

Whitehill Primary School

Sun Lane, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 5HN

Inspection dates 1–2 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils achieve well. From low starting points they make good progress by the end of Year 6, particularly in English.
- Results in tests at the end of Year 6 have improved since the previous inspection. In 2012, results in reading, writing and mathematics were significantly above the national average.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium achieve well and their test results were also above the national average in 2012.
- Teaching is typically good and has improved since the previous inspection. Teachers carefully mark the work that the pupils have completed.
- Reading is taught well; pupils read often and are well supported.
- Initiatives carried out by the headteacher and other school leaders have led to rapid improvements in the school's overall effectiveness.
- Staff and governors carefully monitor how well the school is doing and what it needs to do to improve further. Good quality staff development places the school in a strong position to continue to improve further.
- Pupils enjoy school, they behave well, feel safe and are well looked after. Strong and trusting relationships underpin pupils' enjoyment of learning.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- A small proportion of pupils do not make enough progress in mathematics at Key Stage 2.
- While the quality of written advice given to pupils in their books is good, the pupils are not given enough opportunities to respond directly to the advice given.
- Not enough of the quality of teaching over time is outstanding.
- Teachers do not consistently challenge the more able pupils enough in lessons, particularly in mathematics.
- The presentation of pupils' work in Key Stage 2 is not as good as it is in Key Stage 1. Some of the classrooms in Key Stage 2 do not do enough to celebrate pupils' work and display what the best work should look like.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 lessons or parts of lessons, including the teaching of phonics (letter patterns and the sounds they make), two of which were joint observations with senior members of staff. All except two teachers were observed.
- The inspection team looked at pupils' work in their books, attended an assembly, met with a representative group of pupils and heard readers in Year 2 and Year 6.
- Inspectors held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body and two other members, staff and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspection team also observed other work of the school, including the plans for further development, the school's own self-evaluation, attendance and safeguarding information, assessment records and the school's own monitoring of the progress that pupils are currently making.
- Inspectors took account of 21 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View) and considered the 30 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Gianni Bianchi, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Gillian Bosschaert

Additional Inspector

Selina Sharpe

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a larger-than-average sized primary school and is currently expanding in numbers.
- It has provision for a nursery and Early Years Foundation Stage which has three classes. Most pupils are White British. A number of other ethnic groups are represented in varying proportions.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above that seen nationally.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action is well above average. The proportion of pupils who are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is in line with that seen nationally.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children who are looked after by the local authority and the children of service families) is well above that seen nationally.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- A significant number of pupils join or leave the school at other than the usual times.
- None of the pupils are taught in alternative provision (other schools or units).

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching so that both are outstanding by:
 - building on the existing strengths in teaching in the school as a model to share best practice
 - making sure teachers plan and provide work that is challenging for all pupils, particularly the more able in mathematics
 - ensuring that pupils are routinely given time in lessons to respond to the teachers' comments in their books
 - setting clear expectations of levels of presentation in pupils' books and ensuring the environment within all of the Key Stage 2 classrooms matches the vibrancy of the Key Stage 1 classrooms.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the Reception classes with skills in communication, literacy and numeracy at much lower levels than those typically expected for their age. Effective teaching ensures they make good progress and enter Year 1 with skills closer to the levels expected.
- Pupils in Years 1 to 6 achieve well. Standards are improving and in the most recent national assessments at the end of Year 6, results were significantly above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Setting by gender and then ability in Year 6 has helped teachers to match work more closely to pupils' needs.
- National data show that the Year 6 pupils who left in 2012 made good progress during their time in Key Stage 2. Current school data and robust monitoring of the quality of teaching indicate this improved trend in progress is generally being maintained.
- Nevertheless, teachers sometimes miss opportunities to stretch the more able and allow them opportunities to apply problem solving skills to everyday situations. As a result, a few do not make as much progress as they could in mathematics.
- Daily phonics work is taught well. Despite this, only a small proportion of pupils reached the expected level in the Year 1 phonics screening check last year and so planned intervention has been implemented to help these pupils to catch up. Recent assessments have shown this to be successful. Pupils enjoy reading and are well supported at school by teachers and support staff. Consequently, Year 2 reading levels are improving over time and are close to the national standards.
- Pupils eligible for pupil premium funding made good progress and scored above the overall national average in tests in 2012. Compared with other pupils in the school, they reached similar standards in mathematics, but about one quarter of a National Curriculum level lower in English. Extra government funding is used effectively to support small groups and individual pupils. Current school data show that these pupils continue to make good progress.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress, sometimes at a faster rate than their peers. This is due to early identification of pupils' specific needs and good planned intervention to support their learning. This is helping them to catch up with other pupils, although their test results by the end of Year 6 are still not as high as those of other pupils.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well because the school directly supports their learning in lessons through effective use of support staff.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is typically good and some lessons seen during the inspection were outstanding. Under the guidance of the good leadership, teachers have worked hard to improve their practice since the previous inspection.
- In the best taught lessons the learning is fun and exciting. In a Year 4 lesson, excellent relationships within the class allowed the teaching assistant to orally recount a story which the children and teacher were able to assess, edit and improve. This motivated pupils to want to be successful in their learning and as a result the most pupils made good progress.
- In the nursery and Early Years Foundation Stage, teachers usually plan exciting learning activities that children enjoy and they make careful observations to plan the next steps of learning.
- Reading is taught effectively and pupils told inspectors that they read often at school and were able to talk confidently about the strategies they use when reading. Daily guided reading develops children's comprehension skills. In an outstanding lesson pupils were self-assessing their comprehension skills using electronic pens to complete a multiple choice task and then

immediately check their own work.

- In lessons where the pace was brisk and teachers used a range of methods to motivate pupils and focus learning, progress was good. In a Year 2 lesson, the teacher checked the progress of all the groups in the class during the lesson and did not rely on the plenary alone to assess what pupils had learned.
- Teachers usually plan learning that matches the needs of different groups of pupils and target questions carefully to ensure all pupils have opportunities to contribute to class discussions. Occasionally, the more able pupils do not have a chance to work at a higher level, especially in mathematics.
- The quality of work in pupils' books varies. Pupils' work is typically neat and well presented in Key Stage 1, but this is not always the case in some Key Stage 2 classes. Handwriting is not always as neat as it could be and corrections can be untidy, making them hard to read. The learning environment of some of the upper Key Stage 2 classrooms is not of the same high standard as that in Key Stage 1, and does not display and celebrate enough the best quality of work that pupils should aim for.
- Work is marked regularly but pupils are not routinely given opportunities in lessons to respond to the teachers' comments and take their own learning forward.
- Pupils in Year 5 spoke positively about their homework because it is related to their topic, valued by their teachers and displayed in the classroom.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The school provides a safe learning environment and teachers apply the school's behaviour policy fairly and consistently. Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations but are less aware of the dangers of cyber bullying.
- Pupils' typically good behaviour in lessons, at playtimes and around school is a strong factor in ensuring that pupils make good progress. However this is not yet exemplary, as there are occasions when pupils do not keep to the task they have been given, especially if it is not sufficiently demanding.
- Attitudes to learning are good. Children have respect for one another and are willing to participate in the learning experience in an atmosphere free from any discrimination.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance is improving. Since the previous inspection report, a number of strategies have been implemented and a family liaison officer employed to ensure attendance continues to improve.
- Bullying is rare and this too was the opinion of the small percentage of parents and carers who responded to Parent View. Pupils know where to go and who to speak to if they feel unsafe. Incidents of poor behaviour are quickly followed up by staff and individual pupils who have particular behavioural needs are well supported in class and around the school.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to extend their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. Assemblies enrich cultural development and pupils enjoy participating in them and reflecting on the importance of the themes. However, there are fewer opportunities for pupils to explore cultural diversity within day-to-day lessons.

The leadership and management are good

- The clear vision of the headteacher has been pivotal in improving the school since the previous inspection. Her high aspirations and focused development priorities have been pursued with rigour and resulted in clear improvements in pupils' progress, behaviour and the quality of teaching.
 - The leadership of mathematics and English has been particularly effective in helping colleagues
-

to improve the quality of teaching. The introduction of 'talk for writing' has had a positive impact on improving standards.

- Leaders closely monitor the quality of provision in the classrooms by checking the work in pupils' books and dropping into lessons to gauge how well pupils are learning. Termly moderation meetings allow teachers to check for consistency in the assessments they make of pupils' progress. This gives leaders a clear picture of the strengths and areas for development and allows them to plan future staff training which closely matches the school's needs.
 - Pupils' progress is reviewed once a term, and where necessary carefully planned intervention programmes are implemented to ensure all children are making or exceeding the progress expected of them for their age.
 - Equality of opportunity is at the centre of the school's work although leaders know there is more to be done to ensure that the more able, particularly in mathematics, continue to make the excellent progress shown in the 2012 national assessments.
 - The curriculum promotes pupils' personal and academic development with both literacy and mathematics being given a high profile. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of visits, visitors and after-school activities.
 - This year, the local authority has reduced the amount of support it provides and now maintains a light-touch approach. This is a testament to the school's internal capacity for further improvement.
 - All statutory safeguarding and vetting procedures are fully met.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors demonstrate a good understanding of the strengths of the school and what it must do to improve further. Recent training and increasingly regular visits to school have broadened their knowledge to ensure they can challenge the school to further improve standards. This has enabled them to have a much greater understanding of information on pupils' progress. Governors have a clear understanding of how the performance of teachers is managed and use a range of information to help guide decisions about promotions or salary progression for staff. The governing body knows how the pupil premium funding is being spent and the positive impact of this on pupils' learning.
-

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	121790
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	406051

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

Type of school	All-through
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	528
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anthony Dowding
Headteacher	Jane Porter
Date of previous school inspection	12–13 July 2011
Telephone number	01474 352973
Fax number	01474 329007
Email address	headteacher@whitehillprimary.kent.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

