enjoy and additional support they receive are extending the range of vocabulary they use when talking about their learning.
- Teachers plan activities that absorb pupils in their learning, for example, as seen within a Year 1

mathematics session. Pupils were increasingly enthused as they worked to solve a number puzzle which required them to explain their thinking.

- Pupils' learning is strong where teachers use questioning effectively. There are examples of effective practice, seen, for example, in Years 2 and 6, in which pupils' discussion helped them to apply their subject skills to form accurate responses in their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers and are enthusiastic in their learning. Children within the Reception classes are eager to talk about their activities and proud to show their work. Pupils in the special opportunities unit confidently welcome visitors and talk of the success they are enjoying in their reading.
- During break and lunchtimes, the school is calm and pupils play well together. Throughout the open spaces and in the dining hall, pupils are respectful of each other and enjoy the range of activities available.
- Behaviour is not better than good because pupils' positive attitudes have yet to have a stronger affect on their progress.
- Pupils value the responsibilities they assume within the school. These include helping in the day-to-day running of activities, including assemblies. Older pupils act as mentors for younger children. Pupils are especially enthused about growing their pumpkins. Pupils speak highly of the opportunities they have to work within teams, train as leaders and gain skills in first aid during their activities in the 'Pioneers' group.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say everyone is friendly in their school and teachers are always supportive. Cyber bullying and any other type of bullying are very rare. Pupils say name-calling does not take place and discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. Pupils have a secure understanding of how to keep safe while using the internet.
- Attendance is average. The school's actions are effectively improving this aspect of its work. The very large majority of parents are positive about their child's experience at school, as seen from those who responded to the online questionnaire.

The leadership and management require improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because achievement is not yet good. The headteacher is bringing marked improvements through well-planned actions. More effective checks on pupils' progress ensure gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding are closing. The quality of teaching is now leading to pupils making better progress.
- Subject leaders are active in checking the quality of teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility. However, they have yet to more thoroughly evaluate the impact new initiatives are having on pupils' progress.
- Procedures to review how well teachers enable pupils to make progress are in place. These are linked to their teachers' targets and pay and career progression. Teachers value the bespoke training to develop their classroom practice.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well provided for. Additional support such as speech therapy is tailored to the needs of pupils, enabling them to do well.
- Pupils in the special opportunities unit are effectively catered for and they are becoming increasingly successful in their learning.
- The school has the capacity to sustain improvements. Leaders draw on the Trust's range of support in addition to their own expertise. Leaders also collaborate with other colleagues locally and these partnerships bring benefits for pupils too.
- The provision for sport is well developed. Leaders use the additional primary funding effectively so that teachers deliver good quality physical education that is having a positive impact on pupils' physical wellbeing. The school's football teams are particularly successful in competitions.

Pupils say they enjoy table tennis. Archery, non-contact boxing and basketball feature strongly within the school, too.

- Pupils engage in a variety of experiences through the subjects they are taught. These especially focus on providing them with memorable activities which enthuse them, whatever the task. Pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy are planned for, along with a range of themed topics. Leaders are developing pupils' writing skills.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural experiences is thorough. Pupils reflect on what visiting speakers say during assemblies and there are opportunities to engage in philosophy. Pupils act as junior leaders and are active in raising funds for several charities. They participate in creativity weeks that include photography and studying work by artists from different cultures. There are educational visits to the theatre and places of worship.
- The school's work on safeguarding is thorough. Risk assessments cover the work of the school including taking pupils on educational visits.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are fully involved in the school. They have effectively overseen changes to the school's leadership to bring about improvements. They use their training to good effect and compare the school's performance with that of other schools nationally. Governors challenge school leaders to ensure improvements are being sustained. There are effective routines in place to check the headteacher meets performance targets. Teachers are rewarded with salary progression and promotion according to how their teaching promotes improved progress for pupils. Governors do not tolerate discrimination within the school. They check the additional funding is closing gaps in attainment for eligible pupils. The primary sports funding is used in ways which are extending the ability of teachers to provide physical education so that pupils' sporting skills are being enhanced. The management of the school's general budget is very effective.

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	138574
Inspection number	440065

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor led Academy
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	360
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lisa Evans
Headteacher	Tim Smith
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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