

Briary Primary School

Greenhill Road, Herne Bay, Kent, CT6 7RS

Inspection dates 27–28 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.

- Children are educated and looked after well in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are well prepared for Year 1.
- Pupils' results at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 have improved over time. Pupils in all classes make faster progress than in most other schools.
- Most teaching is at least good and some is outstanding across the school. Pupils learn well and progress quickly during most lessons because they are active in their own learning and because of their teachers' strong knowledge about the subjects that they teach.
- Classrooms and corridors are presented in a way that encourage the best out of pupils and make them value learning and achievement.
- Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes towards learning and courtesy towards others. They are considerate and well behaved. Pupils feel safe and well cared for in school.
- Leadership is good because the headteacher, other leaders and governors have high expectations and ensure that teaching is of good quality. Pupils' results and progress continue to improve as a result.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' results in writing, although improving, and results in English grammar, punctuation and spelling, are too low.
- Whilst improving, the rate of progress made by pupils eligible for pupil premium funding does not yet match that of other pupils.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors saw teaching in every class. They observed one assembly, 22 lessons and pupils' behaviour at lunchtime and in the playground. Eight lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Discussions were held with pupils, two members of the governing body, the headteacher and other members of staff.
- The inspectors observed many aspects of the school's work, including supervision and support for pupils who need extra help. They heard pupils read and examined pupils' work in their exercise books and on classroom and corridor wall displays.
- The inspectors looked at a number of documents, including plans for what pupils will learn in each subject, plans for the school's future development, the school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe, pupils' attendance records, minutes of governing body meetings, records of how pupils' learning and the quality of teaching are checked, and external reports on aspects of the school's work.
- The views of parents and carers were taken into account through taking note of the 32 responses to the online Parent View survey and the school's records of parental views.
- Staff views were taken into consideration by looking at questionnaires completed by 20 staff members and through discussions with several members of staff.

Inspection team

Steven Popper, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Maura Docherty

Additional Inspector

Noureddin Kassal

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a much larger than average-sized primary school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations of pupils' attainment and progress.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for additional government funding, known as the pupil premium, is slightly higher than the national average. This extra money is provided for children in local authority care, children with a parent in the armed services and those known to be eligible for free school meals. There are no pupils with a parent in the armed forces and seven pupils in local authority care are currently on roll.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action and at school action plus is average; there are eight pupils with statements of special educational needs currently on roll. Some pupils have speech, language and communication needs, whilst others have behaviour, emotional, social difficulties or other needs.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The number of pupils joining the school other than at the usual times is higher than in most other schools.
- The school is adjacent to a children's centre, which is not managed by the school. The children's centre was not included in this inspection.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have two Reception classes provided for them.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher took up their posts in September 2007. The mathematics leader took up her post in September 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' results in writing, English grammar, punctuation and spelling by ensuring the accuracy of pupils' spelling.
- Improve the rates of progress made by pupils eligible for pupil premium funding by increasing the amount of outstanding teaching found in the school, in particular by ensuring that pupils are active in their own learning early on in all lessons.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils in all classes make faster than expected progress. A greater proportion of pupils than in most other schools has made expected or better than expected progress by the time they leave Year 6. Pupils' results at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 have consistently and swiftly improved over time. These are the reasons why the achievement of pupils is good.
- Most children start school with skills lower than expected for their age. They make good progress whilst in the Early Years Foundation Stage and are well prepared for Year 1.
- Results of national screening in phonics (linking letters to the sounds they make) are consistently higher than in most other schools.
- Pupils' results in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 have substantially improved over time, although they remain too low in writing. This is because teaching has improved in quality.
- Pupils' results in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 have also improved over time because of better teaching. However, pupils' results in writing, English grammar, punctuation and spelling remain too low, particularly because of poor performance in spelling. This is one reason why the achievement of pupils is not outstanding.
- Pupils receiving support through the use of pupil premium funding do not make progress in mathematics as swiftly as other pupils, with a gap of about two terms at the end of Key Stage 2. This is another reason why the achievement of pupils is not outstanding. However, the school is successfully closing this gap, and eligible pupils across the school are now making faster progress.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make progress in line with that of other pupils in the school. This is because they are given teaching that meets their needs.
- Pupils, including more able pupils and those who joined the school other than at usual times, made fast progress during the great majority of lessons seen during the inspection. This was because their teachers gave them helpful and accurate guidance and good opportunities to work things out for themselves.
- Pupils take care about the quality and presentation of their work. This is because of teachers' high expectations and the very effective use of classroom and corridor spaces to show pupils work at its best.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching has improved and most teaching across the school is now good, with some that is outstanding. Pupils make swift progress in all classes as a result.
- Teachers and teaching assistants communicate clearly to pupils. Pupils understand the high standard of work expected of them.
- The best teaching is highly imaginative and absorbs pupils through very well chosen stimuli for learning. For example, in one outstanding Year 6 English lesson, pupils were given evocative portraits of eerie characters to explore independently. This led to deep thinking and concentration that resulted in high quality descriptions and story writing.
- Teachers have strong knowledge of the subjects that they teach. They give pupils accurate and precise guidance and engage pupils in high quality dialogue that develops their understanding. Teachers give pupils good opportunities to work together and discuss ideas with each other.
- Teachers make good use of opportunities for pupils to apply English and mathematical skills to other subjects. For example, one good Year 2 lesson developed pupils' speaking and listening skills whilst also developing their understanding of the Great Fire of London.
- The small amount of weaker teaching suffers from a lack of pace and overlong introductions that prevent pupils from getting on with their learning quickly enough. As a result, some pupils lose

focus and get distracted or noisy. This is why the quality of teaching is not outstanding.

- Teachers in the Early Years Foundation Stage nurture children well and provide them with good opportunities for learning. The Early Years Foundation Stage classrooms, in common with all others in the school, are highly stimulating, very well presented and used to promote the value of learning and achievement.
- Pupils' books contain marking that gives pupils clear advice about how to improve their work and good opportunities for self-evaluation. Written feedback encourages pupils to respond to their teachers' advice and record their thoughts, although teachers do not consistently check that pupils do so.
- Teaching assistants are used well to support individual and groups of pupils with particular needs, both inside classrooms and in separately taught sessions in other areas of the school. Support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is good across the school. This is one reason why most groups of pupils make equally fast progress.
- Homework is used effectively to develop pupils' skills and learning. For example, spelling books contain opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge of spelling to sentences that they compose themselves.
- Pupils interviewed by the inspectors said they found their lessons challenging and fun. They praised their teachers for offering support and making lessons interesting.
- A very large majority of parents who left an opinion for the inspectors thought that their children were taught well and made good progress as a result.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils typically show very positive attitudes towards learning and take pride in their achievements. However, pupils can sometimes lose engagement with learning and get noisy or start calling out during the very few times teaching is less strong. This is why the behaviour and safety of pupils are not outstanding.
- The school's ethos, 'Every child has the right to learn but no child has the right to disrupt the learning of others', is understood and demonstrated by pupils. Low level disruption in lessons is uncommon.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons, in the playground, during lunchtime and when travelling around the school is good. Pupils are very polite and considerate of others at all times. Relationships between pupils and other pupils and between pupils and adults are very good. Pupils are skilled at working together and listening to each other well.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including when online. They understand why bullying and extreme behaviour, such as racism, are not acceptable. Pupils who talked to the inspectors did not feel that there is any bullying in the school and felt safe and well looked after.
- The school has high expectations of pupils' behaviour and manages it well. Pupils know what is expected of them. The few incidents of poor behaviour are monitored carefully and responded to effectively.
- Attendance has improved over time and is now in line with that of most other schools. This is because of the school's high expectations of attendance and because of successful work with parents. The attendance of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is improving but remains lower than in most other schools. This is another reason why the behaviour and safety of pupils are not outstanding.
- A very large majority of parents who expressed an opinion thought that behaviour in the school was well managed and that their children were well looked after.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, senior and middle leaders and governors have high aspirations for the school. The high expectations of the headteacher have ensured that pupils' achievement and teaching have consistently improved over time. This is why leadership and management are good. However, pupils' results in writing, English grammar, punctuation and spelling are too low, which is why leadership and management are not outstanding.
- There have been substantial improvements to the way that senior leaders check the quality of teaching and monitor pupils' achievement. As a result, the school's evaluation of its strengths and priorities for development is accurate. Leaders, including middle leaders, understand data well and use it to understand where improvements are needed.
- The school's development plan demonstrates the high ambition that the headteacher and governors have for the school. Actions designed to bring about improvement are identified with precision and the school is clear about how success will be judged.
- Performance management is rigorous and informed by regular scrutiny of lessons and pupils' work. Teachers are set targets relating to improvements in the quality of teaching and in pupils' results and progress. Decisions about possible pay awards to staff are explicitly linked to consideration of teachers' performance and their success in meeting their targets. Teachers' professional needs are identified and teachers are given training and other support to help them meet their targets.
- Pupils learn a broad range of subjects and study exciting topics such as Mexico and the Aztecs and Animals and Us. There are good opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through pupils' engagement with different religions and opportunities to discuss moral issues in their lessons, such as how parents could talk to children about evacuation during the Second World War. Equality of opportunity is promoted well and there is no discrimination.
- Pupils' engagement in sports and physical education is broad and includes swimming and dance. Pupils' experience of sports is enhanced through links with other local schools, including a local secondary school. Sports premium funding is used to enhance pupils' experience and give teachers training to develop their skills in this area. The school received a Bronze School Games Kitemark award in 2013.
- Pupil premium funding is spent on effective one-to-one and small-group tuition designed to ensure pupils with lower starting points can catch up with other pupils. These have led to improvements to the progress made by eligible pupils.
- The school ensures that all pupils are safe. It keeps appropriate and up-to-date records of its work in this area and meets statutory requirements. The school has implemented recommendations made by the local authority to strengthen its work in this area.
- The local authority has offered much support to the school. It has given training to teachers and governors and checked the quality of pupils' work. The local authority also supported the school's improvements to its monitoring of pupils' progress and the quality of teaching.
- The headteacher and school leadership team have the well-judged confidence of the school's governing body, the local authority and a very large majority of parents.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are very active and monitor the school well. They have been trained effectively and understand data about pupils' progress. Governors challenge the school about pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching. They have set up a strategy group that works with school leaders to help direct school improvement. The Chair of the Governing Body leads regular meetings that scrutinise pupils' progress. Governors set the headteacher performance management targets that reflect the key priorities of the school. They scrutinise school finances carefully, including the use and results of pupil premium funding and the use of the sport funding. Their impact on the school's drive for improvement is good.

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	118520
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	426471

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	410
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Stanley
Headteacher	Ben Cooper
Date of previous school inspection	31 January–1 February 2012
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