

Horton Kirby Church of England Primary School

Horton Road, Dartford, DA4 9BN

Inspection dates 25–26 February 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	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.

- The headteacher's strong drive for improvement is shared by staff and governors. Good leadership and management have resulted in improvements in teaching and pupils' performance since the last inspection.
- Pupils' progress is good in all year groups and secures consistently good achievement throughout the school.
- Attainment rose markedly in 2014 at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics, and continues to rise because of good teaching.
- Children in the early years get off to a good start. Children are well prepared for Year 1.
- Teaching is good. Marking shows pupils how to improve their work and pupils respond to this guidance.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive effective support and make good progress from their different starting points.
- Pupils' behaviour is good, both in lessons and in the playground. Pupils are polite and friendly.
- Pupils are kept safe in school. They are well supervised and say they feel safe.
- Middle leaders share the school's vision for improvement and contribute effectively.
- Governors are very involved in the school. They make a significant contribution to driving improvement in the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Sometimes the most able pupils are not given work that challenges them to work and think hard enough.
- Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to practise and develop their writing skills in subjects other than English.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 19 lessons or parts of lessons, of which eight were jointly observed with senior leaders.
- Inspectors looked closely at pupils’ work for the current school year. They listened to pupils read. They observed behaviour during morning breaks and at lunchtimes. They attended a school assembly.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils, parents and teachers to hear their views of the school. The inspection team took account of 90 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. They spoke to parents in the playground and several who were in school during the inspection.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, governors and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors scrutinised documents, including those relating to safeguarding, attendance and managing behaviour.
- Inspectors considered the 32 staff questionnaires that were completed.

Inspection team

Joanna Toulson, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Christine Mayle	Additional Inspector
Peter Lacey-Hastings	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is slightly larger than the average-sized primary school. Four of the 11 classes have mixed-age groups.
- The early years provision consists of two full-time Reception classes.
- The large majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for additional pupil premium funding is below average. This funding is available for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those in the care of the local authority. In 2014, the proportion of pupils eligible in Year 6 was very small.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There is a breakfast club on site. This is managed and inspected separately.
- Since the previous inspection there is a new Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Give pupils every opportunity to make rapid progress by:
 - making sure the most able pupils are given work that challenges them so that more reach the highest levels of which they are capable
 - ensuring that pupils develop their writing skills by writing at length and to a high standard not only in English but also in other subjects.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is ably supported by his deputy. Together, they have worked relentlessly, and successfully, to improve teaching and pupils' achievement since the previous inspection. The school is in a strong position to continue to improve.
- The checks that senior leaders make on the quality of teaching and learning are rigorous. Teachers have targets that are linked to how well pupils should achieve. The headteacher ensures that only good classroom practice leads to salary progression. Staff training, which includes visiting other schools and in-school sessions for the whole team, has helped all teachers to improve their practice.
- Middle leaders, some of whom are new to their role, share the headteacher's vision for making sure that pupils achieve as well as possible. They receive good support and training and contribute well to school improvement.
- The systems to check the progress of individual pupils and groups are used effectively to make sure that any pupil falling behind receives extra support.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate. The improvement plan is focused on appropriate priorities and frequent checks are made on how well the school is progressing towards achieving its aims.
- Equality of opportunity is promoted well. Values of respect and responsibility are strongly evident in school displays. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn about democracy and different cultures. As a result, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The curriculum has been planned so that the full range of National Curriculum subjects is covered. It is adapted well to meet the needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, but it sometimes does not provide enough challenge for the most able pupils. Pupils have good opportunities to deepen their understanding through special exhibitions of work. In one project, for example, Year 3 and Year 4 pupils displayed the Ancient Egyptian work they had done in school and at home in an exhibition to which parents were invited. The curriculum promotes mathematics, reading and writing well, although it does not always encourage pupils to develop their writing well in subjects other than English.
- The school environment is safe and calm, which enables good behaviour and good learning to flourish. Relationships across the school are strong. Discrimination of any sort is not tolerated.
- The school fosters good relationships with parents. Several of the parents spoken to during the inspection commented on how approachable staff are. The website provides up-to-date information to parents about school life, which helps them to contribute to their children's learning at school.
- Funding to accelerate the progress of disadvantaged pupils is used appropriately. Additional help through small-group support and individual tuition has helped to close any gaps in attainment.
- Additional funding for physical education and school sport has been used to improve the outside areas so that outdoor games can take place all year round. As a result, pupils' participation in sports and competitions has increased.
- The school has ensured that good systems are in place so that safeguarding meets statutory requirements and pupils are safe and well cared for.
- The local authority has supported the school well. It has met half termly with representatives from the governing body and the senior team to check progress. This has helped school leaders to keep focused on improving the achievement of pupils across the school. It has also provided other management support where needed, but this has reduced over time as the school has improved.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has improved its effectiveness considerably following the previous inspection. Governors are well trained and know the school very well. They are involved in all aspects of the school's work. They have a visible presence in the school and have specific areas of responsibility, on which they report to other governors in helpful detail. They use data effectively and understand how well the school is performing compared with other schools nationally. They receive frequent information from the headteacher about pupils' achievement and provide good challenge to school leaders.
 - Governors know about the quality of teaching across the school. They have ensured that the headteacher's pay is linked with his performance. They know about the targets set for teachers and how any underperformance is tackled.
 - Governors have supported school leaders in improving attendance by, for example, not authorising holidays in term time.
 - Governors carefully evaluate the impact of additional funding, such as the pupil premium for disadvantaged pupils and the sport funding, so that adjustments for further improvements are made.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are kind to each other and respectful towards adults. They contribute to the life of the school through the school council, the eco-council and by sitting with younger pupils at lunchtime. Pupils spoken to say that behaviour is good and all staff who completed the questionnaire agree. Most parents who responded to the online questionnaire also agree.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to their work and usually work hard. However, on those few occasions when activities are not sufficiently challenging, their concentration wavers and hinders behaviour being outstanding.
- Pupils enjoy school. As a result of robust systems to promote good attendance, pupils' attendance has risen over the last three years and is now similar to the average figure.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils spoken to said they feel safe in school. Break and lunchtimes are well supervised by staff.
- Pupils understand about the different sorts of bullying. They know that name calling is wrong and say that if it does occur it is dealt with quickly. The school's records show that any unacceptable behaviour is dealt with effectively. Pupils know how to keep safe on the internet.
- Pupils have prayer boxes and worry boxes in which they can leave notes about any concerns they may have. They are confident that adults will help them whenever necessary.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. This is a result of strong leadership.
- Teachers make clear to pupils what they are learning and how to be successful. Assessment is effective. Pupils' work is well marked and pupils usually respond to the comments that teachers make. Classrooms are bright and inviting.
- The most able pupils are usually challenged appropriately. However, sometimes these pupils have to complete work they can already do unnecessarily, before getting on with more difficult tasks. This slows their progress.
- The teaching of reading has improved since the previous inspection. Staff share their love of reading and join pupils in reading for pleasure every Friday. Library clubs, including boys-only reading clubs, appropriately promote an enjoyment of books.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds letters make) is effective and helps pupils to develop their reading and writing skills. Pupils learn the techniques needed to make their writing interesting. For example, in Years 5 and 6, the teachers made sure that all pupils understood how to write persuasively so that they could write engaging leaflets about a national park. In English lessons, pupils write to a good standard, but this is not always the case in other subjects. The teaching of mathematics is good. Teachers make sure that correct terminology is used. For example, in Year 1, the teacher's questioning encouraged pupils to use 'longer' and 'shorter' to describe clock hands. In another lesson, Year 2 pupils explained why a number was odd or even, and could describe patterns in number using mathematical language.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are supported well. Teaching assistants give effective extra help in class as well as in small groups and this helps pupils to make good progress.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Achievement has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. All groups of pupils, including White British pupils, currently in school make better progress than they have in the past because of improvements in teaching. Progress in writing is a little slower because pupils do not have the chance to develop their writing skills sufficiently in subjects other than English.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonic check was very high in 2014, and a marked improvement on the 2013 figure. Attainment at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics was also higher than in 2013, especially in reading.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 in 2014 also improved. Pupils' attainment was similar to the

national average in reading, writing and the English grammar, punctuation and spelling test. Attainment in mathematics was higher than average and a greater proportion of pupils reached the higher levels than was typical nationally.

- Evidence from the inspection, including pupils' workbooks and the school's assessments, suggests that the current pupils in Year 6 are on track to reach standards in 2015 in reading, writing and mathematics which are above the national average.
- There were too few pupils eligible for pupil premium funding in Year 6 in 2014 to report their attainment without them being identified. However, the school makes good use of the funding, with the result that disadvantaged pupils make good progress from their different starting points and often attain better in reading, writing and mathematics than their peers.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because they are well supported with work that is matched closely to their learning needs.
- The most able pupils make good progress. However, more needs to be done to make sure that they make the progress they should so that they consistently reach the highest levels of which they are capable.

The early years provision

is good

- Children enter the Reception classes with skills and abilities which are typical for their age, although with lower communication skills. They make good progress and, at the end of Reception, the proportion achieving a good level of development is above the national average. All children are well prepared for Year 1.
- Parents have good opportunities to be involved with their child's learning. Parents appreciate the termly Stay and Play afternoons when they can join their child in class to help them play and learn.
- Children are taught about different cultures from an early age. During the inspection, children made vegetable noodles and dragons, used chopsticks and wrote cards to celebrate Chinese New Year. Through these and other well-chosen activities, children develop early skills well.
- Teaching is good. The activities provided take into account children's needs, although sometimes activities for the most able children are too easy and this slows their progress.
- Children learn to play safely by taking turns and being kind to one another. They behave well while sitting on the carpet with the teacher and when playing together in the classroom and in the outside areas. They happily share a reading book and help each other with 'tricky' words.
- Leadership and management of the early years provision are good. Adults work closely together to provide a well organised, safe and secure environment for learning. Checks on learning are made soon after children join Reception so that individual needs are identified quickly and appropriate action taken.

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	118861
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	453647

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	280
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Daniel Tremain
Headteacher	Glenn Pollard
Date of previous school inspection	26–27 February 2013
Telephone number	01322863278
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