

# Brookland Church of England Primary School

Brookland, Romney Marsh, Kent, TN29 9QR

**Inspection dates** 24–25 April 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The new headteacher, staff and governors, remedied issues identified in the previous inspection and are effectively identifying and working on those aspects that now need further improvement.
- Pupils achieve well through the school, particularly in the way they read confidently and speak articulately.
- Children benefit from a good start in the Reception class so they learn to relate well to each other and make good progress in their early reading and writing skills.
- Basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics are taught well throughout the school. Teachers make lessons fun and interesting.
- The school's 'family-based' atmosphere and excellent focus on developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness means they are extremely well behaved, mature, polite and hard-working. Pupils say they feel extremely safe.
- Links with other schools both locally as well as farther away, such as with their partner school in France, help broaden pupils' understanding of others from differing backgrounds and beliefs.
- Governors give the school the right balance between support and challenge. They have recently reviewed their routines to gain a clearer understanding of how the school's effectiveness can be enhanced further.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not all pupils achieve the highest levels in their work as sometimes work in mathematics or science is not based on real-life problems to solve or explore.
- As yet there is a limited range of resources available for reception children to use in their new outside area.
- In lessons, teachers sometimes start pupils who are capable of harder work on the same activities as others, rather than getting them to tackle more difficult tasks quickly.
- Sometimes planning misses opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology (ICT) within day-to-day activities.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 10 part lessons taught by five teachers, of which two were joint observations conducted with the headteacher. In addition, the inspector briefly observed activities such as the breakfast club.
- He listened to a sample of pupils read in Year 2 and Year 6 and observed playtime and lunchtime routines. He observed two assemblies.
- Meetings were held with a representative group of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and three other members of it, a representative from the local authority, and all teaching staff. Information was examined which related to pupils who may be disabled or have special educational needs.
- The inspector took account of 44 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View) and spoke to a few parents and carers during the inspection. He analysed questionnaires completed by 10 members of staff.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documents, including the school's checks on teaching, governors' visits and meetings, planning, internal information about pupils' progress and records of behaviour and attendance, together with documents relating to safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Kevin Hodge, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Brookland is much smaller in size than most primary schools. The headteacher was appointed two terms after the previous inspection.
- A lower than average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium (funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and children from service families).
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is below average, although the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is higher than normally found.
- Nearly all classes have pupils from more than one age group.
- The majority of pupils are White British and there are very few pupils from minority ethnic heritages. There are none at the early stages of learning English as an additional language.
- There is a daily breakfast club, which is managed by governors.
- A new outdoor area for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage was completed at Easter.
- The school meets the current floor standards, which set the government's minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' learning and achievement by:
  - ensuring that more activities in mathematics or science are linked to real-life situations and based on problems to solve
  - making sure that when appropriate, those pupils capable of harder work start at more difficult levels than other pupils
  - ensuring pupils use ICT more often in everyday activities
  - continuing to provide more outdoor resources for the recently developed Reception class outside area.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children have an enjoyable and safe start to their school life in Reception class. They settle quickly, behave extremely well and play together productively, whether it is within the class or outside. Many count confidently to 10 and some were proud that they could count to 20 and beyond.
- Their good knowledge of letter sounds and combinations (known as phonics) means their reading and writing skills develop well. Children enjoy using their new outside area, although the range of resources is comparatively limited, which in turn limits the variety of activities staff can provide to fully stretch children's learning. Assessments last year show that by the time children entered Year 1 all were ready to start Key Stage 1 work.
- Pupils achieve well through the school and Year 2 did particularly well in their national tests last year. Results slightly dipped in English for Year 6 pupils, but the school quickly put in place additional support to ensure current Year 6 pupils are on track to achieve well this year.
- Current work indicates pupils are set to reach above average levels in both English and mathematics. In mathematics, key calculation skills are taught well through the school. Pupils are accurate and confident in their calculation work and knowledge of shape and space. Occasionally, though, pupils do not apply their mathematics skills in activities based on everyday situations.
- In science, pupils' knowledge is good, but is not always gained as a result of solving simple scientific problems. Because they do not always understand how their knowledge can be applied, this limits their achievement to good, rather than outstanding levels.
- Pupils are fluent, above-average readers and articulate, confident speakers through the school. They know a good range of authors, and readily explain what is best about the school, the work they enjoy and how much they enjoyed a recent residential trip.
- Pupils achieve well in other subjects such as art and music. Work with outside groups, such as the Royal Opera House and local schools, broadens pupils' understanding and experiences. Pupils' confident ICT skills are noticeable in specific activities such as research, but opportunities to use these skills in day-to-day lessons are too few to really extend pupils' research, recording and presentational skills.
- There is very little difference between boys' and girls' achievement and that of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well, as extra adult support, often provided in adjacent spaces outside classrooms, pinpoints those needing extra support so they often match those levels of pupils nationally. Those who benefit from pupil premium funding also achieve well and any gaps between their levels of attainment in English and mathematics, and others' nationally are small. In some cases, these pupils' attainment is better than that which pupils reach nationally.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good through the school. Lessons are often organised with practical and hands-on work to make learning fun and interesting, such as younger pupils venturing outside to discover numbers hidden in various locations and pupils in Years 3 and 4 learning bat and ball skills.
- In the Reception class, children's social, physical and academic skills are taught well. Practical activities help children sound out letters or match letter sounds to objects. Reading is taught well through the school through an effective focus on teaching phonics. Pupils enjoy reading both for pleasure and for research. One pupil said she loved reading to her parents.
- The range of activities in Years 1 to 6 develops pupils' basic skills well, and a renewed focus on enhancing pupils' writing has resulted in pupils achieving better this year. For example, in a well-taught Year 1/2 lesson based on the story of St George and the Dragon, one pupil wrote, '...with a swipe of his tail he could start a red hot fire', reflecting their good levels of vocabulary and

sentence construction.

- Staff recognise that the expectations of what some pupils should achieve, particularly able pupils, are not always high. More-able pupils do not always achieve their best, as they often start in lessons with the same level of work as others rather than tackling harder work straight away to stretch their learning more fully.
- Staff foster pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding extremely well with frequent reminders about the benefits of working together, valuing others' opinions and in helping others in their work. Regular group working develops pupils' keen sense of collaborative learning.
- Teachers' marking is helpful in highlighting to pupils how they can improve. Simple routines such as highlighting positives about work (known as stars) and areas to improve (known as wishes) help motivate pupils to improve their learning.
- Additional adults support learning effectively both within the class and in small-group activities in adjacent spaces. Simple, but effective activities help those needing extra support to achieve well.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are outstanding

- Pupils behave brilliantly both in lessons and around the school. They are polite, kind and thoughtful to their classmates and visitors.
- Pupils say that any dips in behaviour are extremely rare and know that bullying, in any form, such as that found on the internet, name-calling or racism, is virtually unheard of.
- The family-like atmosphere created within the school is the result of the excellent promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. The school's clear focus on enabling pupils to make wise choices has succeeded in creating an extremely positive ethos for learning and pupils who value the differences that exist between each other and those from differing backgrounds.
- Links with other schools locally, along with regular written links with a partner school in France, have broadened and improved their understanding of others more distant from the school since the previous inspection. A recent letter from the school council outlining why they should win extra resources for their school was shortlisted and awaiting to see if they are successful.
- Playtimes are extremely well ordered and activities stretch pupils' physical abilities. Pupils enjoy attending the early morning breakfast club, and morning 'wake and shake' activities help pupils and staff alike to start the school day on a very positive note. Not surprisingly, children enjoy attending, with levels improving from below to above average since the previous inspection.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The new headteacher, supported by governors, quickly set about tackling those issues identified in the previous report, while highlighting further areas to improve in teaching, the outside area for the Reception class and progress for some pupils.
- Staff say that they work together well, have appreciated being more involved in the way they are accountable for pupils' progress, and in catering for those with special educational needs. They say the new headteacher's perspective and ideas are helping them improve their practice and regular observations of teaching help guide effective performance management reviews.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness threads through lessons, assemblies and regular reminders about the school's values of pupils having choices. There are still some subjects such as ICT, mathematics and science needing some fine tuning so that they cater for pupils' learning even more effectively.
- Links with parents and carers are extremely positive and Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire confirmed all parents and carers who responded would recommend the school to others. A small number of parents and carers met during the inspection spoke very positively about the school and the management team.

- The local authority's regular and positive support has enabled the school to develop links more widely through an 'achievement for all' initiative which has broadened the school's outlook and use of others' expertise.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors reviewed their organisation at the beginning of the year and successfully provide the right balance between support and challenge to senior leaders. A recent visit to gauge the progress of the school's behaviour policy was thorough and is the forerunner of other such visits planned to take place. Governors understand and have discussed the link between the performance of teachers, how responsibilities are allocated and salary progression. Regular training means they know how results from national tests compare to other schools' and keeps them updated about safeguarding and staff vetting procedures. Governors are also conscientious in ensuring that those pupils entitled to extra funding, known as the pupil premium, have extra support within lessons and increased resources where necessary. Governors do not tolerate discrimination of any sort and ensure that equal opportunities are provided for all pupils.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	118664
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	412184

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	96
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Emily Carr
<b>Headteacher</b>	Martin Hacker
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12–13 May 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01797 344317
<b>Fax number</b>	01797 344776
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