

# Little Hadham Primary School

Stortford Road, Little Hadham, Hertfordshire, SG11 2DX

**Inspection dates** 18–19 June 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- School leaders have developed partnerships with local schools and the local authority which helps them ensure that teaching is consistently good. As a result, pupils' progress is good and their attainment is above the national average at the end of each key stage.
- Progress is accelerating. Children thrive in the Early Years Foundation Stage, make good progress and continue to do so across the school.
- Pupils behave with remarkable care and consideration towards each other. Their close relationships make a strong contribution to their academic success.
- Pupils take an active role in ensuring that all pupils are kept safe. Parents agree. This makes for a calm and orderly community.
- Pupils' opportunities to reflect deeply on what they are learning make an exceptional contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Governors know the school well, and provide excellent support and challenge. This helps leaders to have an accurate assessment of its strengths and areas of development.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' progress in writing is not as strong as in mathematics at Key Stage 1.
- Teachers in Key Stage 1 do not always provide enough opportunities for pupils to write in detail in subjects other than English.
- Some pupils in Key Stage 1 are not given enough support to improve their spelling, punctuation and grammar.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited six lessons. All of these observations were shared with the headteacher or the deputy headteacher. He also made a number of other short visits to classrooms.
- The inspector heard pupils read, attended an assembly and looked at written work from pupils across the school. Much of this was done in partnership with the deputy headteacher.
- The inspector looked at a range of documents, including the school improvement plan and records on behaviour, safety and attendance. He also looked at information on individual pupils' progress, anonymised records of teachers' performance, and records of meetings held by the governing body.
- The inspector met with pupils, interviewed a sample of staff, and spoke to parents. He also spoke to members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The views of parents were obtained through the school's surveys and the 42 responses to the online Parent View survey. Written comments from 16 members of staff and from three parents were also considered.

## Inspection team

Brian Netto, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. Classes are taught in mixed-age groups throughout, with children from the Nursery and Reception classes taught together in a purpose-built Early Years Foundation Stage unit.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is low. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils looked after by the local authority and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is just below average.
- A much higher proportion of pupils than average join the school at times other than the usual.
- The headteacher is the lead professional for gifted and talented pupils within the local network of schools. She also supports other headteachers from within the local authority and in a nearby primary school in Essex. The teacher in charge of the Early Years Foundation Stage helps other schools in checking the outcomes of children in their Early Years settings. The Chair of the Governing Body supports other governing bodies in neighbouring schools.
- The 'B49' breakfast club that is managed by the governing body provides early morning support for many pupils from across the school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been several changes in teaching staff and in the governing body.

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

- Accelerate progress in writing across Key Stage 1 so that pupils achieve at least as well as they do in mathematics by the end of Year 2, by:
  - giving pupils more opportunities to write in greater detail in subjects other than English, making better use of vocabulary
  - making sure that all pupils, including those who are more able, those supported through the pupil premium, and boys in particular are helped further in improving their spelling, punctuation and grammar.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Attainment has been significantly above average overall at Key Stage 1 for several years. The strongest subject in 2013 was mathematics. There has been a similar pattern of attainment at the end of Year 6. In 2013, pupils in Year 1 achieved around the national average in the screening check for phonics (letters and the sounds they make).
- Children are supported extremely well in the mixed Nursery and Reception class. They join the school with skills typical for children of their age, though their mixed pre-school experiences mean that some need additional social and emotional support. Children mix very well, settle quickly and engage well with different activities. Their progress is good so that, by the time they enter Year 1, they have skills above those typically found.
- Over time, progress has been good across Key Stage 2. Progress in writing at Key Stage 1 is not as strong as in reading and mathematics. This is due to a small number of pupils who did not achieve as well as they could. The achievement of the pupils is not always reflected in the published information due to the small numbers of pupils in each cohort. Progress is accelerating and most pupils now make good progress.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve as well as their peers, making good progress. These pupils benefit from tasks set at the right level and from support given in small groups
- Pupils who join the school at times other than the usual settle very quickly. Their needs are identified early so they achieve well and any who have fallen behind quickly catch up with their peers.
- There were not enough pupils supported by the pupil premium in Year 6 in 2013 to comment on their attainment without identifying individuals. However, the small numbers of pupils funded through the pupil premium make good progress as they move through the school, and gaps in attainment especially in writing at Key Stage 1 are closing as these pupils move through the school.
- More-able pupils make accelerated progress, particularly at Key Stage 2. They are able to reach higher than expected levels of attainment for their age, especially in mathematics, as they are frequently asked to take on more challenging tasks.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good because adults provide a very positive climate for learning. Routines are clear, and all adults have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve. Pupils respond well to this and always give of their best.
- Pupils are given many opportunities to write and teachers use a range of stimulating resources which help them to improve their writing skills. Pupils in Year 3 and 4 wrote vivid accounts of Howard Carter's discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamen, for example. Timely support helped pupils write powerful diaries capturing a sense of wonder and awe as the explorer first set eyes on the tomb.
- Sometimes pupils, in Key Stage 1, are not given enough opportunities to improve their spelling,

punctuation and grammar. This results in boys, those who are more able and those supported through the pupil premium sometimes falling slightly behind. Opportunities to write in more depth in subjects other than English are too limited.

- Pupils are successfully taught to enjoy reading and to read widely. They use their phonic skills alongside other skills to read a wide range of different texts. Effective questioning helps them to discover hidden meanings and quickly learn new vocabulary.
- Teachers make good use of stimulating and practical resources in teaching calculation. As a result, pupils quickly use and apply new skills, and develop confidence in using the correct language. For example, pupils in Year 5 and 6 sorted three-dimensional objects into different types and demonstrated an excellent understanding of their correct names.
- Teachers help pupils to reflect more deeply on topics and this develops their powers of reasoning. For example, pupils in the Year 2 and 3 class researched pirates and then considered different images in deciding which the odd one out was. Similarly, children in the Early Years Foundation Stage gave thoughtful responses when asked to choose the odd one out of three objects.
- All teachers regularly set tasks which challenge the pupils. Pupils are encouraged to choose 'the root, stem or flower' challenges which become increasingly more difficult, and quickly learn to make the right choices.
- Teachers give regular feedback in their marking. Pupils are helped to see how they have been successful, and what they need to do next to continue their learning. They know that a 'footprints' stamp means they have successfully responded to the teacher's comments. In this way, marking is leading to better progress.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Their work to devise an anti-bullying charter resulted in the recent award of the county accreditation. Pupils demonstrate a thorough understanding of the different sorts of bullying. Their charter encourages others to accept difference, as one pupil said, 'We are all different, but different in a good way'. The pupils' behaviour is strong evidence for the school's firm commitment to equality of opportunity.
- Pupils have an extremely clear idea of what is the right behaviour and try to live up to this ideal. Assemblies successfully teach them to value and respect each other. For example, in one assembly a story drew on volunteers to illustrate the importance of co-operation. This quality characterises the outstanding way pupils work together in class and help each other achieve.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils insist that everyone has the right to be safe at all times, and say that they are in school. They accept that talking things through and seeking help will keep them safe. They have excellent ideas about how to keep safe for example to prevent cyber-bullying.
- Pupils show great pride in their school community. This is reflected in the meticulous care they take in their work, and the displays which are treated with great respect.
- Friendship is very important to the pupils of Little Hadham. Many willingly take on extra responsibilities, such as the 'sports crew' who lead activities for the younger children during free time, and fulfil them conscientiously and with enjoyment. This is a school where children

flourish. For example, the breakfast club provides a welcoming and safe start to the day for many pupils. As one said, 'I enjoy Little Hadham because I know everybody.'

- In 2013 attendance dipped. However, this was due to particular circumstances beyond the school's control, largely through an epidemic of illness. Over the last few years, attendance has been around the national average. Pupils enjoy coming to school so attendance is improving.

## **The leadership and management are good**

- School leaders have been effective in sustaining improvements so that teaching continues to be good. The headteacher is well supported by teachers who have additional responsibilities, and by governors. Several leaders provide outreach work to support other schools which need help. This is also helping to improve leadership within the school and the school's capacity for further improvement.
- All leaders make regular checks on the quality of teaching so that teachers are helped to improve. Teachers respond positively to the support given to them. This helps to ensure that only the best performance is rewarded by pay increases.
- Topics are planned so that pupils learn skills and ideas from different subjects. Occasionally, these topics stretch over a week or longer, and provide deeper learning opportunities. Pupils take part in a wide range of sporting and cultural activities. The particular, successful focus on extending their reasoning skills is central to a curriculum which makes an exceptional contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school makes good use of the pupil premium funding so that pupils do not miss out on trips and after-school clubs. Good support for these pupils means that any gaps in achievement with their peers are generally closed by the time they reach Year 6.
- Partnerships with other schools help leaders to successfully bring about improvements. The school is a strategic partner in the Teaching Alliance with Hertfordshire and Essex High School and Science College. The sports fund is used to improve teachers' skills, for example in teaching gymnastics, as well as providing a wider range of sports and games for the pupils. Skilled teachers from the partnership and elsewhere help pupils increase their participation and enjoyment of sports.
- Notwithstanding a small number of parents who responded to the on-line Parent View survey with concerns, the large majority of parents agree that the school is a happy and harmonious community. Parents are given every opportunity to have their views heard, such as through the Parent Council which represents families from each class.
- The school makes effective use of the local authority to ensure that they have an accurate estimation of how well the pupils are doing when compared to other schools. The local authority makes full use of the expertise within the school to help improve other schools.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - An experienced Chair of the Governing Body leads colleagues well, and also offers her expertise to other schools. Governors spend a lot of time in school making checks on how well the pupils are doing. They use their detailed knowledge of data about how well the school compares to other schools to offer support and challenge in equal measure. They are well qualified to help the school evaluate its strengths as they undergo regular training, and are

kept well informed by the headteacher. They have a good grasp of how targeted funding is leading to better achievement, such as through the pupil premium, and to greater participation in after-school clubs and teams, such as through the sports premium. Governors allocate responsibilities well so that they make sure that all statutory requirements including those related to safeguarding are met.

## 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>	117126
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	439582

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	128
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Lesley Calder
<b>Headteacher</b>	Elizabeth Stockley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 July 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01279 771285
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