

Potley Hill Primary School

Potley Hill Road, Yateley, Hampshire, GU46 6AG

Inspection dates 10–11 June 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 is a very skilled leader. She is strongly supported by other leaders and governors in successfully driving forward improvement in teaching and achievement.
- Systems for checking the effect teaching has on pupils' progress are comprehensive and effective. Both have improved well as a result.
- Leaders and governors continue to work hard towards their goal of providing high quality education for all pupils. The school is very well placed to improve further.
- In all year groups pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. More pupils than are seen nationally reach the levels expected for their age. Their attainment is above average by Year 6.
- Teaching is uniformly good. Adults plan challenging lesson activities that help all pupils to achieve well. Marking of pupils' work is excellent.
- Pupils who might be at risk of underachieving, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, achieve well. The attainment of most disadvantaged pupils is close to that of their peers.
- Procedures to help Reception children settle into school are excellent. They achieve well and the large majority reach a good level of development.
- Interesting and motivating programmes of work and an excellent range of clubs and visits help pupils to enjoy school, behave well and work hard.
- Pupils are kept safe and feel safe in school. There is little bullying. Pupils who find it difficult to behave well all the time receive very good support.
- Governors hold leaders to account well. The checks they carry out on the school's work are highly effective. Governors are very well informed about teaching quality and pupils' progress.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some middle attaining pupils do not make faster progress, especially in writing and mathematics.
- Teaching is not yet outstanding. There are not enough highly challenging and exciting activities that help pupils to do their very best.
- In a few lessons adults miss opportunities to move pupils on to new learning when they have understood the work.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in 14 lessons or parts of lessons, of which two were joint observations with senior leaders. In addition, the inspection team made a number of other short visits to group or individual activities organised to help pupils who have fallen behind to catch up.
- Inspectors heard some pupils read, scrutinised a sample of pupils' written work and visited some extra-curricular activities.
- Meetings were held with pupils, members of the governing body and staff, including senior and middle leaders. A conversation was held with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 88 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). They also spoke to a small number of parents bringing their children to or collecting them from school.
- Responses from the 26 staff questionnaires were analysed.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised a number of documents, including the school's records on current pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance. They looked at documents related to planning, monitoring and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Diane Wilkinson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Francois Walker

Additional Inspector

Stephanie Matthews

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Potley Hill is a larger than average-sized primary school. Most pupils are taught in mixed-age classes in Years 1 and 2, 3 and 4, 5 and 6. At the time of the inspection all Reception children were attending full time.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average. Few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding is well below the national average. This funding is to provide extra support for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and to children who are looked after.
- The school runs a before-school club (Early Bird) for pupils. This was also inspected.
- There has been a change of headteacher since the previous inspection. She took up her post in September 2013. A number of new staff have also joined the school.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement through ensuring that:
 - more pupils make faster progress in writing and mathematics, especially the middle attainers
 - every opportunity is taken during lessons to accelerate pupils' progress
 - more teaching is outstanding, and that more lessons provide activities that highly motivate and inspire pupils to do their very best.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher's very effective skills are evident in the way that she has improved the quality of leadership since the previous inspection. She is ably supported by the deputy headteacher, other senior leaders, middle leaders, and the governing body. As a result of the strong development strategies the school has improved well in all areas, including teaching and behaviour, since its previous inspection.
- Comprehensive and rigorous systems for checking the school's work, particularly teaching quality and pupils' progress, permeate all aspects and provide a clear picture of its effectiveness. There is a strong commitment to continuous improvement among all staff, which has supported improvements. This demonstrates that the school has a strong capacity to improve further.
- Middle leaders, such as the special educational needs co-ordinator, are effective and keep a continuous check on pupils' progress and adjust activities to help them do well.
- Support for teaching quality has successfully eradicated inadequacies and brought about uniformly good teaching throughout the school. The skilled leaders coach teachers well. Excellent opportunities for professional development ensure staff receive very good advice on how to improve their practice.
- Leaders and governors use formal performance management procedures to very good effect to hold staff to account for pupils' progress. Staff are set high targets which they work hard to achieve. Only good performance is rewarded.
- The school successfully fulfils its role in promoting equality of opportunity, fostering good relationships and discouraging discrimination. It is a very happy and supportive community where pupils from different backgrounds and with differing needs and talents thrive.
- Additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is used to good effect in supporting both their academic and personal development. Leaders and governors monitor this very regularly to ensure that it successfully improves pupils' attitudes to school and their achievement.
- The primary physical education sport premium is effectively allocated to improving the quality of teaching and pupils' well-being. Its success can be seen in the uniformly good physical education teaching now seen and pupils' greatly increased participation in, and enjoyment of, sport.
- Pupils benefit considerably from the very well-designed curriculum that allows them to successfully build on and extend their skills and knowledge. Very good account is taken of the new curriculum requirements, as well as heightening pupils' enjoyment and attitudes to school. The range and quality of after-school clubs, including sports activities, is excellent.
- The school successfully promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and fosters British values. Pupils exhibit a strong commitment to fairness and democracy and a respect for the different religions and cultures present in society, which prepares them well for their lives in a modern democratic Britain.
- Safeguarding arrangements fully meet requirements. Leaders and governors are well trained in important aspects such as child protection and the vetting of staff. Pupils are effectively looked after, including in the very well run Early Birds club.
- The school has a very positive partnership with parents who acknowledge that the school's growing success is down to the hard work of current leaders and staff. Parents work effectively with the school through supporting their children's homework.
- The local authority has provided strong support and challenge for the school since its previous inspection. Its officers played an effective role in helping to improve teaching quality, governance and pupils' achievement. The local authority now considers Potley Hill to be a light-touch school although leaders and governors are keen to participate in the authority's training programmes in the future.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is effective. Governors are strongly committed to training and use their expertise to good effect to support and challenge school leaders.
 - Governors benefit considerably from their excellent systems for checking the success of improvement strategies. This ensures governors are very well informed about teaching quality and pupils' progress. They are rigorous in ensuring that financial increments are only awarded to staff who perform well. They are also aware of where underperformance has been tackled.
 - Governors are well informed about pupils' progress and attainment data. This way they successfully compare Potley Hill's performance with that of other schools locally and nationally. They successfully hold leaders to account for the quality of education as a result.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils behave well at all times, including at playtimes and around the school.
- Pupils are well aware of the rewards and sanctions procedures, stating that these are fair. Lessons are rarely interrupted by poor behaviour.
- Pupils enjoy school and work hard. Relationships with adults and between pupils are very positive. Pupils take great pride in their work and want to do well. Attendance is above average.
- Strong promotion of moral and social qualities and the British values of tolerance and respect ensure pupils from different backgrounds get on well together. Pupils are well prepared for their future life in a diverse society.
- There are a few pupils who find good behaviour difficult, which is why behaviour is not outstanding. In lessons they are well supported by skilled learning support assistants. The behaviour of most improves successfully over time.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils are kept safe and free from harm.
- Pupils and their parents agree that children are well cared for. Pupils are rightly confident that adults will sort things out if they fall over in the playground or have a disagreement with others.
- Staff are vigilant about site security. Procedures for keeping pupils safe on off-site visits are rigorous.
- Pupils are well informed about the different forms that bullying can take. They told inspectors that it rarely happens and that adults are good at sorting things out. Inspection evidence confirms this view.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe in different situations. For example, they are well aware of how they can keep safe when using the internet.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is uniformly good throughout the school because leaders are very successful at ensuring that all staff follow the agreed teaching and marking policies. There is a strong commitment among all staff to help pupils do well.
- Teachers take great care to ensure that pupils develop important reading and writing skills sequentially: for example, in developing their reading comprehension and knowledge of different writing genres.
- There is a consistent approach to skills development. Staff teach the same methods well, for example in mathematical division. Pupils benefit considerably from this approach.
- Staff regularly check pupils' progress throughout each term. They use this information successfully to plan activities at the right level for the different ages and ability in each class. Consequently all pupils make good progress.
- When working with groups or individuals, both teachers and learning support assistants provide well-targeted activities to increase pupils' knowledge and understanding. Their skilful questioning helps pupils to understand easily. In these activities adults adjust learning well to accelerate learning or correct errors.
- Occasionally opportunities are missed to accelerate progress and to revise the activities for those who find the work easier when not under the direct supervision of an adult. This limits pupils' progress.
- The marking of pupils' work is excellent. This ensures that pupils are very clear about how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Pupils respond very well to advice, for example in improving their spelling or correcting calculation errors. They do not often repeat them.
- The extra activities to help those pupils who have fallen behind catch up, and the 'Wizard Activities' to help some pupils keep up with their classmates, are highly effective. This is why the school is especially good at helping most pupils reach the expected levels for their age.
- Teachers do not always focus sufficiently on helping some middle attainers who are doing especially well to make even faster progress.
- While there is some outstanding teaching, this is in the minority. Teachers do not often provide inspiring and challenging activities that help pupils to make excellent progress.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter Reception with skills slightly better than those typical for this age. They make good progress in all areas of learning and the large majority of children reach a good level of development by the end of the year.
- This good start is built on well and can be demonstrated by pupils' good progress in Years 1 to 6. By the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6, attainment is securely above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. All pupils who do not have significant or complex educational needs reach at least the levels expected for their age. Pupils are well prepared for their secondary education.
- The school's hard work to increase pupils' phonic skills (the sounds letters make in words) ensures that the vast majority of pupils become very skilled at building up new words from the sound patterns. The proportion of pupils that achieve the required standard in the Year 1 phonics check is above average.
- Pupils' very good phonic knowledge means Year 2 teachers can ensure pupils easily understand what they read and draw conclusions about the plot and characters. Attainment is very securely above average by the end of Year 2 and continues to rise.
- By Year 6, pupils are very confident readers. They draw accurate conclusions about the plot from clues in the text and retrieve the correct information from non-fiction books. Well over half the pupils exceed the levels expected for this age.
- Attainment in writing and mathematics has improved well over the past 12 months. In these subjects the proportion of pupils exceeding the levels expected for their age is rising.
- The school is especially good at helping pupils to write neatly, spell accurately and use the correct punctuation and grammar in all their written work. The school consistently outperforms others nationally in the national assessments of this aspect. Presentation of work is very good in all subjects.
- Pupils write effectively in different formats such as persuasive letters, poetry or instructions. Their stories are very interesting to read.
- Mathematically, pupils develop strong calculation skills because of the very good attention to ensuring they build on these sequentially. By the time pupils leave they confidently use them in problem solving or when working with data or measures. Most able pupils exceed the levels expected by Year 6, the highest attainers even writing their own mathematical formulae.
- The most able pupils achieve well because they develop very strong skills. Activities stretch them well so that they easily apply their skills in different situations and in solving puzzling problems. However, occasionally, opportunities are missed for encouraging the best middle attainers to develop these strong skills also. This limits their learning.
- Effective in-class support and special activities to help them catch up ensure disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. Most reach the levels expected for their age.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress from their starting points when compared to other pupils nationally. The published data for the 2014 national assessments show that, by the end of Year 6, the group of disadvantaged pupils, which was only a very small minority of the year group, were over a year behind their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics. When compared with other pupils nationally they were a year behind in reading and mathematics and two terms behind in writing. Inspection evidence shows that, from their mainly low attainment on entry, the gap is now narrowing significantly.
- Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds make good progress. Those who speak English as an additional language also make good progress. They often exceed the levels expected for their age once they understand English sufficiently.

The early years provision is good

- Excellent induction procedures help children settle into school very quickly. Children are provided with a well-planned range of activities that capture their interest.
- Staff work hard to ensure that children make good progress across all areas of learning. As a result, a greater proportion of children than is seen nationally reach a good level of development in all areas.
- Strong priority is given to supporting children's safety and well-being. Reception classrooms provide a caring and positive learning environment. As a result, most children quickly learn to behave well, develop good attitudes to learning and form positive relationships. A few boys still find it difficult to manage their feelings and behaviour if activities do not inspire and motivate them, despite strong support for this aspect.
- Teaching is consistently at least good. Some learning in lessons is outstanding. Very practical activities

help children to understand easily. This was observed in an excellent activity to help children learn how to double numbers.

- A strong emphasis on phonics and on learning to write cursively from the start of the year benefit children's reading and writing skills. During the inspection high quality sentence writing was observed. Children are well prepared for the work they will have to do in Year 1.
- When children work on tasks where they apply their skills in different circumstances, adults are good at questioning children to help extend their learning.
- Adults constantly check how well children are doing. This builds up a comprehensive picture of their progress. The information is used well to help plan future activities.
- Staff form excellent relationships with parents. They value parents' views on their children's progress. Parents receive very regular and informative updates on this.
- This aspect of the school's work benefits from strong and effective leadership and a successful early years team who are continually looking for ways to improve their practice.

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	116059
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	462433

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	295
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Katharine Richman
Headteacher	Heather Clarke
Date of previous school inspection	4–5 July 2013
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