

Culverstone Green Primary School

Wrotham Road, Meopham, Gravesend DA13 0RF

Inspection dates 18–19 September 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- As a result of good teaching, children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress. The early years provision is a significant strength.
- Pupils' **progress** in Key Stage 2 is now good, particularly in reading.
- Pupils enjoy school, are enthusiastic about learning and feel extremely safe.
- **Pupils'** behaviour and attitudes to learning are good.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium make increasingly good progress.
- The provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good. They make good progress.
- **Most teaching is good. Systems for assessing pupils' progress** are well established.
- Learning support staff are well trained and effective.
- School leaders have been effective in making significant improvements as the school has grown.
- School leaders are well prepared for the implementation of the new National Curriculum and new assessment procedures.
- The governors are knowledgeable and effective. They challenge school leaders robustly in relation to **standards and pupils' progress**.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Standards in writing across the school lag behind those in reading.
- There are too few examples of outstanding teaching.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 12 lessons, nine of which were seen jointly **with the school’s senior leaders**.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, the **school’s senior leaders, and a representative of the local authority**.
- Inspectors took account of the 21 responses to the staff questionnaire and the 59 responses to the online questionnaire (**Parent View**). **Inspectors also looked at the school’s own survey of parents’ views**, conducted earlier in 2014.
- **Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a range of school documents**, including local authority reviews and action plans and **records of the school’s checks on the quality of teaching**. They also considered minutes of governing body meetings and records relating to behaviour, attendance, **safeguarding and the tracking of pupils’ progress**. **They looked closely at pupils’ written work** for both the current and the last school year and listened to pupils read.

Inspection team

George Logan, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Judith Grevett

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Culverstone Green School is an average-sized primary school.
- The school roll has increased significantly in the last four years, with many pupils joining the school part-way through their education. Of those leaving Year 6 in 2014, only a minority had all or most of their education at Culverstone.
- The great majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. There are a few pupils from Gypsy/Roma families.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs on the school roll is about 30%. This is well above that found in most schools.
- **The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.**
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be entitled to free school meals and those looked after by the local authority) is below average.
- The school shares its building with a private pre-school. It also hosts an after-school care club. These are managed and inspected separately.
- The school offers a breakfast club which provides for pupils who arrive at school early.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all pupils make consistently good progress across the school by:
 - building upon the good practice now embedded in the teaching of reading to support similar improvements in writing
 - increasing significantly the proportion of outstanding teaching, so that pupils are challenged and inspired to learn.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The monitoring and evaluation of teaching by senior leaders is thorough, taking account of all aspects of a **teacher's work**. The **school's performance management systems are** rigorous, appropriately informed by aspirational targets and supported by good professional development. There is a close link between **teachers' performance and their pay progression**. New appointments are only made if candidates are of sufficient calibre.
- **The school's view** of itself is broadly accurate and improvement plans reflect the correct priorities. The **school's actions to address long-standing weaknesses** in teaching are having a **positive impact on pupils'** progress. Reading has been a key recent focus for the school and **pupils'** relative underperformance in writing is recognised by school leaders as a priority.
- Subject and other leaders have a secure grasp of their areas of responsibility and a clear view of what needs to be done to raise standards. Key recent appointments, reflecting the demands of a larger school, have enhanced the capacity of the leadership team. This is particularly evident in the leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Senior and subject leaders monitor the impact of pupil premium funding closely and adjust provision to ensure maximum impact. This funding is helping eligible pupils do well.
- The curriculum effectively **meets pupils' needs**. Priority is given to literacy and numeracy; the recent focus on reading has contributed to much-improved standards in this subject. Outdoor learning is strongly promoted within and beyond the school grounds. The school is ready for the new National Curriculum and for the progressive implementation of a modified assessment system.
- Extra-curricular provision is extensive, and activities funded effectively through the primary sport funding have increased **pupils' participation in a variety of** competitive sports. Targeted staff training is intended to ensure that these initiatives can be sustained.
- The school has received light-touch levels of support from the local authority, consistent with the **authority's** normal practice in relation to schools **graded 'good' by Ofsted**. An extended programme of support is in place for 2014/15.
- **Provision for pupils' spiritual,** moral, social and cultural development is good and pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- Good practice is shared through partnerships with other schools and the school has good links with parents and carers.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body plays an important role in the leadership of the school. A number of governors have specialist knowledge of education and this helps them to provide a clear strategic direction. Governors are keenly aware of **the school's strengths and** weaknesses and are fully involved in the school's self-evaluation and development planning. They undertake training and **know how the school's** performance relates to that of other schools nationally. Governors effectively hold school leaders to account. They are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity, tackling discrimination and promoting good relationships across the school. They have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and ensure that pay and promotion are fully **aligned to teachers' effectiveness**. Governors carefully evaluate the impact of decisions about the use of the **pupil premium to close gaps in pupils' attainment**. They ensure, along with senior leaders, that all statutory duties are met.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are courteous, polite and proud of their school. Pupils display very positive attitudes and their enthusiasm for learning contributes well to their mostly good progress.
- Inappropriate behaviour is rare; few pupils have been excluded for a fixed term since the last inspection. Good behaviour management systems ensure an effective and consistent response to poor behaviour. Few parents and carers indicated any concerns about behaviour.
- Pupils eagerly undertake responsibilities around the school, including walking the school dog, Susie, and contribute well to the smooth running of the school community.
- **The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is** good. Thorough risk assessments are in place where appropriate and safeguarding arrangements fully meet national requirements. Pupils feel extremely safe and are confident that adults will manage any difficulties they might have.

- Pupils have a good awareness of a range of risks. Year 6 pupils recognise the potential dangers associated with, for example, social media and cyber-bullying.
- Bullying is rare. Pupils are aware that it may take many forms, but are confident that any incidents of bullying will be promptly dealt with by the school.
- Pupils' attendance has improved and is broadly average.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Pupils experience consistently good teaching, although too little is outstanding.
- Most teachers provide good levels of challenge. This was evident in a fast-paced Year 6 English lesson, where pupils were writing a poem in the shape of a diamond, based upon a text they had recently studied. The task was challenging and stimulating. Pupils showed a high level of sustained engagement and were happy to comment creatively about the work of their classmates.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium do well because their progress is carefully tracked and they have improved support. Learning support staff are well trained and very effective in supporting small groups and individuals.
- The teaching of reading has improved and is now good. The teaching of phonics (the sounds letters make) is effective, with additional support provided for pupils who have not made sufficiently rapid progress. Pupils now read confidently and with understanding.
- In a few lessons, teachers are not sufficiently attentive to the pace at which pupils are working, leading to a loss of momentum in their learning. For example, when using **'talk partners' to allow pupils to articulate** their ideas, some teachers allow too much time. By contrast, in a Year 4 English lesson, pupils were told that they had 30 seconds for discussion, which helped focus their efforts.
- The school has good **systems for checking and improving pupils' progress**. Teachers' marking is thorough and shows pupils clearly what they have to do next. Much work in mathematics is marked by pupils themselves. Targets are used effectively by teachers to guide **pupils' progress**.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children start in Reception with levels of knowledge and skill which are, overall, consistent with those expected for their age. Good teaching ensures that children then make good progress so that most now leave Reception attaining at least at the expected levels.
- The rapid increase in pupils entering the school, sometimes with complex special educational needs, at different times, **adversely affected pupils' progress and attainment**. As these exceptional factors are now moving through the school, a more stable and positive profile of **pupils' achievement** is beginning to emerge.
- **Pupils' attainment at the end of** Key Stage 1 has been relatively low and their progress has, for some years, been too slow in Years 1 and 2. However, recent actions, particularly in relation to reading, have **had a positive impact upon both pupils' progress** and their attainment, which is now broadly average. **Pupils' strengths in reading**, both here and across the school, reflect the recent drive to raise standards further. More Year 1 pupils than average attained the expected standard in the phonics screening check in 2013. However, this trend of improvement has not been as marked in writing.
- **Pupils' attainment at the end of** Key Stage 2 is broadly average. **The school's data suggest that, in the last school year**, most pupils in in Key Stage 2 made better-than-expected progress. An upward trend is clearly evident in the provisional data for 2014 in both reading and mathematics. As in Key Stage 1, **pupils' writing** remains a focus for improvement.
- The gap between the attainment in English and mathematics of disadvantaged pupils and others in the school, as well as all pupils nationally, is rapidly narrowing. The average gap in each case is now around two terms.
- Their regular attendance and effective support by the school for the few pupils from Gypsy/Roma backgrounds ensure that this group makes steady progress in the development of their basic skills.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are supported well and make progress that compares favourably with that in other schools. Pupils requiring greater support in 2013 made particularly

rapid progress, reaching standards well above those expected for this group.

- The more able pupils are ambitious to succeed; they are increasingly well supported and achieve high standards. Links have been developed with a local grammar school to support more-able, older pupils in mathematics.

The early years provision

is good

- There have been significant improvements in early years provision since the last inspection. A new early years teacher and phase manager has been appointed and a range of improvements made to the curriculum, the organisation of the indoor and outdoor environments and the effectiveness of assessment. Visits to other settings have enabled staff to develop their understanding and practice.
- **Improved provision and classroom practice have had a beneficial impact upon children's learning and achievement.** A much higher proportion of children achieved the expected level of development in the summer of 2014 than was the case nationally, although fewer children than anticipated exceeded those expectations. The school has implemented further improvements to ensure that the curriculum allows children to achieve their full potential, particularly in relation to developing independence in learning.
- The school ensures that the youngest children are safe and well looked after. Good staffing levels mean that children receive appropriate levels of attention in relation both to their education and welfare. Close links are maintained with the on-site pre-school from which the majority of pupils now come, but also with the more widely dispersed settings attended by the others. Good links have been established with parents and carers, who have **a high level of involvement in their children's education.**
- Assessment procedures are rigorous and all early years staff have a detailed knowledge of individual children and their needs.

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	118263
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	444268

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	203
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jan Bennett
Headteacher	Ruth Doughty
Date of previous school inspection	4 March 2010
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