

Arunside School, Horsham

Blackbridge Lane, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 1RR

Inspection dates

26–27 November 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.

- All leaders, including governors, have a sharp focus on improving teaching. Consequently, pupils' standards in reading, writing and mathematics are rising.
- All groups of pupils now make good progress from their starting points.
- Overall, teaching is good. Imaginative activities capture pupils' interest and develop their literacy and numeracy skills well.
- Pupils benefit greatly from the excellent teamwork between teachers and assistants.
- Pupils are proud of their school and value the warm and trusting relationships that underpin their positive attitudes to learning.
- Pupils behave well. They feel safe and very well looked after.
- The headteacher provides clear and resolute leadership. She works closely with governors who provide her with effective support and challenge.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding and there is still a small amount of teaching that requires improvement.
- Occasionally in lessons, the work is not hard enough for the more-able pupils, and the pace is too slow.
- Opportunities for pupils to find things out for themselves are missed in some lessons.
- Teachers do not always use questioning well to probe and extend pupils' understanding.
- The best practice in marking has not yet been fully shared across the school.

Information about this inspection

- Teaching and learning were observed in 16 lessons and pupils' work was examined, especially in English and mathematics. Some observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with staff, pupils, a representative of the local authority and three members of the school's governing body. One meeting with pupils was dedicated to a discussion of reading, with an opportunity for pupils to read aloud.
- Informal discussions with pupils took place at breaks and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors took account of the 27 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the 22 responses to the staff questionnaire. Parents' involvement in school life was discussed with senior leaders. At the beginning of one day, informal conversations were held with parents in the school playground.
- A range of documentation was looked at including records relating to pupils' progress, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Jacqueline White, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Clive Reynolds

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- In this smaller-than-average size primary school, the great majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion from minority ethnic backgrounds is broadly average. An above average number of these pupils speak English as an additional language. A sizeable number of pupils are at an early stage of learning English.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is average. The pupil premium is additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those with a parent in the armed services.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- An above average number of pupils join or leave the school at other than usual times.
- There are plans to increase the school's roll in the future and a major building programme is underway to facilitate this.
- The school holds several awards, including Healthy Schools, Eco Green Flag and the Intermediate International Award.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that it is never less than good and more is outstanding by ensuring that:
 - the work set is sufficiently demanding for all pupils, especially the most able
 - the pace of learning is always brisk enough
 - questioning is targeted effectively to probe and deepen pupils' understanding
 - there are more opportunities for pupils to gain independence by finding out things for themselves and then applying and demonstrating what they have learned in lessons
 - best practice in marking is shared, particularly the linking of guidance to pupils' longer-term targets and ways of encouraging pupils to reflect on, and respond to, points for improvement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Most pupils achieve well. Their good progress is secured through high-quality support programmes and effective teaching in lessons. Well-trained teaching assistants are very skilled at accelerating pupils' progress through small group work and one-to-one tuition.
- Children enter Reception with a very wide range of needs and ability levels. Most are well below typical levels of development, particularly in the area of communication and language. Excellent care and skilful teaching ensure they gain confidence and make good progress in developing their early reading, writing and mathematical skills.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is broadly average. Standards and progress have been better in reading and mathematics than in writing. The school is taking effective action to tackle this. Its reliable assessment information shows most pupils now make good progress in writing.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make the same good progress as their classmates. Provision for these pupils is very carefully planned and highly personalised.
- More-able pupils generally make good progress but in lessons their potential is sometimes capped because of a lack of challenge or because they do not move on to harder work quickly enough.
- Pupils eligible for the additional pupil premium funding make good progress alongside their classmates. The starting points of many of these pupils are very low. However, provisional data for 2013 show gaps in attainment closing, especially in reading where they are about a term behind their classmates; in mathematics they are three terms behind and in writing, about five terms.
- Equality of opportunity is at the heart of the school's values. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, including those who speak English as an additional language, are doing well. The school works very effectively with other agencies to support pupils at an early stage of learning English. There is no discrimination within the school.
- The needs of pupils who join the school at other than usual times are assessed swiftly. Where necessary, good support is provided so that these pupils settle in quickly and learn well.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Most teaching is of good quality and leads to pupils achieving well. However, there is not enough outstanding practice for teaching to be judged as outstanding overall.
- Where teaching is most effective, lessons are well planned and build on pupils' skills. Expectations for work and behaviour are high and mostly met. Tailored activities engage pupils and stretch them to their limits. This was particularly evident in a Year 6 mathematics lesson where the teacher challenged pupils to apply their knowledge of multiplication to create and solve problems. Pupils were given opportunities to present their problems and get their classmates to solve them. This extended pupils' understanding of different problem-solving methods so that they made good progress and developed independence.
- Most lessons include a variety of well-structured activities that incorporate high-quality resources. Good use is made of paired and group work so that pupils can exchange ideas and develop their speaking and listening skills. In many lessons, teaching assistants demonstrate an excellent understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning and support their progress very well.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive consistently good support in lessons which ensures they participate fully, develop confidence and enjoy learning.
- Sometimes, when learning is too controlled by the teacher, openings for pupils to take the initiative, find out things for themselves and gain independence in their learning are missed.

- The teaching of reading is well structured and effective in improving pupils' skills. Pupils of all ages and abilities enjoy reading and have good opportunities in lessons to read for different purposes.
- Teachers are skilful in using discussion and exemplar materials to prepare pupils for writing in different styles. For example, pupils were able to be very precise about writing recipes for cookery because they had tried and tested recipes in a practical cookery lesson.
- The quality of questioning is usually good in that it obliges pupils to think for themselves and develop their responses. However, it is not always well targeted to probe and extend pupils' understanding.
- In the few lessons where teaching requires improvement, it is usually because the pace of learning is too slow and the level of challenge is not high enough for more-able pupils.
- There is some very good marking practice in the school but this has not been fully shared. Not all teachers link the guidance they give pupils to their longer-term targets. Pupils are not always given regular opportunities to reflect on, and respond to, points for improvement.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils enjoy learning and want to do well. They listen attentively and usually contribute confidently in lessons. Occasionally, some pupils are not actively involved in their learning because they are not encouraged to experiment with or use what they have learned.
- Behaviour is good. Staff are unanimous in this view and nearly all parents agree too. Pupils are polite, friendly and respectful. They enjoy responsibilities such as being play leaders at breaks and lunchtimes, or as school councillors. They are kind to each other and the older pupils are excellent role models for the younger ones.
- Pupils form trusting relationships with staff and know that if they have any worries or concerns staff will help them. Pupils understand that bullying can happen in a range of ways including through mobile phones. They say that bullying is not a problem and are confident that if incidents did arise, the school would deal with them straight away.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe, fit and healthy. They enjoy sports events and know how to keep safe outside school and who to go to if they need help.
- Parents are very positive about the school and how much their children like being there. Pupils enjoy a range of activities that enrich their learning, particularly the clubs and social events the school organises.
- Through curriculum topics and working with a range of visitors, pupils show respect for the different communities and lifestyles in the world beyond school. A well-established link with a school in Kenya, that includes a teacher swap, extends pupils' experiences of the diversity in the wider world.
- Pupils' attendance is improving. Figures are now in line with the 2012 national average for primary schools.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, well supported by all staff and governors, has a clear ambition for the school that is rooted in securing the success of every pupil. She is a visible presence around the school modelling the high expectations that she insists on. Her leadership and the strong teamwork throughout the school have resulted in improvements in teaching and achievement since the school's previous inspection. Leadership and management are not yet outstanding because, while pupils now achieve well, they do not all make rapid and sustained progress across the school.
- The monitoring of teaching and pupils' progress is rigorous. Teachers and assistants understand that they are accountable for pupils' achievement. Effective training and support, and clarity about roles and responsibilities underpin buoyant staff morale.

- Leaders have a good awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Their improvement plans are focused on the right priorities to boost achievement further.
- Subject coordinators have a good understanding of how to secure improvement in their areas and contribute effectively to staff training. They are fully involved in undertaking lesson observations, monitoring teachers' planning and scrutinising pupils' work.
- The school has developed its curriculum so that it is more creative. Increasingly, it provides exciting and meaningful experiences that captivate pupils and develops their literacy and numeracy skills methodically.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of learning are promoted well through activities in and outside the classroom.
- The school is in the midst of a major building programme which will allow for expansion in the future. This is being well managed so that impact on the current environment for learning is minimised.
- Pupils participate in very varied and well-resourced physical and sporting activities that foster their health, leadership and social skills well. The new funding for sport is being used appropriately to sustain and extend pupils' high-quality experiences. For example, golf is a recent addition. The skills of teachers are also being developed through coaching in specialist activities.
- The school has a very productive relationship with the local authority. Support has been effective, particularly in helping to improve the quality of teaching.
- Partnerships with parents are well established. The school's 'open door' policy is greatly appreciated by parents, who feel informed about, and involved in, their children's learning.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development, based upon their monitoring. Through good-quality training and personal expertise, they have developed appropriate skills to interpret data. As a consequence, they support and challenge the headteacher about the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. They receive appropriate information about the management of teachers' performance and see that teachers' pay rises are appropriately linked to pupils' achievements. Governors manage the school's finances well. They are fully aware of how the pupil premium funding is spent, and the impact this is having on the achievement of eligible pupils. Governors ensure that the school meets national requirements for safeguarding children. Policies are regularly reviewed to ensure that children are kept safe and free from harm.

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	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. 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.

School details

Unique reference number	125883
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	426517

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	169
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jill Jordan
Headteacher	Carol Slight
Date of previous school inspection	7–8 November 2011
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