

Chevening, St Botolph's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Chevening Road, Chipstead, Sevenoaks, TN13 2SA

Inspection dates

27–28 February 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The school's family atmosphere is underpinned by a clear set of values, and places it firmly at the heart of the community.
- Pupils are well known as individuals by their teachers and teaching assistants. Teachers monitor pupils' progress carefully and use this information very effectively to give personalised support when a pupil is experiencing difficulty. This contributes well to the outstanding progress pupils make throughout the school.
- Pupils' achievement is outstanding and they reach high levels of attainment across a broad curriculum. Pupils quickly become fluent readers, although by the end of Year 6, fewer pupils reach the highest levels in reading than in writing and mathematics.
- Pupils relish the many extra-curricular activities and clubs, and undertake many responsibilities willingly, which adds to the school's vibrant atmosphere.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They feel exceptionally safe in school because they are extremely well cared for and enjoy strong friendships.
- Outstanding teaching challenges pupils' thinking and fosters their keen sense of enquiry and love of learning. As a result, pupils are eager to extend their learning beyond the classroom, to find things out for themselves and consolidate their understanding in homework tasks. Occasionally, older pupils do not take enough care with their handwriting and the presentation of their work.
- The headteacher's strong sense of purpose is shared by staff, and highly effective teamwork has led to the school's improvement in achievement, teaching and leadership.
- High-quality governance ensures that the school's performance is kept under constant review and that strategic decisions are focused on a continuous drive for improvement.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 19 lessons involving all teachers who were teaching during the inspection, many observed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher. Inspectors listened to a sample of pupils read and talked to them about how the school helps them to develop their reading skills.
- Meetings were held with representatives of the governing body, staff and a group of pupils. A telephone discussion took place with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school's work, attended an assembly and visited clubs, including the after-school club. They scrutinised pupils' work, progress data, evaluation and development documents, information about how the school cares for and protects pupils, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and minutes of recent governing body meetings.
- Inspectors took account of 76 responses to the online Parent View survey prior to and during the inspection, together with other evidence submitted by parents and carers through letters and telephone calls, and questionnaires completed by 21 staff.

Inspection team

Helen Hutchings, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Howard Dodd	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Chevening, St Botolph's is an average-sized primary school, with children in the Early Years Foundation Stage taught in the Reception class.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage, with a number of other ethnic backgrounds represented in small numbers. Few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and children of service families) has doubled since the last inspection but is well below the national average. There are currently no looked after children or children of service families in the school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is much lower than the national average, as is the proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school runs an after-school club on four days a week.
- There have been a number of staffing changes since the last inspection, including the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- The school works in partnership with other schools locally through the Sevenoaks Partnership and as part of The Brook Alliance to share practice and professional development for teachers.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the levels reached in reading, particularly for higher-attaining pupils, by encouraging them to read a broader range of books.
- Improve the overall quality of the work of older pupils in Key Stage 2 by ensuring that they always take care with their handwriting and the presentation of their work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Children join the school in Reception with levels of knowledge and skills that are above those typical for their age. Excellent teaching and care ensure that children settle quickly and develop a love of school. They make very rapid progress in all areas of their development, including their phonics (linking letters and their sounds) and numeracy skills because of the imaginative and sharply focused range of activities planned for them. This was seen in a lesson when children sustained high levels of concentration to successfully complete words by filling in missing letters from a sequence of numbered illustrations.
- Pupils build extremely well on their strong foundations in Reception, so that they continue to make rapid and sustained progress. For example, last year almost three-quarters of pupils made more than the progress expected nationally in mathematics. Pupils' attainment in the national tests and assessments in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Years 2 and 6 is high.
- In the Year 1 national phonics screening check in 2012, all pupils reached the expected standard and the majority exceeded it. Because children learn to read quickly and accurately at an early stage, they are able to access information for themselves, which promotes their attainment across the curriculum and helps them to become independent learners.
- Pupils' rates of progress have increased systematically over the last three years as a result of more regular assessments, which are used to identify when a pupil is having difficulty. This information is used effectively to ensure that any gaps in pupils' knowledge and weaknesses in their skills are closed quickly. This includes the early identification of the needs of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and the additional support they are given ensures that they make the same rapid progress as other pupils. Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve in line with their peers.
- The school's information about pupils' attainment shows that pupils are on course to achieve even higher outcomes in the national assessments than in previous years. In particular, more pupils are making faster progress in reading than previously. Although pupils read often and frequently for pleasure, the school has accurately identified that the range of books pupils choose is not wide enough and that many are capable of reading more complex literature to help them achieve the highest levels in national tests. Pupils apply their literacy and numeracy skills confidently, as seen for example in published books of pupils' book reviews, the latest of which has been produced electronically.
- Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, who receive support through the pupil premium, achieve significantly better than pupils nationally. Although there are minor differences from year to year, based on the average point scores for English and mathematics, these pupils attain standards in line with and sometimes higher than other pupils. This shows the effectiveness of the school's use of additional funding, which includes individual and small-group tuition, and illustrates the school's commitment to tackling discrimination and promoting equal opportunities.
- Pupils are keen to work hard and have an acute sense of their achievements, such as when they attempt challenging work and suddenly understand a new mathematical concept. While not wanting to leave the school because they enjoy it so much, pupils in Year 6 recognise that they are exceptionally well prepared for secondary school.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Pupils recognise that there is much inspirational teaching in the school, speaking about how teachers make lessons interesting and often fun. The impact of teaching is reflected in pupils' work, showing the very wide range of approaches teachers use to add variety and interest to learning.
- Teachers expect a great deal of their pupils, for example in the quantity and quality of their

writing, and routinely set very challenging tasks. Because teachers know their pupils extremely well, they accurately match activities to pupils' earlier achievements. For example, in a Year 2 mathematics lesson about telling the time, pupils were guided to one of four practical tasks, including a board game, which quickly developed their ability to read the time on a clock face. Teachers often give pupils a choice about which task they will attempt, and regularly involve pupils in setting and understanding the success criteria for learning. Consequently, pupils make sensible choices and frequently relish the challenge of undertaking the more difficult tasks.

- Teachers effectively promote pupils' knowledge and skills through partner and small-group activities, when pupils talk through their ideas together, for example, before writing them down. Teachers regularly ask probing questions and there is a consistent school emphasis on requiring pupils to justify their thinking, which deepens their understanding.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work in close partnership. While teaching assistants often provide effective support for individuals and small groups who find learning more difficult, they also support more-able pupils to attempt particularly challenging work successfully.
- Pupils have regular opportunities to assess their own learning and older pupils know exactly what they have to do to reach a higher level. Teachers' marking is regular and gives pupils detailed guidance about how they can improve their work. Increasingly, pupils are responding to teachers' suggestions, for example redrafting parts of their writing or carrying out corrections in mathematics. Teachers are implementing the school's handwriting policy systematically for younger pupils, but sometimes teachers do not require the very best standards of presentation and handwriting for older pupils so that the appearance of their finished work does not match the quality of its content.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary in lessons and in more informal situations around the school. The school's welcoming atmosphere helps pupils who join the school after Reception to make friendships and settle in quickly.
- Parents' and carers' comments indicate that they do not have concerns about pupils' behaviour. While there are clear expectations and boundaries for behaviour, there is rarely the need for even the most minor sanctions to be used. In lessons, pupils are responsible and have respect for one another's ideas and opinions.
- Pupils' above average attendance and involvement in an exceptionally wide range of school activities strengthen their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The overwhelming majority of pupils are involved in school clubs and extra-curricular activities. Pupils talk with pride about the help they give others, for example as 'buddies' for reception children, recognising that they also gain enjoyment and learn from such activities. The spiritual life of the school is evident in assemblies, in considerate everyday behaviour and the good relationships pupils form with one another and with adults.
- Pupils are particularly proud of the pupil-led clubs, such as Movie Makers, Designing, and the Comic Club, which cater effectively for a wide range of interests. These are extremely well planned and organised, and help pupils to develop their leadership skills. The after-school club offers a well-regarded facility for parents and carers, and provides a good range of activities for those attending, including beginning homework, following individual interests or engaging in outdoor activities.
- Pupils have a secure grasp of what constitutes bullying in all its forms. Although sometimes there are disagreements, pupils are adamant that there is never name-calling or physical bullying. Inappropriate or unkind behaviour is extremely rare and any such issues are dealt with quickly. Because of the work undertaken in school, pupils are knowledgeable about risk and danger, such as when using the computer and internet.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher provides inspirational and principled leadership. Its success is reflected in the consistency of the quality of learning across the school, and in the increase in pupils' rates of progress since her appointment. The talented staff team shares her aspirations and they work closely to support one another. As a parent or carer said, 'They do their jobs well with good nature and humour but they don't operate in silos. They work brilliantly together.' Teachers see pupils as individuals and nurture them extremely well to get the best from them.
- The school's systems to check progress are rigorous so that self-evaluation is accurate.
- Since her arrival, the headteacher and governing body have adapted staff responsibilities to reflect school priorities. The management of teachers' work is rigorous and focused on pupils' achievement. Pay progression is linked to each teacher's success in achieving ambitious targets. The school's priority on moving teaching from good to outstanding has been particularly effective so that the headteacher and many teachers are confident to use their experience and share best practice beyond the school, for example, through The Brook Alliance professional development programme.
- The school's curriculum is carefully constructed to challenge pupils in their learning and to develop creative thinking alongside the core skills in English and mathematics. Pupils often plan their own projects, for example, during the inspection pupils were developing their financial understanding in an enterprise project linked to a forthcoming school trip. Music and the arts are well represented in the curriculum and in general school life.
- Because of the school's recognised strengths, it receives light touch support from the local authority and diocese, but this is well focused on ensuring that the school has continuing external feedback.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body is committed to ensuring that all aspects of the school's work are of the highest possible quality. Governors play an important role in sustaining the excellent improvements that have taken place since the last inspection, often through their challenge of the headteacher and senior leaders. Governors are extremely well informed, and their understanding of how well pupils are achieving and the effectiveness of teaching enables them to ensure that salary progressions are justified. They are committed to ensuring that all pupils have equal opportunities, for example, by checking how effectively the pupil premium funding is used. Governors are experienced, but participate in training from time to time to ensure that their knowledge remains up to date. They fulfil their statutory duties to ensure the health and safety of pupils and staff. Parents and carers comment positively on the changes made to ensure that children are safe in 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	118715
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	403361

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Reverend Christopher Smith
Headteacher	Helen Jones
Date of previous school inspection	18 March 2008
Telephone number	01732 452895
Fax number	01732 741044
Email address	office@chevening.kent.sch.uk

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