

The Highway Primary School

The Highway, Orpington, Kent, BR6 9DJ

Inspection dates 5–6 March 2015

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' achievement is good over time. They make above average progress in reading and writing, and average progress in mathematics to reach standards of attainment in line with the national average.
- In 2014 at the end of Year 2, an increased proportion of pupils attained the higher Level 3 in reading, writing and mathematics. However, fewer than the average attained Level 2a in mathematics.
- At the end of Year 6, in 2014, attainment in reading and writing was above average. There was a drop in the number of pupils attaining expected levels. However, more pupils than the average attained the higher Level 6 in mathematics.
- This year pupils in all year groups are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This includes disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs.
- The most able pupils are making very good progress. They are in line to do very well in 2015. For example, in Year 6 they are currently making at least the equivalent of two years' progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching is typically good. Learning in lessons and pupils' work in books confirm this.
- Leaders and managers check the quality of teaching and learning rigorously and regularly. The strategies put in place this year to improve the teaching of mathematics are beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' progress in mathematics.
- The curriculum is well planned to incorporate the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Governors have clear ambitions to give pupils an outstanding education. They know how to achieve this and check that managers are doing all the right things to realise it.
- Pupils' behaviour in and around school is outstanding. They respond with dignity to the high expectations teachers and other adults have of their conduct at all times.
- Safety is good. Pupils carry out their activities with a good sense of responsibility towards their own safety and that of their peers.
- Education in Reception is good. As a result, pupils make good progress and are well prepared for entry into Year 1.
- The areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection have been successfully tackled.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Teaching of mathematics to middle- and lower-ability pupils often leads them to be confused by too many concepts being taught at the same time.
- The outdoor area available to pupils in Reception is too small for the range of physical activities required by the early years framework.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited all classes and observed teaching in nine lessons. Six were observed jointly with either the headteacher or the deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' workbooks to see how much progress they had made over time.
- They talked to pupils to find out how happy they are at this school and how well they think they learn here.
- Inspectors also talked to parents and carers to see what they think about their child's school; whether they think behaviour is well managed, for example, and whether they think that their children are well taught here.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents used for the management of the school, including the behaviour and anti-bullying policies, other policies related to keeping children safe in school and minutes of governing body meetings.
- They talked to other teaching and non-teaching staff. They met with four governors: the Chair of the Governing Body and the Chairs of the finance, curriculum and standards committees.
- They also held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of responses by 49 parents and carers to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and they considered the responses of 16 members of staff to the anonymous staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors also looked at two external reviews of the school, commissioned by the school's leaders.

Inspection team

Mina Drever, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Victoria Turner

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school, with fewer boys than girls and with one class in each year group. Pupils can join the school full time in Reception.
- Pupils represent some 12 ethnic groups, though this changes slightly from year to year. The largest group is White British, which makes up four fifths of pupils on roll. The other two largest groups are Other White and African.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is much smaller than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs is much smaller than the national average and it varies from year to year.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium grant is well below average, though it has increased in the last year. In this school the grant is used to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after.
- The school is receiving an increasing number of pupils with multiple needs. For example, some pupils who are supported by the pupil premium also have special educational needs.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in mathematics, reading and writing.
- Partnerships with other schools include being a member of the South Orpington Learning Alliance of eight schools.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement in mathematics by:
 - ensuring that pupils of lower and middle ability are given suitable and planned opportunities to acquire complex concepts with full understanding before moving on to the next step.
- Improve the outdoor provision for children in the early years so that children have a greater variety of equipment to extend their physical development, as required by the early learning framework.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- All leaders, teachers and other school staff are united in their vision to provide an outstanding education to the pupils who come to this school. Parents, carers and pupils are very appreciative of these aims and work hard together with the school to work towards them.
- The strong ethos, 'where everyone matters', is underpinned by a 'family sense' of being responsible for one another and for supporting one another. As a result, social behaviour and relationships are outstanding.
- The headteacher has put in place rigorous systems for checking the quality of teaching and the rate of progress each pupil makes. Teachers' performance is checked against the progress pupils make. The headteacher has also played a significant role in planning management succession by building good capacity in the senior leadership team
- Individual and collective professional development for teachers is carefully identified and targeted for specific teaching and learning areas. This year, for example, new systems are in place to raise the achievement in mathematics. Impact can already be seen in the faster progress that pupils currently in school are making.
- Every teacher and every adult knows how much progress pupils are making at any one time because of the frequent checks that teachers carry out on individuals' learning.
- The very detailed school development plan is based on rigorous and accurate self-evaluation, focused clearly on raising standards, for example, improving teaching and learning in mathematics.
- Subject and phase leaders are knowledgeable about the most effective teaching strategies for promoting learning. For instance, new approaches to teaching mathematics to raise standards have been put in place since September 2014. Internal school progress checks show that pupils are beginning to make better progress in mathematics in all year groups.
- The curriculum is underpinned by creativity. Subjects are taught both as stand-alone areas of learning, and interwoven through the curriculum via thought-provoking projects. For example, pupils learn to apply computing skills in investigations about climate change around the globe. A virtual but safe learning platform has been created for pupils in school. It allows them to become experts in blogging and uploading their own work to share with friends, teachers and parents.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of the pupils' education are very strong. Music stands out as it involves all pupils in singing and learning to play instruments. It is used effectively to raise pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Through studying and debating various aspects of democracy, such as the voting system and the right to express opinions, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Equal opportunity is enshrined in the school's values of respect and celebration of the uniqueness of the individual. All pupils have equal access to all aspects of school life.
- There are very good and reliable systems for identifying pupils with special educational needs. Managers visit pupils' previous nursery schools and/or their homes before they join Reception. They get accurate information about pupils' needs and prepare appropriate support programmes. Progress is checked regularly. As a result, these pupils make good progress from their different starting points.
- The pupil premium grant is used extremely well to make the most impact on progress. Besides individual and group support in literacy and mathematics, it is used to facilitate participation in sports clubs, visits to museums and theatres, and residential trips.
- The sports premium grant has been spent on specialist coaches and new equipment, and used to increase teachers' expertise in teaching physical education. Pupils' fitness has improved through innovative programmes which involve daily exercises for all pupils and participation in competitive sporting activities.
- The local authority has worked with the school as a critical friend since the last inspection. Members of staff provide expertise to the local authority. For example, the early years leader acts as a local authority moderator for early years assessment. The deputy headteacher leads a number of schools on professional development in improving the quality of teaching writing. The school meets safeguarding requirements. Safe recruitment practices and good risk assessments ensure that pupils are safe whilst in school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors provide a good balance of support and challenge to the school leaders. They know that the teaching of mathematics to the lower-ability pupils needs improving. They approved the purchase of appropriate resources and training for staff in order to achieve this. They are well trained in analysing

pupils' test results. They understand precisely where the school sits in the performance tables and what they need to do to make this an outstanding school. To this end they check the leaders' management of teachers' performance. Salary and promotional rewards are strictly monitored, as is the headteacher's performance. Governors have been managing a very tight budget very well for a long time.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. They arrive punctually to every lesson ready to learn. They apply themselves to each task with great interest and enthusiasm. They like coming to school and as a result attendance is very good.
- Pupils say that disruption to learning is extremely rare, because pupils like learning and there are very clear rules for good learning behaviour, which teachers use very well. Pupils respond to the 'Golden Rules' – based on sanctions and rewards – with a high degree of respect and maturity.
- At break and lunchtimes pupils play very nicely together in the very well-equipped playground. There are lots of activities for them to get involved in, for example a giant chess board and handball. There are also 'quiet areas' for those pupils who wish to relax and watch others at play.
- The ethos of the school encourages very good social behaviour. For example, once a week 'social skills groups' meet to share worries and anxieties. They talk about what makes people feel good about themselves and what behaviour can be hurtful. As a result, pupils develop very good levels of self-esteem and self-confidence.
- Parents and carers say that their children are very happy in school. 'It's like a family here', said one parent.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe. Parents and carers are satisfied that their children are well looked after by the school.
- There are good systems in place to make sure that pupils stay safe whilst in school and when they go out to day or residential trips. Staff members carry out stringent risk assessments.
- All staff contribute to the physical and emotional safety of the pupils, responding to their individual needs with appropriate support.
- Teaching pupils about all types of safety runs through active learning about the dangers of life. For example, a literacy lesson asked pupils to consider whether children should be banned from the internet. As a result, pupils see that safety covers all aspects of life. They understand all forms of bullying and discriminatory attitudes.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is fun and interesting. Pupils say that teachers make learning exciting, especially when they are allowed to carry out research by themselves to find out facts from the internet.
- Pupils make good progress in lessons because teachers and adults use high-level questioning as a basis for learning. Every lesson and every project starts with a question. For example: 'Can I create an experiment that will measure the capacity of my lungs?'
- Teachers take great care in planning tasks appropriate to pupils' individual abilities. However, mathematical tasks for the lower-ability pupils often contain too many concepts at the same time. This causes confusion and consequently they make slower progress than the more able pupils.
- The most able pupils make very good progress in lessons. Their ability to explain complex concepts is impressive. For example, Year 6 pupils displayed a very good understanding of correlation, the relationship between different events.
- Workbooks show that the most able pupils make a huge amount of progress in their learning and understanding, for example, from calculating areas of two-dimensional shapes to converting percentages and fractions into one another. However, work in books suggests that the progress of lower-ability pupils in acquiring mathematical knowledge is slower.
- Teachers mark all work carefully and there is plenty of evidence that pupils use teachers' written feedback well to improve the quality of their work.

- The school uses a systematic whole-school approach to literacy. Pupils use this well, learning to transfer their literacy skills quickly from one subject to another. Pupils take good advantage of the many resources available to them to test their literacy skills, for example using spellchecks on computers and dictionaries. High expectations ensure that pupils apply grammatical correctness in all subjects, including when writing in science.
- Pupils read very widely and they show great enjoyment of books. This is because teachers use very effective strategies in teaching them how to read for understanding and enjoyment.
- The teaching of mathematics across the curriculum has improved and is now well developed, with pupils applying mathematical understanding to everyday life. For example, during events such as 'maths week', they use opportunities during visits to shops to scrutinise pricing, and when looking at buildings in their community they study their shapes. They learn about budgeting and saving. During the school's 'science week', they make relationships between investigative charts and statistical calculations.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils achieve well from their different starting points. They join Reception with skills that are above those expected for their age. They make good progress and reach well above the national average standards by the end of Reception. This leaves them well prepared to start Year 1.
- Over time, between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, pupils make more than expected than-average progress in reading and writing. In mathematics, progress is in line with average expectations, though the lower-ability pupils make slower progress in mathematics than they do in reading and writing.
- In 2014, test results at the end of Year 2 showed great improvements over 2013, with many more pupils attaining good standards in reading and writing. Improvement in mathematics was lower and middle-ability pupils made less progress in mathematics than in mathematics and in reading.
- Attainment in 2014, at the end of Year 6, was in line with the average. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standards in mathematics and reading improved.
- The most able pupils did very well at the end of Year 2 and at the end of Year 6. Many more pupils attained the higher Level 3 in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2, and the higher Level 6 at the end of Year 6.
- Currently, pupils are making good progress in all year groups in reading, writing, and mathematics. In mathematics this is because leaders and teachers have put in place, since September 2014, new teaching and learning approaches which are promoting better understanding of mathematical concepts. For instance, all pupils in Year 6 are making at least expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics. The most able are making very rapid progress.
- There is a range of achievement for pupils with special educational needs from year to year. This is because the numbers are very small and their needs are individual and different from year to year. They make good progress in their own right from their different starting points. This is because of the individualised support they receive from teachers and other adults.
- The number of disadvantaged pupils in 2014 at the end of Year 6 was too small to make any comparisons with other pupils nationally or with other pupils in class. Those disadvantaged pupils in the current Year 6 are making the same accelerated rate of progress as other pupils in writing and mathematics. They are less than half a term behind in reading.
- The very few pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well, as do pupils from all other ethnic groups. This is because each individual pupil's progress is carefully targeted for support when needed. In addition, the school puts a great deal of importance on the development of good literacy in all learning. This helps these pupils to make rapid progress in all subjects.

The early years provision

is good

- Pupils' attainment at the end of Reception was well above the national average in 2014.
- Pupils learn very well in lessons and make very good progress because the teaching is of a very high quality. Therefore pupils are very well prepared for entry into Year 1.
- Learning is very well planned and staff are very well trained in how pupils at this age learn. Adults model learning very well. For example, pupils learn to formulate sounds very carefully and accurately when learning the sounds made by letters of the English alphabet.

- Assessment procedures are very meticulous and recorded weekly and electronically, with examples of pupils' work. Parents and carers can access the ongoing records at any time to see how well their children are doing.
- Leaders provide a harmonious learning environment, which is very safe and conducive to pupils' happy participation in their learning.
- Pupils behave very well in lessons, enjoy learning and are very attentive to adults' instructions. They play extremely well together in the outside area. However, the outdoor area is not big enough for pupils to run around. The area where they can learn to cycle is very tiny. It is in general quite restrictive. This is why the early years provision is not outstanding.

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	101624
Local authority	Bromley
Inspection number	444151

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	219
Appropriate authority	The Governing Body
Chair	Ms Sarah Gardiner
Headteacher	Mrs Sue Kenneth
Date of previous school inspection	30 November – 1 December 2009
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