

Guestling Bradshaw Church of England Primary School

Rye Road, Hastings, TN35 4LS

Inspection dates

18–19 October 2012

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.

- Teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Some teaching is outstanding.
- Pupils achieve well across all subjects, although progress in writing and mathematics is not as rapid as in reading.
- Pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to learning which contribute well to their good achievement in lessons and above average attendance.
- Pupils feel safe because staff look after them well and help sort out any problems quickly.
- School leaders and the governing body have a very good understanding of how well different groups of pupils are achieving. They make sure that any training for staff is closely linked to improving pupils' achievement. Leadership of English and mathematics across the school is strong.
- The curriculum is well planned and provides a wide range of activities which pupils enjoy. Pupils have many opportunities to use their reading, writing and mathematical skills across different subjects.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some more able pupils do not achieve as well as they can in mathematics because teachers do not always provide work which is hard enough. Opportunities for pupils to explain their reasoning in mathematics are limited.
- Teachers' marking does not always make it clear to pupils how they can improve their written work.
- Subject leaders, other than those of English and mathematics, are not always able to manage their areas of responsibility well enough.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 part lessons, six of which they observed jointly with senior leaders. All teachers were observed at least once. Inspectors also visited two assemblies and listened to a selection of pupils read.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work, and met with groups of pupils to discuss their learning and their views about school.
- They had discussions with school leaders and staff, representatives from the governing body and the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 23 responses on the Parent View website and 15 questionnaires completed by members of staff. They met informally with parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors also looked at school documentation and particularly at procedures for safeguarding.

Inspection team

Linda Pickles, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Alistair McMeckan	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Guestling is a smaller-than-average primary school.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium support (additional money allocated to schools by the government) is average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve standards in mathematics at the higher levels and accelerate progress in writing by:
 - giving the more able pupils more demanding work in mathematics
 - providing more opportunities in mathematics for pupils to explain how they have solved problems and what they have found out
 - ensuring marking gives pupils clear guidance about what they need to do to improve their writing.
- Improve middle leaders' monitoring of pupils' and staff's performance, for subjects other than English and mathematics, to more closely inform whole school self-evaluation and improvement planning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils join the school with skills and knowledge that are appropriate for their age, although their reading and writing skills are less well developed. Children make good progress across all areas of learning, particularly in reading and writing and personal and social development. Achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage has significantly improved since the last inspection and children are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils continue to make good progress across the school and by the time they leave at the end of Key Stage 2 they are above the levels expected for their age in reading and writing. Progress in writing for current year groups, however, is slightly slower than reading.
- Although attainment is not as strong in mathematics at the higher levels as it is in English, pupils still make the progress they should and standards in mathematics are at least in line with national expectations at the end of Year 6.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, as well as pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, achieve well because of the good support they receive both in class and through extra help outside of lessons.
- The school's focus on the structured teaching of the sounds letters make, known as phonics, has successfully improved pupils' reading skills. A very small minority of pupils in Year 3 do not yet have the reading skills they need to make progress and the school is using additional funding effectively to accelerate their progress.
- Pupils enjoy their learning, particularly the problem-solving activities in mathematics which are based on real-life situations. Sometimes the more able pupils are not stretched enough in lessons. As one Year 3 pupil said, 'I keep getting ticks and I don't really get anything wrong.'
- In lessons, pupils enthusiastically share their ideas with each other and can explain accurately and confidently what they are learning. For example, Year 5 pupils were engaged and motivated whilst compiling a character description of Mary Lennox from *The Secret Garden*. They were keen to use metaphors and adjectives to improve their writing.
- Pupils have good opportunities to use and share their skills in information and communication technology, and in English and mathematics, across all subjects.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching helps pupils to achieve well because teachers communicate high expectations, effectively manage class behaviour and plan lessons which interest and motivate pupils. For example, pupils made excellent progress in an outstanding Year 6 literacy lesson because they were all genuinely involved in the lesson and greatly enjoyed using singing and actions to identify abstract nouns and explore subordinate clauses.
- Careful planning by teachers allows pupils to practise their reading, writing and mathematical skills across all subjects and this contributes to their good achievement. Teachers encourage pupils to work together and share their ideas in pairs and groups so all pupils are actively involved.
- Teachers promote reading skills well and pupils enjoy the whole class reading books linked to topic work. Teachers and other adults use skilful questioning during group reading sessions to extend pupils' understanding and help pupils to develop their reading skills. This is a strength across all year groups and makes a significant contribution to pupils' above average attainment in reading.
- Mathematics lessons provide very good opportunities for pupils to apply their understanding to real-life situations, but teachers do not always plan activities which stretch higher attaining pupils. This limits the progress these pupils can make because they spend too much time doing work they can already do. Opportunities for all pupils to record and explain how they have

tackled problem-solving activities are sometimes missed.

- Teachers assess pupils rigorously and marking is regular and encouraging. Newly introduced assessment systems are being used well across all subjects and year groups. They include opportunities for pupils to judge for themselves how well they have done. Teachers' marking of written work, however, does not consistently give pupils clear enough guidance about how they can improve further.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage settle quickly and learn to play together well.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and are keen to do well. They think school is a peaceful community and they speak very positively about the feelings box they can use if they have a problem they want to share. Pupils greatly enjoy the responsibilities they are given as peer mediators, assembly helpers and members of the school council.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. In a small minority of lessons pupils occasionally lose concentration when the work planned is not at the right level for them. Pupils are kind to each other and respectful towards all adults. They enjoy being together as a school and singing together in assembly.
- Pupils told the inspectors that they feel very safe in school. Pupils say incidents of bullying are rare and are dealt with very quickly by staff if they occur. Results from the Parent View survey and discussions with parents confirmed that their children feel safe and well looked after. They also have a good grasp of how to keep safe, both on the internet and outside of home and school.
- Attendance levels are above the national figures for primary schools because of the rigorous action taken by senior leaders to reduce absence levels.

The leadership and management are good

- Under the purposeful leadership of the headteacher, ably supported by other senior leaders, the staff have collaborated effectively to secure rapid improvement since the previous inspection. The continued improvements in pupils' attainment and progress show that school leaders have used their rigorous self-evaluation to promptly identify and tackle weaknesses. This demonstrates that the school has good capacity to improve further. Decisions about pay progression for teachers are firmly linked to the pupils' rates of progress.
- The headteacher and senior leaders, who are responsible for English and mathematics, rigorously monitor pupils' achievement by analysing progress data, carrying out regular lesson observations, looking at pupils' work and checking teachers' planning. These systems are used well to identify accurately training needs for teachers and other staff to secure rapid improvement.
- Staff training is effective and teachers speak positively about how extra coaching and feedback from lesson observations have helped them improve their teaching.
- The progress of different pupil groups is monitored closely and prompt action is taken to support pupils who are in danger of falling behind. Thorough tracking of pupils' progress ensures that all pupils have equal access to all aspects of school life.
- Other than in English and mathematics, curriculum leaders do not always know enough about the quality of teaching and pupils' progress in their subjects. This restricts their ability to share successful methods and identify what needs to be improved.
- The local authority provides light touch support for this good school. The school makes effective use of its collaboration with other local schools to support its improvement priorities.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well supported through the curriculum which provides pupils with varied and interesting opportunities for learning. Tolerance and

understanding of different cultures are promoted well through links with schools in America and the Gambia.

- The school has been successful in engaging parents and carers in its work, for example by improving communication through the newly established parent forum. Parents hold very positive views about the school and how well it supports their children.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- provides good challenge for school leaders because they have a secure and thorough understanding of how well the school is performing and what it needs to do to improve further
 - undertakes a range of checks to make sure that the school's arrangements for keeping the pupils safe are comprehensive
 - ensures that financial resources are used efficiently and closely monitors the impact of the school's additional funding through the pupil premium which has been used to pay for additional staffing to support reading programmes and staff training on teaching phonics
 - knows this is having a positive impact on improving pupils' reading skills in Years 1 to 3
 - is effective in monitoring the performance of the headteacher against challenging targets that are based on priorities for improving pupils' attainment and progress
 - regularly arranges visits to lessons and speaks to pupils to gain information first hand, and closely monitors the impact of the school's actions against the school improvement plan
 - fulfils its statutory obligations with regard to safeguarding.
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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	114551
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	405522

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Maria Benford
Headteacher	Carolyn Weston
Date of previous school inspection	16–17 May 2011
Telephone number	01424 812279
Fax number	01424 814139
Email address	cweston@guestling.e-sussex.sch.uk

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