

Borough Green Primary School

School Approach, Borough Green, Sevenoaks, TN15 8JZ

Inspection dates 25–26 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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 headteacher, other leaders and governors have worked effectively to raise standards. They have a clear understanding of what needs to be done to further improve teaching and learning. They acted quickly and effectively to raise standards when Key Stage 2 examination results dipped last year.
- Pupils are given a good start in the nursery and Early Years Foundation Stage and continue to make good progress throughout the school.
- Standards in reading are high and in mathematics are improving strongly. Standards of writing are high.
- Teachers have high expectations. Pupils respond enthusiastically and take a pride in their school and their achievements.
- The school environment is safe and welcoming. Pupils' behaviour is good and they manage their own behaviour well, helping each other to learn.
- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers plan stimulating activities which motivate and excite pupils to learn. The strong leadership of the headteacher and the governors ensures that staff and pupils work together to raise achievement. The leadership checks the quality of subject leadership rigorously.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although examination results historically have been high, standards slipped in 2013, especially in mathematics. Standards were well below national standards in the new spelling punctuation and grammar test, especially for boys.
- Although most teaching is good, in some classes teachers do not always encourage pupils to reach the highest standards of which they are capable.
- Changes in middle leadership have not yet had time to raise standards in all areas.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 lessons or parts of lessons, one jointly with the headteacher. They looked at work in pupils’ books and they listened to pupils in Year 2 and Year 5 read. They talked to groups of pupils about their work and also attended a choir practice.
- Inspectors held meetings with school leaders, governors, groups of pupils and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection team scrutinised plans for school improvement, minutes from governing body meetings, information about pupils’ learning and progress and documentation regarding the safeguarding of pupils.
- Inspectors considered the views of 129 parents and carers through the online survey (Parent View) and through informal discussions. Inspectors took staff views into account by analysing responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors visited the breakfast and after-school clubs and the nursery.

Inspection team

John Worgan, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Joanna Jones	Additional Inspector
David Whiteside	Additional Inspector
Diana Morgan	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school has experienced significant changes in leadership in the last year, including the appointment of a new head teacher.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards ,which set the minimum expectations for pupils' learning and progress.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for additional funding is lower than average. The government provides this to support pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language are well below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs that are supported at school action is below average, as is the proportion that is supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- A nursery, run by the school, provides pre-school education for babies and children up to four years old.
- The school runs breakfast and after-school clubs.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that more teaching becomes outstanding by:
 - ensuring that all staff are trained and supported so that they deliver high quality mathematics lessons
 - consolidating the progress made in the teaching of spelling, punctuation and grammar by getting pupils to check their work carefully so that they make fewer errors.
- Strengthen middle leadership by:
 - Using the checking of teaching and learning to share good practice in order to increase the proportion of outstanding teaching
 - Using data more effectively to check pupils' progress, to help them to improve their work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The nursery gives children an excellent start so that they are well-prepared to enter the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and abilities which meet expectations for their age. Good and outstanding teaching ensures that children make outstanding progress and are well cared for.
- Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have been consistently high and school data for the current year shows that they are likely to remain so.
- Progress is good because teaching generally matches activities to pupils' abilities, using a range of resources and learning activities. Standards of writing are particularly high and inspectors were particularly impressed by the quality of writing by younger pupils. In some mathematics lessons, some pupils said that they found the work easy; inspectors felt that teachers could introduce higher level tasks at an earlier stage.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 have been high for some years. In 2013 standards dropped, especially in mathematics, and were well below the national average, as were results in the new spelling, punctuation and grammar test, particularly for boys. The school has analysed the reasons for this and has acted quickly to remedy weaknesses in the teaching of spelling, punctuation and grammar and in mathematics. This has been achieved by adding dedicated brief grammar sessions to the timetable and by producing and implementing an action plan for improving the teaching of mathematics.
- The school's assessments for this year show that former high standards are on track to return. The school has eliminated the gap between girls' and boys' performance. This has been due to consistently good teaching and appropriate staff training supported by the local authority and school leaders.
- Standards of reading are high. Pupils make good use of sounds and letters when reading and read widely. They read to inspectors with confidence and spoke enthusiastically about the books which they had read. The school's performance in reading in national tests is above the national average.
- Standards in mathematics are improving, although school data shows that older pupils' achievement does not yet match national averages. The school is aware of this and has produced detailed action plans for improving the teaching of mathematics, which are producing accelerated progress.
- The school checks the progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs regularly and gives them appropriate support which helps them to make good progress.
- In the 2013 statutory assessments, the pupils receiving additional funding matched other pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics. Current school data shows that this is likely to be sustained. The school uses the funding to enrich these pupils' experience by subsidising activities such as dance and outdoor activities as well as to support their learning.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good and inspectors saw some outstanding teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in the teaching of older pupils in the Year 5/6 classes.
- Pupils and parents agree that standards of teaching are consistently good and this was confirmed by inspectors' reviews of work and in discussions with pupils.
- The school develops pupils' skills through a wide range of activities. In a year 5/6 science lesson, pupils were working outside, experimenting by testing the effect of uplift in liquids of a variety of densities. Children in the Reception class were developing their subtraction skills, running a toy shop and giving correct change.

- In a few lessons, teachers gave pupils tasks which they found easy. Consequently they do not reach the highest standards of which they are capable
- Teaching assistants give very high quality support to pupils. They play a full part in joint planning sessions with teachers and often teach groups or the whole class, allowing teachers to work flexibly. They support pupils with special needs effectively, using skilful questioning to encourage them to develop skills and to work confidently.
- Pupils talk enthusiastically about their work and are proud of the progress which they have made. The school makes strong provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural education. Music is a particular strength and pupils' singing in the choir is impressive. All pupils have swimming lessons in the school pool.
- The school uses the extra funding allocated for the teaching of physical education effectively to provide specialist teaching for all pupils and to support a range of activities including sailing, golf, trampolining and outdoor activities with the parachute regiment.

The behaviour and safety of pupils is good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils enjoy school and this is reflected in their positive attitudes and well above average attendance. They report that most pupils behave well and that lessons are rarely disrupted by poor behaviour. Records kept by the school show very few reported incidents related to poor behaviour. A new behaviour management system focuses on rewarding good behaviour.
- Pupils are polite and considerate; they are courteous to each other and to adults. They have excellent attitudes to learning and take a pride in their school.
- Teachers have well-established, positive relationships with pupils, so that pupils are calm, settled and ready to learn. Pupils respond well to teachers' high expectations of behaviour and learning.
- Pupils eagerly grasp all opportunities to work according to any methods adopted by teachers or by themselves, and relish sharing information and helping each other to learn. Inspectors were particularly impressed by the younger pupils' ability to plan their own learning and to work in pairs and groups.
- In a few lessons, pupils were distracted and behaviour standards slipped. School records show that there have been instances of poor behaviour in the past. Consequently behaviour is not outstanding.
- Pupils get on well together, regardless of background. They say there is no discrimination and that all pupils are treated fairly and have an equal chance to join in with all activities provided by the school.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils say that they feel completely safe in school. They also have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe in a range of other situations, including when using the internet.
- They know about different types of bullying, including those related to race and gender. Pupils say that bullying is rare and helpful adults quickly help to sort out any minor disagreements that arise.
- Most parents and carers who responded to Parent View agreed that their children are happy and behave well and that the school keeps their children safe.

The leadership and management is good

- The leadership of the head teacher is of high calibre. Pupils, staff, governors and the local authority all recognise this. She has successfully led the school through a difficult period when standards had fallen, and her leadership has been a key factor in ensuring that former high standards have resumed.
- Senior and middle leadership is undergoing a process of change which is beginning to have a positive impact on teaching and learning. The school recognises that further training and development are needed to sustain these improvements. Staff responsible for subjects are enthusiastic and committed. They have responded positively to training for their roles provided by the school and the local authority.
- The school checks pupils' progress carefully and provides support quickly for those who fall behind, so enabling them to catch up. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are well supported and make similar progress to that of their peers.
- The leadership checks the school's performance thoroughly and constructively. Governors and staff are fully involved in this process, resulting in carefully planned actions, securing improvement, especially in the teaching of mathematics and spelling punctuation and grammar. The leadership identifies areas of weakness and takes appropriate action to remedy them, showing the school is capable of doing even better.
- The leadership manages teachers' performance well. The leadership sets teachers clear targets, based on pupils' progress, their own professional needs and those of the school. Governors monitor the system effectively.
- The range of subjects taught is well-planned. Pupils' writing across a range of subjects is strong. French is taught throughout the school and a wide range of clubs and activities enhances pupils' experience. The school makes careful use of additional funding to ensure that all pupils can participate in activities.
- Staff are well trained in child protection issues and offer a high level of care to pupils. The school meets all safeguarding requirements. It does not tolerate discrimination and ensures complete equality of opportunity for different groups.
- The school works effectively with other schools and with the local authority to share good practice and to agree on the levels at which pupils are working. The local authority has given the school significant support over the last year but now states that because of recent improvement, a 'lighter touch' level of involvement is now appropriate.
- The nursery is exceptionally well-managed and staff care for children well. Staff check their progress and support their development by carefully planned activities.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governors have managed a difficult period for the school, including the appointment of a new head teacher with sensitivity and care, ensuring that staff and pupils have been well supported. Governors work closely with the head teacher and are fully involved in reviewing the schools' work and in producing plans for raising achievement.
- The governing body has been re-organised, with a clear focus on raising achievement. New governors with appropriate skills have been recruited and the governing body is organised so that key tasks are appropriately delegated to individuals and sub-committees.
- Governors have a clear view of the quality of teaching, ensuring that staff promotion and increases in salary are linked to the quality of teaching and pupils' progress.
- They understand pupils' progress data and use it effectively to check pupils' performance in relation to pupils elsewhere.
- Governors thoroughly check the allocation and use of additional funding. Governors review this regularly, so they are sure that eligible pupils make the good progress intended.
- Governors communicate regularly with parents, both informally and through questionnaires, and take account of their views.

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	118847
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	431417

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	307
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Louise Wheeler
Headteacher	Karen Sandberg
Date of previous school inspection	2 July 2009
Telephone number	01732 883459
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