

De Havilland Primary School

Travellers Lane, Hatfield, AL10 8TQ

Inspection dates 30 April–1 May 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.

- This is a happy improving school where all pupils feel welcome.
- The headteacher, ably assisted by the deputy headteacher and governors, provides highly effective leadership. As a result, teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are rising, teaching is improving and pupils' progress is accelerating.
- Staff morale is high because the culture of the school has changed. Staff feel valued and supported. They work well as a team and share a common vision for continuous improvement.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. It also prepares pupils successfully for life in modern Britain.
- The quality of teaching is at least good, especially in mathematics and in the early years.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils are enthusiastic learners. They arrive punctually at school and to lessons. They are kept completely safe while they are in school.
- Pupils have exceptionally positive and trusting relationships with staff. Staff boost pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem very well.
- From starting points that are often below what is typical, all groups of pupils make good progress and reach average standards by the time they leave. Standards across the school are rising.
- Children in the early years achieve well, and sometimes outstandingly so, from their different starting points.
- Attendance is good and improving.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Marking does not always give pupils clear feedback on how they can improve their work. Teachers do not always check to make sure that pupils act on their comments and advice.
- A small minority of teachers do not always provide tasks that challenge pupils appropriately, including the most able. The work is also sometimes too difficult for the least-able pupils, who do not understand it or know how to improve.
- Pupils' progress in reading, including their understanding of phonics (sounds linked to letters) and their comprehension skills, is not as rapid as it is in writing and mathematics. Pupils do not read widely enough across the curriculum as a whole.
- Pupils' standards in extended and creative writing are not as high as they are in other aspects of writing.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 25 lessons. Four of these visits were conducted jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. While visiting lessons, inspectors looked at the work in pupils' books and talked to pupils about their learning. They also carried out a short walk around the school to observe behaviour.
- A group of pupils from Key Stage 2 accompanied inspectors around the school to help them gather information about the school's curriculum, the pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development, and pupils' behaviour and safety.
- In addition to looking at pupils' books during lesson observations, inspectors reviewed pupils' work and heard individual pupils read. They also observed playtime and lunchtime activities.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior staff and staff with responsibility for leading achievement, different subjects and year groups. Inspectors spoke informally with members of staff and pupils as they moved around the school.
- Inspectors viewed the results of the 18 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). Inspectors took account of the school's survey of parents' views made in the spring of 2015. They spoke informally with parents as they collected their children at the end of the day. The 32 questionnaires submitted by members of staff were taken into consideration.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, which included: the school's checks on how well it is doing and its plans for improvement; evidence about how teachers are set targets to improve pupils' progress; records of the school's checks on the quality of teaching; minutes of meetings of the governing body and the senior leadership team; information about pupils' progress; records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Terrance Mortimer, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Mandy Short	Additional Inspector
Bimla Thakur	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- De Havilland is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the pupil premium provides support is above the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below the national average.
- Just over half the pupils are from White British backgrounds, with the rest coming from a variety of minority ethnic backgrounds, the largest group being African. There are just over one quarter of the pupils attending the school who speak English as an additional language.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6
- Children attend the Nursery part time and Reception on a full-time basis.
- Since the appointment of the headteacher in September 2012, half of the teaching staff have left the school and been replaced by other teachers. Three senior leaders have been appointed since Easter 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is typically outstanding, and pupils' achievement continues to rise, by ensuring that teachers:
 - always provide activities that are pitched at the right level of difficulty and are suitably challenging, especially for the least- and the most-able pupils
 - provide more opportunities throughout the school for pupils to develop their skills in extended writing
 - provide pupils with clear guidance, both in lessons and through their marking, on how they can do better, and insist they act on this advice so that their work improves.
- Improve pupils' reading by:
 - strengthening pupils' understanding of phonics across the school
 - giving pupils more opportunities to read appropriately demanding texts in different subjects so that they can improve their comprehension skills
 - developing pupils' love of reading across all areas of the curriculum.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has created a senior leadership team with clear terms of reference and redefined responsibilities. This has enabled the school to cope with the many changes in staffing it has undergone since the last inspection. Over half of the current teaching staff has arrived at the school in the last two years. Many staff have left the school since the last Section 5 inspection.
- Staff and governors form a unified team who enthusiastically share the headteacher's ambition for the school and for pupils' achievement. They communicate their high expectations clearly to leaders and teachers, and the school is moving forward rapidly. Leaders' and governors' evaluations of the school's effectiveness are honest and realistic, and set out clear strengths and priorities for improvement.
- Parents spoken to at the school gate are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They speak extremely positively of the headteacher and staff, saying that they are approachable and know pupils well as individuals. They are very supportive of the changes made by the current leadership. The school creates and maintains strong links with families of children whose circumstances might make them vulnerable as well as those who speak English as an additional language. This contributes to pupils' good progress and achievement.
- The headteacher has acted to address previous shortcomings. His drive and determination, supported well by the deputy headteacher, have created a culture that has contributed considerably to improvements in teaching, assessment, behaviour and curriculum development. Governors, parents and staff are wholly supportive of leaders' focus on raising achievement. Consequently, there is a positive ethos within the school that is enabling pupils to thrive. The morale of the staff is high and they appreciate the good support and guidance he has given them.
- Leaders have challenged inadequate teaching across the school and this has resulted in marked improvements in the quality of teaching. Disappointing results at the end of Year 2 in 2014 were the result of previous inaccuracies in teachers' assessments and poor teaching. Both have been addressed. Consequently, standards are now rising rapidly and the school is on course to exceed previous levels of attainment in both key stages.
- Leaders' accurate analysis of pupil performance data has enabled them to identify appropriate priorities and develop a well-considered improvement plan, for example, to improve writing. Their rigorous monitoring of teaching and teacher assessment is making a big difference to the quality of teaching; it is helping teachers to target work more accurately and so improve pupils' performance. Leaders say that 'every week is a monitoring week'.
- Teachers' individual targets are clearly focused on improving pupils' progress. Leaders provide good levels of support for teachers and the well-planned training they have organised has strengthened teaching considerably. Decisions about teachers' salaries are directly linked to evidence of teachers' impact on pupils' achievement.
- Leaders make sure pupils have many opportunities through the curriculum to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. The school encourages pupils to show respect for each other and to recognise that each pupil is unique and should be treated as an individual. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They have a good understanding of British values, such as democracy, as a result of what they discovered about Parliament during a recent trip to London. Pupils understand the need for rules and expectations and the benefits they bring, and have respect for different faiths and beliefs.
- The curriculum is planned to engage and interest pupils in their learning and generally succeeds. Pupils enjoy their learning and find it 'fun'. The school has incorporated the new curriculum for mathematics well. However, support for reading and writing has not been strong enough in the past and, while this is now improving, there is scope for more support for pupils' literacy. The school has recently introduced new initiatives to improve the teaching of phonics and to broaden pupils' writing experiences. These are beginning to prove successful, although it is too early to be able to judge their full impact. However, there are still too few opportunities for pupils to read widely and write extensively across the curriculum as a

whole or fully to develop their comprehension skills.

- The primary physical education and sport premium is used well to provide additional clubs and activities after school and during lunchtimes. It has also been used to provide additional specialist training for all staff and to improve their teaching of physical education and sport. As a result, more pupils now take part in competitive sports and pupils enjoy the sports coaching they receive while they are playing at break and lunch.
- The pupil premium is used effectively to help eligible pupils achieve as well as their classmates. It has been used to support pupils in smaller teaching groups, where necessary, and to support free attendance at the breakfast club for eligible pupils. This has proved invaluable in improving behaviour and attendance as well as achievement. These pupils receive effective support and often make better progress than other pupils. Leaders and governors ensure there is no discrimination and everyone has an equal chance to achieve.
- All safeguarding policies and procedures meet statutory requirements and are effective. The learning environment throughout the school is safe and calm, which enables good behaviour and good learning to flourish. The deputy headteacher provides very good support for individual pupils who have difficulty managing their behaviour.
- Middle leaders are effective. The headteacher is supported ably by a skilled team of knowledgeable senior and middle leaders, especially in areas such as inclusion, phonics, special educational needs, English and mathematics. He has provided all such leaders with support and training so that they can develop their areas of responsibility as effectively as possible, and plans to provide more.
- The early years is well led and managed. Links with parents of children in the Nursery and Reception classes are good. Parents contribute well to their children's learning, especially in helping them to read.
- The local authority provides effective support, advice and training. This has helped to improve pupils' achievement, provision in the early years, and the effectiveness of governors. The authority uses De Havilland as an example for other headteachers of how to track progress effectively and eliminate poor teaching.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have achieved a good knowledge of the quality of teaching and pupils' performance by asking searching questions, receiving regular reports from the senior leadership, and coming into school to see lessons for themselves. They know that staff training has been effective in helping the school to raise standards.
 - Governors receive detailed information on teachers' performance, and have only rewarded teachers for their work if they are satisfied they have met their personal targets.
 - Governors know how well the pupil premium and primary school sports funding are used. For example, they know that this funding has strengthened teachers' practice by encouraging them to work alongside professional coaches. They monitor how well it is helping to promote the health and well-being of pupils.
 - Governors' support for the school and their knowledge about pupils' performance are good. They work well with all staff, and work closely with the school to ensure that it maintains its drive to raise standards, including tackling underperformance. Together with senior leaders, governors take care to ensure that the school's arrangements for safeguarding its pupils are effective and meet all statutory requirements.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They show consistently good attitudes to their work. They are supportive of, and readily collaborate with, each other.
- The school promotes mutual respect between pupils, and between pupils and adults, by promoting the school's values strongly. Pupils are proud of their school and respond positively to this approach. They are

confident, polite, and respectful and are able to talk sensibly to each other and to all adults in the school.

- Pupils say they are generally kind to each other. They are clear that there is no discrimination or racist behaviour, and they are confident that, should it happen, it would be dealt with quickly by staff.
- At break time and lunchtime, pupils socialise in and across all year groups within their relative key stages. The school provides a good level of supervision and adults oversee all playground activities to ensure pupils are safe and not on their own. Older pupils are encouraged to take responsibility by helping younger pupils to devise games.
- The school environment is clean and tidy. There is no litter. The well-presented displays on show around the school fully reflect the standard of pupils' work and the values of the school.
- Behaviour is not outstanding because pupils can sometimes lose their focus in the very small number of lessons where teaching is not sufficiently challenging.
- Attendance is average and rising. The school follows up all absences rigorously and discourages term-time holidays. Pupils are punctual to lessons and to school.
- Pupils say they trust all adults in the school to help them if they are concerned about anything. They feel safe, secure and cared for. Their parents agree.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Parents and carers are confident that pupils are safe and confirm that they believe their children are well cared for in school. The school's high level of care is evident not only during the school day, but also in the many clubs and activities offered before and after school.
- The school's policies and procedures, especially those for behaviour, child protection and health and safety, are implemented consistently by all staff and are highly effective. The deputy headteacher has an excellent understanding of the challenges facing its most vulnerable pupils. She has developed highly successful strategies for engaging with parents to the benefit of their children. Pupils are very welcoming and look after each other extremely well. They know and understand the school's stringent safety rules and adhere closely to them.
- Bullying in any form is extremely rare and pupils have complete confidence in adults' ability to respond to any concern they might raise.
- Pupils have many opportunities to learn about how to keep themselves safe, for example in the case of fire, during school visits or when using social media sites on the internet.

The quality of teaching is good

- Leaders have secured improvement to teaching throughout the school since the previous inspection. They have done this by resolutely addressing recognised areas of weaker teaching and making good use of professional support. Most teaching meets the learning needs of pupils well, including those from ethnic minorities. Teachers establish very positive relationships with pupils and expect their behaviour to be exemplary. This improvement in teaching is the main reason for pupils' current good progress and their rapidly rising standards.
- The work in pupils' books and their rates of progress reflect the generally good teaching they receive across the school. Teachers have good subject knowledge and expertise, which, in the main, they use to provide activities that promote pupils' literacy, reading and numeracy skills effectively. However, at times, the work set for the least-able pupils is too difficult, and this limits their progress.

- Teaching is good in the Nursery and Reception classes because the activities are well matched to what children know and can do and move their learning quickly forward. Adults provide imaginative activities that stimulate children's interest and develop their skills well, especially in language and mathematics. Here and throughout the rest of the school, teachers make sure that learning is interesting.
- Reading is currently a major focus throughout the school, as a result of pupils' below average scores in the national phonics screening check in 2014. The teaching of phonics has been reviewed and is being strengthened. School data show that the pupils are presently on track to achieve better results this year. However, pupils have not yet developed their higher-order reading and comprehension skills enough. Teachers do not sufficiently encourage pupils to develop a love of reading in subjects outside English.
- Mathematics is well taught throughout the school. The new assessment procedures adopted by the school, for both English and mathematics, have ensured a consistency of approach from all staff, and this is improving progress. Pupils are well supported by teaching that is now better matched to their different abilities than was previously the case.
- The teaching of writing and of spelling, grammar and punctuation has improved and is more effective than in the past. Teachers have introduced new and more exciting ways to encourage pupils to improve their writing skills, especially in the case of boys. However, extended writing and creative writing are not always as well taught as other aspects of writing. This is because activities are sometimes insufficiently demanding and limit the scope for pupils to write fluently across a broad spectrum of topics and subjects.
- Teachers use questions effectively to challenge pupils' thinking. Most teachers quickly adjust tasks where these are too easy or hard for pupils. Most teachers ensure pupils maintain a good focus on their work and learn well. However, these strengths are not consistently evident in all classes across the school.
- Teachers treat pupils with respect, using what they have to say to develop ideas. As a result, pupils are keen to learn and respond eagerly to tasks. Staff make effective use of a range of teaching methods to increase pupils' confidence, and especially their speaking skills.
- Teaching assistants make a positive contribution to the learning of pupils of all abilities. They are skilled and support the work of the teachers well. They ensure that activities in lessons are adapted so that disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and disadvantaged pupils understand what is expected of them and make good progress.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are taught well. The extra help they get in the classroom and at other times is effective because it focuses well on their learning needs. Many of these pupils make better than the expected progress from their different starting points.
- Teaching now focuses much more carefully than in the past on meeting the needs of the most-able pupils in each year group. Teachers try to extend these pupils' understanding by questioning them in detail and devise activities that make them think deeply. However, on some occasions, the most-able pupils are still not challenged enough to ensure they make really rapid progress. This is because these pupils find some of the tasks they are given too easy as the work is not precisely matched to their capabilities.
- Marking is regularly carried out but the quality of teachers' marking varies. Not all teachers ensure that pupils act on the advice they are given and make corrections. Consequently, some misunderstandings persist, not only in English and mathematics but also in other subjects. Some good examples of marking were seen that gave pupils clear guidance on what they needed to do to improve their work. However, this is not a consistent feature of marking in all classes.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children make good progress from entry to the Nursery throughout the early years, in their reading, writing, number and shape and space work. When they leave the Reception year, however, most children have reached a good level of development. Their standards are broadly in line with the national average.

- Low results in the national tests in Year 2 in recent years reflect a legacy of inaccurate assessment and poor teaching, rather than the current quality of teaching in the school. Year 2 pupils in 2014 had made steady progress in the second half of the year in reading, writing and mathematics, but there was too much ground to make up for this to have an impact on their attainment. Consequently, results were below national averages, except in mathematics.
- The data and the work seen in books and lessons indicates that the pupils currently in Year 2 are expected to achieve outcomes broadly in line with national averages especially in reading and writing. It also shows that the school is supporting boys and girls from all backgrounds well and that they are making more consistently good progress.
- In 2014, Year 6 results were below average in reading but broadly average in mathematics and writing. Overall, pupils' results were better than in the previous year. In 2014, most Year 6 pupils made at least the progress expected of them in mathematics, writing and reading, and progressed at a rate that was as good as that of pupils in other schools.
- Currently the school's assessment information and work seen in books, shows a big improvement from 2014 and attainment is rising across the school. Progress has accelerated in Key Stage 2, so that a growing number of pupils are working at or above levels that are expected for their age. This is due to the good teaching and support provided.
- The achievement of the most-able pupils has been uneven over time. They performed well at Level 5 in mathematics in 2014 but none attained the highest Level 6. They made significantly better progress in mathematics and writing than they did in reading. Currently, assessment information shows that the achievement of the most-able pupils is improving across the school and their progress has accelerated. More are reaching the higher levels in mathematics and reading. However, at times, undemanding teaching limits these pupils' progress and more work is needed before they reach the really high levels of achievement they are capable of.
- In the 2014 end of Key Stage 2 tests, disadvantaged pupils made broadly similar progress in reading, writing and mathematics across Key Stage 2 to non-disadvantaged pupils in other schools. They also made broadly similar progress to other disadvantaged pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Test results show that, in 2014, disadvantaged pupils leaving Year 6 were around two terms behind their classmates in reading and around one-and-a-half terms behind in mathematics and writing. Compared with other pupils in all schools, disadvantaged pupils were one term behind in mathematics and writing and two terms behind in reading. Current school data show that the gaps to others in the school have closed to a point where the attainment of disadvantaged pupils is broadly in line with their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs benefit from the extra help they receive. They make good progress in small-group teaching sessions. In lessons, their progress is similar to, and sometimes better than, that of other pupils. This success is due to the school's good monitoring, which ensures their needs are identified early and appropriate support provided to meet them.
- A small number of lower-ability pupils find it difficult to apply their phonics knowledge to reading and spelling new words. Some of the reading books these pupils are given are too difficult, so they struggle to read them. Sometimes, these pupils do not always know how well they are doing or what they should do to improve their work. The school has recognised this issue and has taken steps to eradicate it. However, the full impact of changes is not yet evident.

The early years provision

is good

- The great majority of children enter the part-time Nursery with skills at levels below those typical for their age, particularly in reading, writing and personal development. Though they make good progress, having

improved their speaking and listening ability, their skills are still below those typical for their age when they enter the Reception year. In Reception, children make good and in some cases rapid progress in all areas of learning and most attain a good level of development. They leave Reception well prepared for Year 1.

- Well-established routines and the children's positive relationships with adults ensure that children behave well and make a good start to the school day. As a result, the children's emotional and physical well-being are good and they thrive in the setting's safe learning environment.
- The leadership and management of the early years provision are good. The early years leader is new in post since the last inspection. The accuracy of her monitoring and the work she has undertaken to develop her team of teachers have brought marked improvements to provision. As a result, the quality of teaching is securely good.
- Adults place a strong emphasis on developing children's early reading and writing skills and do this well. Children now make good progress in phonics in this phase and are provided with many opportunities to develop speaking and listening. In writing, most children are forming letters correctly and are clearly able to write sentences about their learning.
- The outdoor learning environment is attractive and well resourced, and teachers use this area effectively to help the children make good progress. Staff keep a close check on children's learning, building up a detailed and accurate picture of each child's progress to make sure that they are achieving as well as they can.
- Parents who met inspectors spoke appreciatively about the good provision and high quality welfare provision their children receive in the early years.

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	134716
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	462097

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	472
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Claire Weetman
Headteacher	Andrew Peck
Date of previous school inspection	8 May 2013
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