

The Haven Church of England/Methodist Voluntary Aided Primary School

Atlantic Drive, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN23 5SW

Inspection dates 15–16 July 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.

- All pupils make at least good progress in reading and writing to reach standards that are above average at the end of Year 6. In some classes, their progress is outstanding.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress because teaching is targeted to meet their individual needs.
- Teaching is consistently good and work in pupils' books suggests that at times it is outstanding. Teachers have high expectations and demand that pupils work hard.
- Teaching assistants are highly trained and contribute very effectively in class. They provide very effective support to different groups of pupils enabling them all to progress well.
- The school provides very good care for those pupils who are at risk of not doing so well.
- Pupils feel safe in school. They enjoy warm relationships with staff and know they are well cared for. They behave well in school and get on very well together regardless of background.
- Pupils benefit from a wide range of opportunities that add to their enjoyment of learning. They particularly enjoy the visits they make to support learning in the classroom.
- The headteacher works closely with school leaders and governors to give the school a clear direction and a sense of purpose. Teamwork is a real strength of the school.
- Despite changes since the previous inspection, school leaders have not lost sight of the need to achieve high standards for teaching and for pupils' achievement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Pupils do not have a secure enough grasp of basic skills of handwriting, spelling and punctuation by the end of Year 2.
- Teaching is improving but there is not enough that is outstanding to secure outstanding achievement for pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils working in 16 lessons or parts of lessons. They were joined by the headteacher and the deputy headteacher for six of these observations. They looked at work in pupils’ books and they listened to pupils in Years 2 and 6 read. They attended an assembly and they observed pupils in school and in the playground.
- Meetings were held with school leaders, members of the governing body and groups of pupils. A meeting also took place with a representative from the local authority by telephone.
- Among the documents scrutinised were records of pupils’ attainment and progress, plans showing how the school is to improve further and minutes from governing body meetings. Inspectors also looked at documentation relating to pupils’ behaviour and safety.
- The views of parents and carers were taken into account by analysing the 74 responses to the online survey, Parent View. Inspectors also considered one letter received from a parent or carer and spoke informally to parents and carers during the inspection. Inspectors also took into account the 37 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Joy Considine, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jackie Edwards

Additional Inspector

David Lewis

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school and is currently expanding to become a two-form entry primary school by September 2016.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for additional funding known as the pupil premium is lower than average. This is additional funding provided by the government for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after.
- The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language is lower than average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is lower than average. The proportion who are supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is lower than average.
- There is provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Reception classes.
- The headteacher is a Local Leader of Education (LLE).
- Since the previous inspection, there have been significant changes to the teaching team. School leaders have also managed a substantial building project to provide additional classrooms to accommodate the additional pupil numbers.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that, by the end of Year 2, pupils have a secure grasp of spelling and punctuation and that they write clearly, neatly and legibly.
- Improve teaching so that a greater proportion is outstanding by:
 - providing pupils with enough time to complete their work without interruptions
 - giving pupils more opportunities to think about the resources they select or the way in which they present their work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- All pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language and those from minority ethnic groups, work hard and achieve well in reading, mathematics and writing. Their standards have improved year on year so that, by the end of Year 6, their attainment is above average. More-able pupils achieve well because staff provide them with harder work that challenges them, enabling them to make good progress.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve in line with their classmates. This is because there are clear procedures to pinpoint their particular difficulties and work is targeted to meet what the pupils understand, know and can do. Highly skilled teaching assistants provide additional support in class by breaking tasks down into small steps so pupils understand what they are going to learn.
- Pupils eligible for additional funding progress at similar rates to other pupils. Their attainment in reading and writing is similar to that of other pupils but they are about a term behind others in mathematics. School leaders have made effective use of the additional funding to provide resources and support for these pupils in class. The most recent performance information shows that the gap in attainment between these pupils and others has closed rapidly as a result of this additional funding.
- Children in the Reception class start school with skills that are typically below the levels expected for their age. They progress well in all aspects of their development because staff provide an exciting range of activities that stimulate and interest them.
- The school introduced a new programme to teach letters and sounds (phonics) systematically and this is already increasing pupils' rates of progress in reading. Results of the Year 1 phonics screening check have improved and are above the national average. By the end of Year 6, pupils read widely and often and confidently talk about a wide range of books and authors they enjoy.
- Pupils' basic writing skills of spelling, handwriting and punctuation are not as good as they should be at the end of Year 2 and they do not always take enough care when completing their work.
- At Key Stage 2, pupils develop their writing skills well. They use a wide variety of vocabulary and figurative language to express their thoughts and ideas. This is because teachers use an extensive range of literature, including stories and factual information, to show pupils different ways in which writing can be constructed.
- Pupils enjoy mathematics and they make good progress. This is because they are taught well. They have a secure grasp of number facts and understand a range of strategies to carry out complex calculations. There are many times when they use these skills when learning other subjects. For example, in Year 4, pupils correctly put events in the correct timeline in history showing confidence when using larger numbers.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is typically good and sometimes better. Most teachers have high expectations for pupils and this is clear from the amount of work in pupils' books. In both writing and mathematics, pupils in most year groups make at least good progress over the year. This is because they receive good guidance from staff about how they can improve their work.
- Pupils enjoy learning and they have very positive attitudes towards school and to their teachers. They respond enthusiastically to teachers' questions and they enjoy sharing their ideas and discussing their work. This helps them to progress well. Just occasionally, their progress is slowed because some teachers interrupt them too many times when they are working.
- All staff are committed to including all pupils in all aspects of school life. They regularly check pupils' progress and put into place actions to help those who are at risk of falling behind.

Teaching assistants are highly skilled and provide effective support. Consequently disabled pupils and those eligible for the additional funding learn well.

- Teachers use their good subject knowledge effectively to plan work that challenges pupils of all abilities. They build on what pupils already know and understand and so learning is deepened and strengthened. However, there are times when learning is slowed because pupils do not have enough time to choose how they approach and present their work or the resources they use.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) is used effectively to help pupils to learn. For example, in a Year 6 literacy lesson, pupils were shown different types of comic strips and cartoons to demonstrate that particular style of writing. This helped pupils to make good progress in producing their own comic strips based on their class topic, 'Oliver'.
- Regularly checks are made on how well pupils are learning. Pupils' work is marked frequently and there are detailed comments about what needs to be improved. Pupils have time to respond to these comments by correcting and improving their work so that they do not repeat errors.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage learn well because they are welcomed into a bright and attractive classroom in which they feel safe and secure. They work and play indoors and outside and get on very well together. They develop confidence and resilience, which helps them to cope well when they enter Year 1.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Most pupils behave very well in class and when moving around the school. Break times are happy occasions when pupils join in with sporting activities, play their own games or just sit quietly together in the school's delightful grounds. Pupils enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their high levels of attendance.
- Pupils from all backgrounds get on well together. They are respectful towards each other and adults and know that discrimination on any grounds is not tolerated. Pupils are polite and well mannered and listen attentively in class. Just occasionally, some pupils are too reliant on adult support and need reminders to remain fully involved in learning.
- Pupils are very well aware of different forms of bullying, including that relating to the internet. They are adamant that it is rare. They say that adults are on hand to sort out the any occasional disagreements. Pupils follow school rules and they agree guidelines for behaviour at the start of the school year.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that teachers talk to them about how to stay safe. Staff place a high priority on pupils' safety and welfare and promote healthy lifestyles very well. They provide good support and guidance to the small number of pupils and their families who need extra help from time to time.
- Discussions with parents and carers and the responses to the Parent View survey indicate that parents and carers are confident that their children behave well and are happy and safe in school. One parent or carer wrote, 'I cannot be happier with any other school or more at peace than I am with The Haven – a truly safe and happy school.'

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides strong leadership and has high expectations for staff and pupils. A team of senior leaders and governors shares her ambition and drive for improvement and supports her very effectively. They are enthusiastic and committed and determined that the school continues to improve.
- One of the strengths of the school is the teamwork that permeates the school at all levels. All staff understand the priorities the school is working towards and they all understand their

contribution to achieving its success. Consequently they implement school policies consistently.

- The restructured leadership team provides opportunities for all teachers to be leaders at different levels and consequently middle leaders are highly effective. However, they know that more needs to be done to improve writing at Key Stage 1.
- School leaders are reflective and they have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They use performance information accurately to identify where improvements need to be made. Consequently actions for development are precise and targeted at areas most in need. This demonstrates that the school is well placed to improve further.
- School leaders often visit lessons, both formally and informally and look at pupils' work in their books. They provide guidance to staff on how they can improve. Consequently teaching has improved and is consistently good. All staff understand that their progression on the salary scale is linked to pupils' achievement.
- There is a well-planned programme of professional development that links closely to the school development plan. Staff often collaborate with other schools to share best practice and make the best use of time and resources. In her capacity as a Local Leader of Education, the headteacher has provided support and guidance to other schools within the local community. The local authority provides 'light touch' support for this good school.
- Pupils study a range of subjects and often use their literacy and numeracy skills in subjects other than English and mathematics. They write extensively in subjects such as history and religious education and they often use mathematics in science to create charts and graphs.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is promoted very effectively through many aspects of the school's work. During the inspection, pupils across the school watched in awe and wonder as talented Year 6 pupils put on a dress rehearsal of their end of year production, 'Oliver'.
- Pupils enjoy the wide range of additional activities including school visits that add to their enjoyment of learning. They are benefiting from the additional sports funding which allows the school to 'buy in' qualified sports coaches who support the staff and provide activities such as tennis and football at break times.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are highly effective in shaping the strategic direction of the school. In recent years they have worked with school leaders, the local authority and the local community to expand the school and oversee a significant building project. During this period, they ensured that the school continued to run efficiently and that pupils' education was not compromised. Governors visit school regularly and have a high profile within the school community. They have a good understanding of the school's performance in comparison with schools nationally. They know that only the best teaching is rewarded and that underperformance is not tolerated. They manage finances well and know that the pupil premium has effectively raised standards for those eligible pupils. They ensure that the school's systems to keep pupils and staff safe are robust.

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	131381
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	444213

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	431
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Vaughan Schulze
Headteacher	Wendy Bray
Date of previous school inspection	8 December 2010
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