

Dewhurst St Mary C of E Primary School

Churchgate, Cheshunt, Waltham Cross, EN8 9ND

Inspection dates 9–10 July 2013

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.

- Improvements to the Early Years Foundation Stage mean that children now make good progress in Reception.
- Positive action has been taken to raise achievement, particularly in Years 3 to 6.
- Pupils are now making good progress and attainment by the end of Year 6 is above average in mathematics and average in English.
- Teaching has improved and is now typically good. There are examples of outstanding practice.
- Teachers' effective explanations and questioning promote pupils' learning well.
- Teachers set demanding tasks that are usually well suited to pupils' abilities and learning needs.
- Pupils are enthusiastic and keen learners
- They behave well in lessons and around the school. In assembly and in some lessons, their attitudes and behaviour are exemplary.
- Pupils feel safe and very well cared for by staff.
- The headteacher has gained the confidence of the school community and provides strong leadership in raising achievement and improving teaching.
- Other key leaders, governors and the local authority have made a valuable contribution to improving the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In a few lessons, pupils not sufficiently clear about what they are expected to learn.
- At times, pupils' learning in lessons slows down when they are not moved on to the main task quickly enough.
- In some year groups, pupils' progress in reading trails behind writing and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 18 lessons and many of these were with the headteacher.
- They held discussions with the headteacher, staff, parents, members of the governing body, a representative from the local authority and pupils.
- The inspectors took account of the 13 responses to the online survey (Parent View).
- Responses to an inspection questionnaire from 18 staff were analysed.
- The inspectors examined school policies, information about pupils' attainment and progress, teachers' plans, pupils' work and the school's planning for improvement.

Inspection team

Derek Watts, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Mehar Brar

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- About three quarters of pupils are White British. Other pupils come from a range of different ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below average.
- An above average proportion of the pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils in local authority care, those known to be eligible for free school meals or those with a parent in the armed services
- The headteacher took up the post in April 2011.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by making sure that:
 - all lessons have a sharp learning focus and that pupils know what they are expected to learn
 - learning always proceeds at a good pace and pupils are quickly moved on to the main task.
- Take steps to accelerate pupils' progress in reading in classes where it trails behind writing and mathematics as indicated in the school's improvement planning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join Reception with knowledge and skills below those typically expected for their age. At the time of the previous inspection, children's progress in Reception was satisfactory. Improvements to the Early Years Foundation Stage mean that children now make good progress in all the areas of learning because of good teaching and the exciting range activities provided.
- Children made good progress in exploring with colour as they created colourful pictures of Elmer the elephant. They applied their writing skills well in producing their own Elmer adventure stories. They made rapid progress in solving number problems used a wide range of resources.
- After the previous inspection, Year 6 test results dipped to below average levels in English and mathematics and pupils had not made sufficient progress through Key Stage 2, particularly in English. The school has taken effective and robust action to accelerate pupils' progress and to raise their attainment.
- Pupils are making good progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 and attainment by the end of Year 6 is above average in mathematics and average in reading and writing. In some year groups, pupils progress in reading trails behind that of writing and mathematics. The school is tackling this issue with determination. The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) has been strengthened and additional support is provided for pupils who need it. Pupils enjoy reading at home and at school. The older pupils read a range of challenging texts.
- In most lessons, the more-able pupils make good progress because they are set challenging and demanding activities. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels of attainment has increased.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because of the well-planned and targeted support they receive.
- In the 2012 national tests for Year 6, the pupils eligible for the pupil premium attained lower standards than the others in reading. These pupils were about five months behind the others. Results in writing and mathematics were similar. More recent data confirm that the school is effectively narrowing the gap between eligible pupils and the others.
- Pupils make good progress in speaking and listening because teachers provide well-planned opportunities for them to discuss their learning in pairs or small groups. They share their learning and express their ideas well.
- Pupils write for different audiences and in different styles. Grammar, punctuation and spelling have improved. They are developing and applying their writing skills in different subjects. Pupils in Year 1 made good progress in describing a setting. They used adjectives and complex sentences to good effect.
- In mathematics, pupils make good progress gaining knowledge and understanding and in applying skills. In a highly successful lesson in Year 6, pupils made outstanding progress in using scale to calculate from a map the distance of Olympic cities from London. They were accurate in their calculations and showed a secure understanding of scale, units and symbols.

The quality of teaching is good

- Improvements to teaching have increased pupils' progress from satisfactory to good. Examples of outstanding teaching were seen in Reception and in mathematics in Years 5 and 6.
- Pupils were very positive about the teaching they receive. They said, 'Teachers always explain things well' and 'Teachers are kind and help you'.
- Teachers promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. They establish very positive relationships with the pupils and create a positive classroom climate for learning. Pupils are attentive, cooperative and show consideration and respect for others. They work well together in a range of activities.
- In the Reception class, children are provided with an exciting range of indoor and outdoor activities. They benefit from high quality demonstrations, instructions and guidance by adults. Children are inspired by the teacher's enthusiasm. Activities are imaginative and children are provided with good opportunities to explore, be creative and learn on their own.
- In the outstanding mathematics lessons, pupils' rose to the teacher's high expectations of learning and to the challenge of the tasks set. Skilful questioning and very clear demonstrations and explanations promoted learning extremely well. Interesting tasks were well suited to pupils' abilities so their interest was sustained. Pupils were motivated by the teachers' enthusiasm and mathematical expertise. Learning moved on at a brisk pace and pupils made rapid progress in deepening their understanding and in applying skills.
- In the good and outstanding lessons, teachers share the purpose of the lesson with the class so pupils know and understand what they are expected to learn. Teachers also set specific steps to success to guide pupils' learning towards what it is they are intended to learn. In a few lessons, the teacher does not share the purpose of the lesson well enough and pupils are less clear about their learning.
- Teachers and teaching assistants expect pupils to do their best in their studies and to behave well. Pupils respond very positively to these expectations.
- The teaching of reading skills, including phonics, has been strengthened. Pupils are taught through a discrete, regular and well-structured programme. Those who need it receive additional one-to-one support to accelerate their progress in reading.
- Good teaching and support enables disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs to achieve well. Activities and support are modified to suit their learning needs. Teaching assistants are well used and make a good contribution in guiding pupils' learning.
- Occasionally, pupils' learning does not move at a fast enough pace. This happens when teachers' introductions are too long or learning time is lost through inefficient distribution of learning resources.
- The marking of pupils' work has improved. In most cases, marking acknowledges good work and provides useful comments to help pupils' improve.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Children in Reception classes enjoy the exciting activities provided as they learn and play together. The staff have established very positive relationships with the children. Children are safe and secure and grow in confidence.
- In Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils show enthusiasm for learning and participate well in the activities provided. Some pupil comments to the inspectors included, 'Lessons are fun' and 'Maths is a challenge'.
- Pupils can be passive learners when introductions to lessons go on for too long and they are waiting to move on to the main task.
- Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. In some lessons and in assemblies, pupils' attitudes and their behaviour were exemplary. The school's records of incidents show that behaviour is typically good over time. Pupils feel safe at school and have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They feel extremely well looked after by adults.
- Pupils have clear understanding of bullying and the different forms it can take, including name calling and cyber bullying. They informed the inspectors that bullying in the school was very rare and that if it did happen, staff would quickly deal with it.
- Pupils are responsible citizens who take pride in their school. They are supportive of their peers and participate well in charity initiatives and community projects. They show a good understanding of different cultures and faiths.
- The school has effective systems for monitoring and promoting good attendance. Attendance levels are average.

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders and managers are successfully promoting good achievement for pupils, good teaching and good behaviour and safety.
- The headteacher has gained the confidence and respect of parents, pupils and staff and has been the key factor in bringing about needed improvements since the last inspection.
- Senior leaders and managers lead by example in their classroom practice. Leaders of English, mathematics and the Early Years Foundation Stage play an effective role in checking performance and improving their areas of responsibility.
- The quality of teaching is carefully checked by the headteacher. Positive steps have been taken to improve teaching. There are effective procedures for appraising staff performance and developing their professional skills. Targets to improve performance are carefully linked to pupils' progress and to the school's key improvement priorities.
- The local authority has made a good contribution to school improvement. An established improvement partner has an accurate overview of the school's performance and provides high quality advice and support to the school and to the governing body.

- An interesting range of learning activities are planned and provided to promote good achievement and good personal development for pupils. Additional activities and clubs are strengths of the school's curriculum.
- Pupil-premium funding has been properly planned and used to accelerate the progress of eligible pupils.
- The school has a positive and welcoming atmosphere. Discrimination is not tolerated and all pupils have access to the full range of activities provided. The staff strive to make sure that different groups of pupils all do as well as they can.
- The results of Parent View and discussions with parents in the playground indicate that parents hold positive views about the school. They are very pleased with safety, their children's progress, the quality of teaching, behaviour and the leadership. Communication between home and school is good and parents have welcomed workshops that help them to support their children's learning.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governors are an enthusiastic and supportive group. They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and the key areas requiring improvement. They know how pupils' attainment and progress compare with schools nationally. Governors receive clear reports from the headteacher about the quality of teaching. The governors' clear knowledge of the school's performance enables them to challenge the leaders and hold the school to account. Governors understand the requirements relating to the management of staff performance, and make sure that promotion and salary increases are linked to pupils' progress. They know what the school is doing to tackle any underperformance. They check that the pupil premium is properly spent. Governors have attended a range of useful courses to increase their effectiveness. There are effective procedures to make sure that all safeguarding requirements are met

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	117415
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	405703

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	185
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Robinson
Headteacher	Sue Wilcox
Date of previous school inspection	18 January 2011
Telephone number	01992 624177
Fax number	01992 624233
Email address	admin@dewhurst.herts.sch.uk

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