

Ethelbert Road Primary School

Ethelbert Road, Faversham, Kent, ME13 8SQ

Inspection dates 30 September–1 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Early years provision		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The headteacher, supported by her senior leaders and governing body, has the highest expectations for all pupils. Together, they provide outstanding leadership that enables staff and pupils to thrive and achieve highly.
- Pupils' exceptional personal, spiritual, moral and social development is at the heart of the school's success and underpins everything they do. There is a strong sense of mutual respect between adults and pupils. Parents, children, teachers and leaders are united in working together to continue to move the school forward
- Standards and progress in reading, writing and mathematics are consistently well above the national average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. They are continuing to rise.
- Teaching is outstanding. Teachers and support staff are highly skilled and work as a team to support all pupils. They receive excellent training to support their professional development.
- Children in the Reception class make outstanding progress and achieve a good level of development. They develop excellent communication and language skills because teaching is outstanding.
- Pupils are exceptionally well motivated to learn. They take the utmost pride in their work and constantly strive to do their best. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school is outstanding. They are friendly and polite at all times.
- Pupils say they feel very safe in school. This view is echoed by parents who have complete confidence in the school's ability to look after their children well.
- Attendance is well above the national average for primary schools because pupils like coming to school.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy the wide range of subjects and enrichment activities on offer during the day and through after-school clubs. As a result, pupils develop excellent skills and attitudes to support their journey into the next stage of their education.
- The governing body robustly holds the school to account for its performance regarding the staff's impact on pupils' progress. This has resulted in a continued improvement in teaching and achievement across the school.
- Governors ensure safeguarding procedures are maintained to the highest standards.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 12 teaching sessions. They also made a number of shorter visits to classrooms and small-group sessions. They examined a wide range of pupils’ books and listened to some pupils read. They attended a whole-school assembly.
- Discussions were held with senior leaders and those with responsibilities for English, reading improvement, mathematics, special educational needs and the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- A telephone call was made to the Chair of the Governing Body. A meeting was held with three other governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors met formally with a group of pupils, and observed pupils in the playground and around the school.
- The inspectors took account of the 73 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and to several letters and emails from parents. Inspectors also took account of the 19 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation, including the information on pupils’ current progress and standards, the school’s plans for improvement, the management of teacher performance and pay, the use of the pupil premium funding, additional sports funding and records relating to safeguarding, pupils’ safety and behaviour.

Inspection team

Penny Spencer, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Michael Sutherland-Harper	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. It has been growing since the previous inspection. It is now designated as a one-form entry primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through a statement of special educational needs or at school action plus is broadly in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after is very small and much lower than the national average.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and do not speak English as an additional language.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There has been considerable building work since the previous inspection to create extra space for the growing pupil numbers.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Share outstanding practice in teaching even more widely to enable recently qualified teachers to make rapid progress in their teaching.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher's passion and determination to provide the very best education for all pupils is shared by all staff and governors. There is clear and decisive leadership and an unequivocal sense of purpose towards continued excellence. Evidence of this shared vision is seen in the wholly positive responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Rigorous checking of the quality of teaching and pupils' progress underpins the highly positive picture of outstanding achievement. Leaders use a wide range of evidence on which to base judgements. These judgements support the management of staff performance. Teachers are set challenging targets and any progression in salary is closely dependent on pupils' achievement.
- Communication with parents is exemplary. Parents are completely supportive of the school and are fully involved with their children's learning. This is evidenced by the overwhelmingly positive responses to Parent View and individual letters given to inspectors. Parents agree that 'This is a truly exceptional school.'
- Teachers who are new to the profession make good progress and develop their skills quickly. They are highly appreciative of the opportunities they receive from their mentor and other staff to observe good practice. However, this could be improved even further with more opportunities to work with all staff.
- Subject leaders are confident and experienced. They work as a cohesive team with senior leaders. Action plans are clear and monitored regularly to ensure they are having the best possible impact on pupils' learning. Teachers and leaders are developing strategies for assessing pupils after the introduction of the new National Curriculum that build on their current outstanding practice. They are using partnerships with local schools to share best practice and refine their plans.
- Schemes of work provide a wide range of opportunities for high-quality learning. New topics from the revised National Curriculum have been imaginatively incorporated into the school's established plans. These are broadened and enriched by a comprehensive programme of trips, events and visits. All this ensures that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is extended. Inspectors were thoroughly captivated by a group of Year 6 pupils who performed some scenes from *'As You Like It'* in the playground during breaktime. They acted with confidence and aplomb after only a short period of time working with the Royal Shakespeare Company.
- Very few pupils receive additional government funding. However, the school uses these funds wisely to ensure they develop secure skills, particularly in reading and comprehension. As a result, pupils in all year groups make excellent progress and achievement at the end of Year 6 is above the national average.
- Very good use is made of the primary sports funding. Thorough evaluation of its impact on improving teachers' skills and confidence has led to a reallocation of funds to employ more specialist staff to deliver high-quality training to teachers. Teachers and pupils were observed enthusiastically participating in the daily dance exercise session, held in the playground, introduced as a result of the funding. Pupils are keen to take up different sports and clubs are well supported.
- The local authority provides the lightest of touches to this outstanding school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The work of the governing body contributes substantially to the excellent quality of education provided by the school. Governors are committed and experienced. They have a good range of relevant skills which are used very effectively to support and challenge all aspects of the school's performance. They are fully involved in the life of the school, and regularly visit to look at aspects of teaching and talk with staff and pupils. The governing body diligently monitors the systems for managing the performance of staff, to ensure teachers' pay is linked closely to improved pupil outcomes. Governors ensure the additional government funding is used effectively to support eligible pupils. They monitor their progress to be sure it continues to improve and that gaps are closed completely with other pupils.
 - The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities and ensures that all requirements are met in relation to the safeguarding of children.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils are friendly and unfailingly polite and courteous towards each other and adults. They enjoy being in school, and it shines through in their cheerfulness and willingness to help each other. Attendance is well above the national average for primary schools.

- Pupils are highly motivated and eager to learn. They relish being challenged and always strive to do their best. As a result, the already very high achievement of pupils is continuing to improve.
- Routines for excellent behaviour are well established and pupils understand them fully. New children in the Reception class were observed responding to instructions quickly and behaving impeccably in assembly, after only a few weeks of being in school.
- Records kept by the school show very few incidents of concern over a long period of time. Parents are unanimous in their view that behaviour at the school is consistently good.
- Pupils are proud of their school and their work. Books are kept neatly and work is presented to an exceptionally high standard. Pupils respect the school environment and have a high regard for other people's property.
- Pupils are regularly involved in community events, both locally and further afield. They have good links with local organisations and regularly support those who are less well off than themselves. This was evidenced by their involvement in collecting food for the local food bank, as part of their Harvest celebrations.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is strongly promoted by the school's work to broaden their horizons, raise aspirations and teach them about life outside of their local area. Pupils spoke highly of the trips to places of interest in London and the opportunities to be involved in musical and theatrical events within the local community.
- Pupils have a good awareness of the different types of bullying and are confident that adults would deal with any situation that might occur.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Safeguarding policies and procedures are comprehensive. All members of staff fully endorse and actively promote them. Training is comprehensive and regularly updated.
- Pupils understand how to keep safe because they are taught well. Frequent lessons, assemblies and events ensure they understand the risks associated with using the internet, cycling and using the roads.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Teachers create a stimulating and exciting learning environment which promotes very high expectations of achievement and behaviour. Teachers know their pupils well and have excellent working relationships with them.
- Teachers in the Reception class provide exciting experiences in a happy and welcoming environment. As a result, children quickly become confident and eager learners.
- Teachers plan work for pupils that is securely based on accurate assessment of their abilities. Tasks are interesting and allow pupils to develop their understanding steadily. Pupils are constantly challenged to think for themselves and to look for solutions to problems. For example, Year 2 pupils were successfully encouraged to develop their understanding of measurements by calculating dinosaur footprints that were larger than their rulers.
- Learning support assistants are an integral part of the teaching team. They are highly skilled and very effective in supporting all pupils. They make a very strong contribution to pupils' outstanding progress.
- Teachers cater for the most-able pupils well. Tasks are adapted appropriately, and opportunities for them to investigate and try out their ideas are frequent. Teachers are very skilful in drawing out pupils' learning and understanding through detailed questioning. As a result, progress and standards for this group of pupils has continued to improve.
- Pupils who have special educational needs make exceptional progress from their starting points. Expectations for these pupils are as high as everyone else and tasks are refined carefully to ensure they succeed. Progress regularly exceeds expectations and many pupils achieve standards in line with all pupils.
- The quality of feedback and marking is integral to the success made by the pupils. It is clear and comprehensive, and pupils respond regularly, and so improve their work. The quality of verbal feedback is very good and contributes successfully to the good or better progress pupils make on a daily basis.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Pupil's achievement is strong in every year group. As a result, by the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are consistently well above the national average for all groups of pupils.

- The proportions of pupils making and exceeding expected levels of progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6 have been well above the national average for several years and are continuing to rise.
- Pupils in Year 1 have an excellent understanding of the sounds that letters make (phonics). The proportion of pupils who achieve above expected levels in the national phonics screening check is above average and has been over time.
- Children enter the Reception class with skills and understanding that are broadly typical for their age. They make rapid progress because of highly skilled teaching and well-thought-out activities. Almost all pupils make a good level of development in all areas of learning. The proportion of pupils who exceed expectations is high and increasing every year.
- Work in pupils' books is of a very high standard in all year groups. Work is beautifully presented and there are excellent opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their ability in all subjects. Progress over time is both rapid and sustained.
- The most-able pupils achieve highly. The numbers of pupils who achieve at the highest levels are increasing every year because teachers are adept in challenging their understanding and deepening their knowledge.
- Pupils who have special educational needs make very good progress from their starting points and achieve highly. They are supported very well by teachers and support staff.
- Pupils eligible for additional government funding reach higher standards and make more progress in English and mathematics than similar pupils nationally. Only a very small number of pupils are supported by this funding in the school, but any gaps in the achievement of this group and their peers are closing. This is because the funding is used to target any specific need and provide one-to-one support where necessary.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- Children get off to an excellent start because they are well looked after in caring and stimulating classrooms and outside areas. Parents are delighted by the way their children settle in and quickly become confident learners.
- Outstanding teaching from the class teacher and the support assistants ensures tasks and activities are challenging and devised to support the needs of each individual.
- Excellent leadership means all staff are trained well to accurately assess progress and challenge children to meet their full potential. A support assistant was observed successfully encouraging an able child to count out conkers up to 20, while supporting a less-able child to count to 10.
- Inspectors were impressed with the resilience shown by all children in carrying out tasks that required sustained concentration.
- Tasks are adapted quickly to follow the interests of the children, which ensures they are engaged at all times. This was observed during a whole-class discussion about giants, where the children decided they would need to build a beanstalk to see the giant in the clouds. The activity was immediately planned into the afternoon session and the children were encouraged to gather any resources they might need. Children were confident to speak to adults and listened quietly to instructions.
- The outdoor space is used creatively and children look after it well. Children enjoy creating their own balancing and climbing trails, to develop their physical skills, supported ably by the teaching staff. Assessment over time is comprehensive and involves parents at every stage. The wide range of evidence is evaluated carefully. Good use is made of the experience of staff in checking and validating their evidence to make sure judgements are accurate

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	118337
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	448815

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	165
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jaqueline Cox
Headteacher	Samantha Fenn
Date of previous school inspection	18 May 2010
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