

Horsted Junior School

Barberry Avenue, Chatham, ME5 9TF

Inspection dates 30 April–1 May 2014

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.

- The achievement of pupils is good. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in mathematics and reading is especially good. Standards in English grammar, punctuation and spelling are high.
- The quality of teaching is good and some is exemplary. Teachers effectively use questioning to engage pupils to deepen their understanding.
- Additional adults within the classroom are skilled in supporting pupils who have additional learning needs so that they make good progress.
- The behaviour of pupils is good and pupils are safe in school. Pupils say they enjoy their lessons and are keen to talk about their learning.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well because of the support they receive across the school.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effectively promoted within a supportive learning community.
- The executive headteacher and deputy headteacher have been successful in improving the quality of teaching so that pupils are now making good progress from their individual starting points across all year groups.
- Governors know their school well. They are actively involved and are taking purposeful actions to further improve the school's performance.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils are not always helped to understand how to move to the next level in their learning.
- Pupils of average ability are not consistently challenged to achieve the higher levels in their tasks.
- Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to write at length in their literacy work, hindering their writing achievement.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons, of which six were observed jointly with senior leaders. In addition, inspectors observed an assembly, listened to pupils read and looked at pupils' work in their exercise books.
- Inspectors met with pupils and talked with them about their work. Meetings were also held with governors, subject leaders and a representative of the local authority. A telephone conversation took place with the chair of governors.
- Documentation covering safeguarding, the management of performance of staff, behaviour and safety, attendance and checks on pupils' attainment and progress was reviewed
- Inspectors took account of 19 responses from parents to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and 21 questionnaires from staff. An inspector also talked to parents informally during the inspection.

Inspection team

Howard Jones, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Evelyn Riley

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized junior school.
- The proportion of pupils receiving support from the pupil premium funding, which is extra government support for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and those from forces families, is average. In this school it is applicable to pupils eligible for free school meals.
- When compared to national figures, the proportions of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs at school action is average. The proportion at school action plus or who have a statement of educational needs are also average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- There is a federation between this school and the adjacent infant school so that both schools share the same governing body and executive headteacher.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching to further promote progress for all pupils by:
 - helping pupils understand how they can improve their work to move to the next level in their learning
 - regularly adjusting tasks for pupils of average ability so they are effectively challenged to achieve the higher levels
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to practise writing at greater length in their literacy work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The attainment of pupils by the end of Year 6 is above average. In national tests, most pupils reach the levels expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. Attainment in English grammar, punctuation and spelling is markedly high and the progress of pupils in mathematics is especially good.
- The achievement of the most able pupils by the end of Key Stage 2 is good. These pupils are especially successful at the higher levels in mathematics and overall they make progress as well as similar pupils nationally because of the high expectations teachers hold for their achievement.
- Pupils enjoy reading. By the end of Year 6, a good proportion make more than the expected progress for their age in national tests. Pupils read from a range of texts and are especially competent in exploring the techniques used by authors such as Louis Sachar to portray their characters.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make progress similar to that of their peers. Their attainment is higher than the national average. These pupils are successful in their learning because of the personal support and guidance they receive during lessons and other additional support when required.
- The gap in attainment for pupils eligible for free school meals is closing over time. These pupils were behind in mathematics, reading and writing by approximately six months at the end of Year 6 in 2013. School evidence shows that from their individual starting points, these pupils are now making progress similar to that of their peers across the school.
- Most pupils achieve the levels expected for their age by the end of Year 6 in writing. However, the proportion of pupils making even better progress is not consistently strong and pupils do not always have sufficient opportunities to write at length in their literacy work in order to accelerate their achievement.

The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils say they value their attractive and colourful school. Displays of pupils' work throughout celebrate their achievement and 'working walls' are used effectively to enable pupils to develop their ideas.
- Pupils are always keen to do well because their learning is made purposeful yet interesting. For example, during a Year 6 mathematics session on probability, pupils were eager to succeed as they engaged in the imaginative approaches to learning created by their teacher.
- Pupils' use of subject specific skills and language are extended effectively. For instance, in a highly effective Year 5 English session, pupils were challenged to empathise with a character in a story. They were consistently required to apply their literacy skills accurately so that the learning of different groups of pupils was exemplary throughout the session.
- Teachers use questioning very effectively to develop pupils' learning. For example, in one Year 4 literacy session pupils were successful in a writing task linked to their reading of *Varjak Paw*, because the teacher regularly developed discussion to secure pupils' understanding at a deeper level.
- Additional adults in the classroom are highly competent in supporting pupils who have additional learning needs. These pupils participate confidently within lessons and complete their tasks successfully, so making good progress because of the guidance they receive.
- Teachers consistently help pupils to improve their work. There are some examples of exemplary practice in which teachers' written comments provide guidance on how pupils can improve their work within a range of skills. However, this is not always effectively used to show pupils how they can move to the next level in their learning.
- Teachers plan a variety of activities to develop the previous learning of pupils, for example in Year 3 literacy, where teachers assess pupils' learning so that subsequent work builds on pupils'

understanding. However, across the school, teachers do not routinely adjust tasks during lessons so that pupils of average ability are more effectively challenged to work toward the higher levels.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils work well together and remain fully engaged in their activities even when tasks are more demanding. They are articulate and use subject vocabulary confidently when talking about their learning and carefully listen to one another as they share ideas.
- During assemblies, pupils behave appropriately and clearly enjoy participating on such occasions. Their conduct around the school and within the school dining hall is never less than good and is at times exemplary. Pupils are proud of their school, are welcoming toward visitors and are eager to talk about how they enjoy their lessons.
- Behaviour is not outstanding because these positive attitudes have yet to impact more fully on raising pupils' progress.
- Pupils happily assume responsibilities in the school. Some pupils form part of the 'Sports Crew' and organise activities during break times and act as play mentors. Groups of pupils also actively promote environment issues, while others care for the school's giant African snails. Pupils champion the school in art competitions; and both the school orchestra and choir participate in local events.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe is good. Pupils emphasise they always feel safe and that adults actively promote their wellbeing. Older pupils have a strong sense of responsibility to set an example for younger pupils and do not tolerate discrimination of any kind. Racist incidents are rare and bullying of any type, including cyber-bullying, is not an issue. Pupils have a clear understanding of how to use the internet safely.
- Attendance is high and pupils clearly enjoy their experience of school. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View) agree their child is both happy and safe at the school.

The leadership and management are good

- The executive headteacher maintains a highly focused approach, bringing about improvements in the school's provision since the previous inspection. Ably supported by the deputy headteacher, improvements in the quality of teaching are improving pupils' learning outcomes.
- Subject leaders regularly check that the quality of provision in their areas of responsibility is improving. They work closely with senior leaders and other teachers to ensure checks on how well pupils are doing improve pupils' achievement across all year groups, so that they do not fall behind in their learning.
- Staff are very supportive of senior leaders and there is a strong collective effort to further improve pupils' progress. Checks on how well teachers are doing are linked to their professional development and career progression up the salary scale. Teachers say they value how bespoke professional development serves to enhance their classroom practice.
- Equality of opportunity is a priority for school leaders and discrimination is not tolerated. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are effectively supported both within the classroom and, if required, through additional support, for example to extend their basic literacy and numeracy skills.
- The local authority provides an appropriate level of support when required and recognises the school has capacity to continue to secure further improvements in its provision. School leaders are also actively involved within a successful partnership with several local schools.
- There is a strong emphasis on sport in the school. Leaders have effective plans for the use of the primary sports funding and ensure professional coaches develop the competence of staff in delivering physical education. Pupils participate in football, hockey, gymnastics and athletics, all of which are having a positive impact on their physical wellbeing.

- Subjects are planned effectively to develop pupils' skills and understanding as they move through the school. There are themed topics and links between subjects which reinforce pupils' use of both English and mathematics. Information and communication technology is used effectively to extend pupils' learning. Leaders are rightly prioritising the development of pupils' ability to write at length so that their achievement in writing is as consistent as that in other subjects.
- Pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is promoted effectively. Pupils' learning in religious education is especially well provided for. Pupils explore other cultures and countries, for example through Native American dance, and learn about their local heritage in shipbuilding in design and technology. Pupils develop their creativity in using techniques such as pointillism, employed by Georges Seurat, and participate in educational visits, for example to the Turner Contemporary Gallery. Pupils also enjoy the ukulele club and playing the violin.
- Safeguarding arrangements are fully in place. Risk assessment procedures, for example for pupils' educational visits, are especially comprehensive.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have an accurate view of the school and provide appropriate support. Consequently, they understand of the school's strengths and those aspects that have yet to be improved to further enhance provision for pupils. Governors undertake training to ensure they are equipped and well informed to effectively challenge school leaders and check the headteacher's performance. They oversee procedures to reward good teaching and check that teachers' salary progression and promotion are linked to pupils' achievement. The school budget is well managed and the primary sports funding is being spent in ways to build in additional capacity for staff to teach physical education, which is improving pupils' physical wellbeing. Governors actively check how well the pupil premium funding is being used to ensure these pupils are as successful as their peers. Governors regularly review all their procedures and are reflective about their practice and management of the school.

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	118477
Local authority	Medway
Inspection number	426469

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	241
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gary Lambkin
Executive Headteacher	Steve Geary
Date of previous school inspection	1–2 February 2012
Telephone number	01634 335400
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