

Hazelmere Infant School and Nursery

Hawthorn Avenue, Greenstead Estate, Colchester, CO4 3JP

Inspection dates 17–18 September 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress from often significantly low starting points. The proportion making good progress has improved since the last inspection.
- The school has a strong and effective headteacher who is developing a good team of senior leaders and governors who share a clear focus on raising standards for pupils.
- Teaching is good and staff have high expectations. Where pupils learn more quickly teachers use expert listening and questioning skills.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress and most are provided with a good range of challenging practical activities.
- Pupils are polite and well behaved in lessons, around the school and at playtimes. Pupils settle quickly to their work. Adults provide good support for pupils within the school to ensure all pupils feel safe and can enjoy their learning.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development are well developed. Pupils have a good understanding of what is right and wrong.
- English and mathematics subject leaders guide improvement well and this has led to speeding up progress for boys in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Parents and carers are very supportive of the school and are pleased with the care and guidance provided for their children. Parents are increasingly offering their support during the school day.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Progress in some classes is variable because teaching is not consistently good. This is particularly where feedback to pupils does not make it clear about how to improve their work, especially for the more able.
- The curriculum does not provide pupils with sufficient learning experiences linked to a wider range of cultures.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage the more-able children are not always provided with hard enough activities in the areas outside the classroom.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons, four of which were observed jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with pupils, members of the governing body, the local authority adviser and staff.
- Inspectors observed the school's work, looked at policies, the school website, self-evaluation and development planning, monitoring records, safeguarding documents, information about pupils' progress and samples of pupils' work. They listened to pupils reading books.
- The views of the nine parents and carers who responded to Ofsted's online survey (Parent View) were taken into account as were informal discussions with parents on the playground. Inspectors took into account the 20 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Christopher Cheswright, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jackie Cousins

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. It has two classes in each year group.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the education, health and care plan is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium (which provides additional funding for looked after children and those known to be eligible for free school meals) is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is increasing in the school, in particular from Eastern European backgrounds. It is currently close to the national average.
- There is an on-site nursery, Nanna's Nursery, which also provides before and after school provision for pupils. This is not managed by the governing body and is inspected separately.
- The headteacher has been in post for one year.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the achievement of the more-able pupils by:
 - ensuring the outside learning areas provide as challenging an environment as those in the classroom
 - providing clearer expectations when they tackle more challenging opportunities.
- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that all staff:
 - follow up routinely on what they have asked pupils to do to improve their work more rapidly
 - continue to develop their marking in order to guide pupils on what to do next.
- Improve the cultural development of pupils by:
 - developing the curriculum to incorporate more opportunities for pupils to experience and appreciate a wider range of different cultures.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has a clear determination to ensure that the school continues to improve the achievement of all pupils. During his first year he has quickly identified what is needed to improve standards of teaching across the whole school to rapidly raise achievement in all year groups.
- Through a restructure of the leadership team and clear guidance and training from the headteacher leadership across the school has been strengthened. This is particularly leading to rapid improvements in the outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and for disabled pupils and those who have special education needs, because the leaders have been given more accountability for the outcomes of pupils.
- The improvements since the last inspection demonstrate the school's capacity for further improvement.
- Robust systems are in place for checking the impact of the school's work and ensuring governors are kept well informed. For example, all data is available to governors within a week of it being collected so that discussions about the progress of specific classes and groups of pupils can have immediate impact.
- The curriculum is tailored to meet the needs of most pupils and is based on a themed approach with separate English and mathematics teaching. A curriculum map ensures that all aspects of the curriculum are covered and that this is enriched through visits and development of the outdoor space. For example, a wooden climbing frame, which the pupils asked for, is being constructed by school staff and parents and pupils are learning from its construction.
- The use of the additional primary sports funding is increasing pupils' skills and enjoyment of sporting activities. It has been used to provide access to multiskills clubs allowing pupils to experience a wider range of sports. Balance bikes allow younger pupils to develop their balance skills and bike safety. A specialist physical education teacher is developing the teaching of dance and gymnastics with the teachers. Yoga is being introduced to help pupils manage their behaviour.
- Parents are extremely supportive of the school and say that the headteacher has 'opened the door to parents'. The headteacher and governing body are working hard to put the school more at the heart of the community by encouraging parents to come into school at the start of the day. Parents of children recently started in Reception were invited to have school lunch with their children.
- Pupil's spiritual, moral and social development are well catered for through well-planned activities. For example, class discussions about the need for school rules and lessons where practical activities are designed to develop their creativity. The cultural aspects require further development to take account of the recent changes in the cultural make up of the school and to prepare them for life in modern Britain.
- Staff performance is managed well. The recent introduction of half termly progress meetings with all teachers is closely linked to whole-school improvement targets and improving teaching. A central feature of this process ensures that all staff across the school are involved in bringing about more rapid improvements in pupil progress.
- The local authority has provided support to the school through a review in the first year of the headteacher being in post and this has helped in the identification of key priorities for school development. The local authority recognises the importance of the links made with the partner junior school to improve the transition for pupils between the schools.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are well-informed. They know about the quality of teaching and understand what the school needs to do to improve. They use data well to inform their judgements and through the setting of targets for the headteacher ensure that performance is regularly monitored. The governing body has restructured meetings to ensure more time is available for decision making. Governors are aware of how additional funding is utilised in the school and have an overview of how this is improving

performance for these pupils. Governors ensure that all statutory requirements are met, including those related to child protection, safeguarding and equality of opportunity.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. In lessons, pupils concentrate well and work hard. They typically support each other well when working in groups. Pupils generally behave well in lessons and settle quickly to any new tasks. The change over between tasks is managed well and leads to good continuity in learning.
- Pupils are polite and move around the school sensibly. During lunchtimes, pupils respond well to the directions of adults when queuing and eating their lunch.
- In lessons, on occasions, some pupils with specific learning needs lose focus, but the expertise of support and teaching staff ensure that this does not disrupt learning of any pupils and is quick in ensuring they are back on task.
- The use of the sensory room and play therapists is a positive factor in the development of pupils' confidence and social skills.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The systems for ensuring pupils are safe meet requirements. For example, pupils and their parents are provided with training in the safe use of the internet.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and, if anything unkind happens to them, they know exactly who to go to and what to do. They say that bullying is rare and when it does happen it is dealt with quickly.
- Parents indicate that their children are safe and happy at the school. They are pleased with the increased security provided through the new boundary fences and say that the school deals quickly with any issues relating to behaviour and safety. One parent said 'The support from all staff at the school has been second to none.'
- When new pupils arrive at the school, in particular those for whom English is an additional language, a buddy system is used which ensures that they quickly get used to how to behave around the school. The increasing number of pupils from minority ethnic groups has created some challenges for the school in the attitudes of some pupils. These are being quickly addressed through assemblies and themed weeks.
- Attendance is improving following a dip in 2014. The leadership has provided clear expectations to parents on punctuality and pupils have access to classrooms earlier in the morning resulting in better punctuality. The leadership team and governors are ensuring that parents are aware of the implications of absence on pupils' progress and there is regular information about attendance in the weekly newsletter. The family liaison officer is offering good support to families to improve attendance.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good because teachers' assessments give them a clear understanding of what pupils need to learn. This means that lessons are generally well planned with work that meets the needs of most pupils. Pupils' learning is well supported through a range of exciting activities to develop basic skills.
- The majority of teachers listen carefully to what pupils have to say and use expert questioning in order to adapt the activities to ensure that good levels of challenge are provided.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are supported well by additional adults and strong teamwork. In a Year 2 literacy lesson, a group of pupils was skilfully supported and challenged by a member of the support staff; her questioning extended the pupils' learning and ensured that they stayed

fully focussed on the task.

- The progress made by boys in reading has been supported by providing more 'boy friendly' books giving them a reason for wanting to read. Boys have benefitted from more direct teacher-led activities which have identified their individual needs and allowed them to progress faster in their reading.
- Marking in English and mathematics is generally good in Key Stage 1 because it usually provides clear guidance for pupils on how to make their work better and by ensuring that this is acted on by the pupils. For example, clear progression can be seen in the use of bar charts in mathematics from displaying results to interpreting them.
- When teachers provide feedback in lessons this is not always specific enough for them to allow pupils to overcome misconceptions; for example in correcting punctuation. Feedback for the more-able pupils is not always quick enough for them to use the well-planned resources to extend their learning.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and abilities that are below those that are typical for their age, with a number significantly below. They make good progress in acquiring and using key skills because the teaching is well planned to meet their learning needs. Despite this good progress, fewer pupils than nationally reach the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they reach Key Stage 1 because their comprehension and mathematical skills limit progress.
- Since the last inspection, the achievement of pupils at Key Stage 1 has improved. Pupils now make good progress in Key Stage 1 in reading, mathematics and particularly writing from their low starting points. Pupils are attaining in line with other pupils of their age nationally.
- Results in the end of Year 1 screening check in phonics (the sounds that letters make) have improved and are now above the national standards. Effective targeting of support has ensured that significantly more boys have met the national standard by the end of Year 1.
- The attainment gap between those pupils supported by the pupil premium and other pupils nationally and in the school in reading, writing and mathematics is closing. These pupils are making better progress in writing than other pupils in the school. Additional funding has been used wisely to enhance and enrich learning and also to support pupils and parents through employing a family liaison worker and providing therapeutic sessions for pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress from their significantly low starting points. This is because the school tracks these pupils well and provides good support, especially in developing their language and communication skills and in their emotional development. The special educational needs coordinator has developed the expertise to identify the needs of individual pupils and ensures that the school has the resources to meet these. For example, play therapists develop social skills and a gym trail is used to develop fine motor skills.
- Pupils for whom English is an additional language make better progress than other pupils across the school because of the carefully planned support they are given on joining the school which ensures they quickly integrate and benefit from the support structure in the school.
- Improved tracking by the headteacher is key to the improvements made in pupil progress. A wide range of evidence is used to track progress and half-termly pupil progress meetings ensure that teachers are specifically targeting the learning needs of different groups.
- The most-able pupils do not always achieve well across the school. They often are less clear than other pupils on what they need to do next to improve. Where more challenging opportunities are provided they are not always given clear expectations on outcomes and therefore do not make the expected progress.

The early years provision is good

- Teachers have high expectations of children as soon as they arrive in the Nursery or Reception. As a result the children are very keen to learn, concentrating well on their learning. For example boys were seen to cooperate and share equipment as they learnt to pour water from jugs in order to develop their coordination and measuring skills.
- Teaching is good and, for example, children in Reception made good progress in developing their listening and attention skills through a whole class activity. This was because the teacher and children listened carefully to the animal sounds children made and this was linked to the sounds letters make.
- Many disabled children and those who have special educational needs start in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and abilities which are significantly below those expected for their age. However, they make rapid progress because of the expert support provided by teaching assistants.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is well managed and a secure baseline is established from which teachers plan the children's learning needs. Information from parents and the interest of the children are used to adapt the learning. This leads to children enjoying their learning and developing their imagination and creativity. Two children showed an interest in dinosaurs and were keen to show everyone their dinosaur drawings.
- An on-line assessment system is used successfully to assess children's progress using tablets which parents are able to access and contribute to. This allows staff to adapt the learning and provide help for each child. One parent said 'it is a great two-way information board about our child. It is lovely to see her enjoying school'.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are developing a good knowledge of phonics. Children supported by additional funding are now making progress in line with other children.
- Children make good progress from their starting points especially in language and communication and physical development. This is a result of the good use of resources in the inside and outside areas and staff who listen carefully and ask questions in order to adapt the learning to the children's needs. However, more-able children are not always given specific or developmental teaching, especially in the outdoor area, and do not always make good progress.

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	114746
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	448447
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	199
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Clare Hawkins
Headteacher	Steven Turnbull
Date of previous school inspection	24 March 2010
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