

# High Ongar Primary School

The Street, High Ongar, Ongar, CM5 9NB

**Inspection dates** 16–17 April 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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, school leaders and governors are providing good leadership, which has led to marked improvements in teaching, pupils' achievement and early years provision since the last inspection. The school is continuing to improve.
- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and their understanding of British values well.
- Pupils' safety and well-being are exceptionally well promoted. Staff ensure that pupils are always safe and secure.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They behave well in lessons and their conduct around the school is excellent. They have positive attitudes to school. Their attendance is above average.
- Teachers' questioning to deepen pupils' thinking is good. They plan interesting activities to motivate pupils. Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils' learning.
- Pupils throughout the school are making good progress. Pupils who left Year 6, in 2014, were well prepared for secondary school.
- The early years provision is well led, teaching is good, learning opportunities are carefully planned and children's safety and well-being promoted exceptionally well. As a result, children feel happy, safe and secure and they are making good progress.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally teachers set pupils' tasks which they find too difficult or too easy.
- Teachers do not always check that pupils are responding to the good advice they are given to improve their writing.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed pupils' learning in six lessons with the headteacher and saw all teachers.
- The inspector heard a few pupils read and looked at samples of pupils' work across the school, including that of children in the early years.
- He held meetings with the headteacher, subject leaders, the early years leader, the special educational needs co-ordinator, four members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and a group of 10 pupils.
- The inspector took account of parents' views. He analysed the 38 responses to Parent View (the online questionnaire for parents) and the 79 responses to the school's most recent survey of parents. He spoke to parents informally who accompanied their children to school. The inspector also looked at the responses on the 27 questionnaires returned by staff.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation including: school improvement planning and evaluation of its work; outcomes of governor's visits to the school, the local authority reviews of the school; safeguarding policies, vetting procedures and records of training; attendance figures and records of behaviour; information about pupils' progress across the school, including in the early years.

## Inspection team

Declan McCarthy, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average primary school.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- Pupils are taught in five mixed aged classes and all children in the early years Reception class attend full-time.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium is lower than in most schools. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the last inspection a new early years teacher has been appointed.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and raise pupils' achievement by making sure that teachers always:
  - provide learning activities that give the right levels of challenge to pupils of different abilities and which they find neither too difficult nor too easy
  - check that pupils are responding to the good advice they are given to improve their writing.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- Good leadership of the headteacher with good support from school leaders and governors has improved teaching and learning, raising pupils' achievement across the school since the last inspection. They have developed a strong culture where teaching and good behaviour thrive. Staff morale is high and all staff share the same commitment and drive to bring about further improvement.
- At the time of the previous inspection, there were considerable weaknesses in early years provision which greatly limited the progress children were making. Leaders have successfully addressed these weaknesses so that the early years provision is now good, enabling children to make good progress and achieve a good level of development. Leaders have also successfully addressed weaknesses in attendance and in marking of pupils' work; attendance has moved from below average to above average and pupils always know how to improve their work, although they do not always respond to the good advice they are given.
- Parents have full confidence in the school as reflected in their strongly positive views of the school and confidence in the school leadership.
- Leadership of teaching is good. School leaders examine pupils' books on a termly basis, regularly visit lessons to look at the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and review the school's data on the progress each pupil makes every half term. As a result, teaching has improved and it is now good.
- The management of staff performance is good. All targets are linked to whole-school priorities for improvement, focusing sharply on raising achievement. These targets are regularly reviewed to ensure that improvements in teaching and learning are sustained.
- The early years teacher is providing good leadership in strengthening links with parents, developing and implementing more robust systems for recording the small steps of progress children are making and raising children's achievements.
- Subject leadership is good. Subject leaders have implemented the new curriculum and the new arrangements for assessment well across the school. The new curriculum has a strong emphasis on developing basic skills of literacy, numeracy and computing and provides good opportunities to learn a broad range of subjects.
- Subject leaders thoroughly reviewed the school's results in 2014 and quickly put strategies into place to bring improvements in English grammar, punctuation and spelling. These are proving successful in improving pupils' skills and raising pupils' achievement further.
- Leaders are promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. They are preparing pupils well for life in modern Britain through well thought out topics on democracy, the elections, the celebration of Remembrance Day, and a range of religious festivals. Assemblies develop pupils' awareness and appreciation of their own, and other faiths such as Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism and Islam. Pupils learn right from wrong and develop good social skills such as the safe use of the internet, taking turns and sharing activities during lessons.
- Leaders effectively promote good relationships. Equality of opportunity is demonstrated clearly as all pupils are making equally good progress from their different starting points. The school tackles any form of discrimination well as there are no recorded incidents of racism or homophobia in the school.
- Leaders use pupil premium funding well to provide additional one to one and small group support for disadvantaged pupils, enabling them to catch up with their classmates. As a result, the gap between their attainment and that of other pupils nationally is narrowing considerably.
- Leaders make equally good use of primary sports funding to provide additional coaching in tag rugby, gymnastics and dance. They run a wide range of after school clubs with high participation rates among pupils. These are leading to successes in competitive games, such as netball, with other schools across the

county.

- The local authority is providing good levels of support and challenge for the school through regular reviews, training and guidance in developing action plans for further improvement.
- Safeguarding procedures are very effective and meet legal requirements. Very robust systems are in place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of pupils. Regular training is available to all staff. Risk assessments are exceptionally thorough, for example, with all staff signing that they have read the very latest guidance on keeping children safe in education. Checks on the suitability of staff and visitors to work with children are rigorous.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are providing strong oversight of the school’s work. They have strengthened their monitoring of the school’s performance through activities such as visits to lesson, review and analysis of data about pupils’ achievement and scrutiny of pupils’ work. They link each of their visits to an area for school improvement. As a result, they have an accurate view of how well the school is doing. They use the outcomes of their monitoring well to shape priorities for further improvement.
  - Governors have implemented robust procedures for managing the performance of the headteacher and staff. Individual targets are sharply focused on the school’s priorities to improve the quality of teaching and raise achievement. Governors know about quality of teaching, have dealt with underperformance effectively and ensure that only good teaching is rewarded.
  - Governors are ensuring the school uses the pupil premium and sports premium funding effectively to improve pupils’ learning and well-being.
  - Governors are very effective in promoting safeguarding. They rigorously check health and safety procedures to ensure the premises and grounds are secure. They thoroughly review and update policies to promote safeguarding. Governors make sure leaders are promoting British values and the pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils behave well in lessons and respond well to the consistently good management of their behaviour and the good role models provided by staff. Many, but not yet all, have a thirst for knowledge, which has a strong impact on their progress. Pupils’ behaviour around the school is excellent. Pupils, staff and parents say that behaviour is good.
- Pupils have good relationships with adults and with one another. They listen carefully to staff and follow instructions and they are courteous and polite to visitors. They respect the views of others and their good behaviour and attitudes to learning are having a positive impact on their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils’ good attitudes to school are reflected in their punctuality and above average attendance, which has significantly improved since the last inspection. Pupils’ positive attitudes to school are also reflected in their high levels of participation in school activities. They take pride in presenting their written work neatly and they nearly always remain focused on their lesson activities.
- The behaviour of children in the early years provision is consistently good. They have settled into the school’s routines and they are learning to share and take turns.

### Safety

- The school’s work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. The school is extremely thorough in checking the suitability of staff and visitors who work with its pupils. The school grounds and premises are safe and secure. Potential risks to safety are rigorously assessed and where any such risks are identified, effective measures are taken to significantly reduce or eliminate them.

- Pupils are exceptionally aware of how to keep themselves and their classmates safe. They always use equipment and learning resources safely including computers and the internet. Pupils have a good understanding of the risks to health and well-being of smoking, alcohol and drugs.
- Pupils say they always feel very safe in school and if they are anxious about anything they would go to any member of staff for support. Parents and staff strongly agree that pupils are very safe in school.
- They rightly say that bullying is extremely rare and, if it occurred, it would be dealt with swiftly and effectively. Since the last inspection, there are no recorded incidents of bullying or harassment of any kind. Pupils have a very good understanding of different types of bullying, including cyber bullying.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Teachers use questioning very effectively to make pupils think and deepen their understanding. For example, in a Year 1 and 2 mathematics lesson, pupils working with odd and even numbers, were challenged to explain their reasoning. In a Year 4 English lesson, pupils rapidly developed good persuasive writing skills when the teacher asked them to think of words that challenged, reassured, encouraged and convinced a snowman to come into a warm kitchen.
- Teachers plan interesting activities to stimulate learning. This was evident in lessons, in pupils' work and records of whole school activities such as a mathematics day when pupils worked out how many vehicles would fit comfortably in the school car park and the playground by measuring dimensions and sizes of vehicles. In a Year 3 lesson, pupils used the internet safely to research carnivorous plants and then write about the characteristics of the *Sundew* plant, which they did with great enthusiasm.
- Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils' learning, especially disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and disadvantaged pupils in all lessons. They break tasks down into smaller steps, focus on pupils' understanding of technical words, and provide examples to illustrate methods and approaches.
- The teaching of basic skills of literacy and numeracy are good and teachers promote these skills well in other subjects, such as history, geography and science.
- Assessment systems have improved and are generally used effectively to inform pupils how to improve their work. However, occasionally teachers do not use the information about pupils' prior learning well enough to set pupils tasks, which are challenging enough to deepen their thinking. As a result, pupils sometimes find tasks too difficult or too easy, which limits their progress.
- The quality of marking has greatly improved since the last inspection with teachers informing pupils how to improve their writing. However, pupils' work shows that they do not always respond to this good advice and teachers do not always follow this up.

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children enter the early years with knowledge, skills and understanding which are broadly typical for their age although they are a little lower in communication and language, and literacy. They make good progress in all areas of learning and most achieve a good level of development.
- A high proportion of pupils, in Year 1, reached the nationally expected standard in the phonics screening check, in 2014. The school's accurate data shows that pupils, currently in Year 1, are on course to exceed this nationally expected standard again. This is a marked improvement since the last inspection.
- Attainment varies from year to year because cohort sizes are small. At the end of Year 2, in 2012 and 2013, standards were above average overall. In 2014, attainment was broadly average. Standards in reading and writing were a little higher than in mathematics. The school's accurate data and pupils'

work shows that pupils, currently in Year 2, are making good progress and are on course to achieve above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics this year.

- In 2014, pupils in Year 6 left the school, on average, one term ahead of pupils nationally in reading and writing and reached similar standards to pupils nationally in mathematics. Standards in English grammar, punctuation and spelling, although broadly average, were not as high as in other subjects. Leaders quickly implemented successful strategies to bring improvements. As a result, pupils' competence in English grammar, punctuation and spelling has risen sharply.
- The school's accurate data and pupils' work in their books show that pupils in Year 6 are making good progress and are on course to reach above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics this year. However, pupils' progress in writing is not quite as fast as it could be, because pupils do not always respond to their teacher's feedback and advice. All groups of pupils are making equally good progress from their different starting points. They are well prepared for secondary school.
- The few disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are making the same good progress as other pupils because teaching assistants are providing effective support for their learning in lessons. Occasionally the tasks they are given are too difficult but they are able to do these with help from teaching assistants.
- The most-able pupils across the school are making good progress from their higher starting points. A few of the most able pupils in Year 6 did not make enough progress in mathematics in 2014, as none reached the highest level 6 on the national tests. However, this year, the school's accurate data and pupils' work shows that the most able in Year 6 are on course to reach the highest level 6 in the national tests.
- There were too few disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 in 2014 to compare their attainment with that of their classmates, or with other pupils nationally, without identifying them. However, they all made at least the progress expected of them in reading, writing and mathematics. The progress of disadvantaged pupils in current year groups is good and some pupils are making more rapid gains so gaps in attainment with their classmates are narrowing.
- Reading records show that pupils are reading widely and often, and as a result are making good progress. Pupils in all year groups are making good progress in mathematics and writing because more attention has been given to developing pupils' skills in reasoning and problem solving and in developing their accurate use of grammar, punctuation and spelling in different subjects.
- Pupils are staying fit and healthy and making good progress in physical education because of good use of the primary sports funding.

### **The early years provision**

**is good**

- Good leadership of the early years provision has resulted in marked improvements in the quality of teaching and children's achievement since the last inspection. Leaders have developed a stimulating learning environment with a rich range of resources. Systems for tracking and recording the progress children are making in each area of learning are more detailed and thorough. Links with parents are now good. Parents are encouraged to stay and work with their children on a weekly basis.
- Good teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is evident in records of children's work. These show that they are linking letter names to letter sounds, forming letters correctly and are counting and recognising objects to 10. In activities seen during the inspection, children were taking turns and sharing resources because staff encouraged and praised them.
- Children make good progress in all areas of learning because staff provide an interesting range of activities that captivate the children's imagination and curiosity. For example, children displayed great enthusiasm and enjoyment when searching for hidden pictures of objects in the outdoor learning environment, which they matched to letter sounds. Children are reaching a good level of development

and are well prepared for entry into Year 1.

- Teamwork between the teacher and teaching assistants is strong. Together, they ensure that children are always very safe and they provide high levels of supervision and engagement in children's activities. They rigorously apply all procedures for safeguarding so that children always feel very safe and secure indoors and outdoors. The children are happy, settled and behave well.



## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	114938
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	462105

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	148
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Judith Ogan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Penny Bennett
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25 April 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	01277 363761
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