

# Palm Bay Primary School

Palm Bay Avenue, Cliftonville, Margate, CT9 3PP

## Inspection dates

23–24 October 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- Pupils make good progress across the school and achieve well.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above average by the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6.
- Pupils learn well because teaching is good. Marking and feedback are effective and teachers have a good subject knowledge.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who are disabled and have special educational needs make similar good progress to others.
- Leaders' high expectations have led to recent improvements in pupils' achievement.
- Children have a good start to school and make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are well prepared to start Year 1.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils are caring, polite and friendly.
- Pupils enjoy school. They feel safe and secure and well looked after. Attendance is above average.
- Parents are very supportive of the school and pleased with the education their children receive.
- Since the previous inspection, the acting headteacher, senior leaders and governors have been effective in maintaining good-quality teaching and achievement.
- Governors are knowledgeable about the school's work and have an accurate understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Governors review their own effectiveness to ensure they can fully hold the school to account for its performance.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching. Not enough pupils make the rapid progress that they are capable of achieving.
- On occasion, teaching does not fully engage pupils and so they become distracted and lose concentration.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 18 lessons, several of which were joint observations with senior leaders. In addition, inspectors talked to pupils about their work, looked at books and listened to some pupils read.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and staff with key leadership responsibilities. Discussions were held with pupils, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documents including the school’s own check on its performance and the quality of teaching, the school improvement plan, information on pupils’ progress and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- Inspectors looked at 67 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and spoke to parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors also looked at 36 questionnaires returned by staff.

Inspection team

Margaret Coussins, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Nicholas Hunt	Additional Inspector
Carol Vant	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is below average. This is additional government funding to give extra support to those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and to children who are looked-after.
- In 2013, the school met the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school makes provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage in two Reception classes, which children attend on a full-time basis.
- The school provides a daily breakfast club.
- Since September 2014, the school's deputy has been leading the school as the acting headteacher. A new headteacher has been appointed to start in January 2015.

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

- Improve teaching so that it is typically outstanding by:
  - improving the proportion of pupils making rapid progress in their learning
  - making sure that pupils of all abilities are motivated and engaged in all of their lessons

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The acting headteacher has skilfully and effectively led the school in the interim period prior to the appointment of a new headteacher. She works very successfully to maintain a calm, hardworking school with a purposeful atmosphere, where staff and pupils want to achieve their best. There is strong teamwork amongst the staff and morale is high. Many agreed with the comment made by one member of staff, 'This is a happy school where there is a strong sense of teamwork.'
- Leaders know the school well. They assess performance accurately and have identified strengths and the next steps to raise achievement further.
- There are rigorous procedures to check pupils' progress which enable leaders to identify and provide extra support to pupils who might be at risk of falling behind or those who need further challenge.
- Teachers' work is checked and monitored carefully. Effective action is taken by senior and experienced middle leaders to provide training and support. This ensures weaknesses are improved quickly.
- The leadership of subjects is good. Leaders have expertise in their subject areas and provide good guidance and support for colleagues.
- Staff performance is managed well and they are given effective training and support. Aspirational targets are set for teachers. Teachers gain promotion or salary increases only if teaching is at least good and their pupils achieve well.
- Senior leaders, staff and governors have high expectations for every pupil and are fully committed to equality of opportunity. They are fully aware that greater numbers of pupils need to make more rapid progress. There are good systems to foster good relationships and tackle any possible discrimination.
- The subjects taught are broad and balanced and meet the requirements of the new curriculum. Pupils' needs and interests are met well. They develop a range of skills as well as those in literacy and numeracy. Music, the arts and sports are given a high profile in the school. The school makes very good use of the school grounds and its proximity to the seaside to provide a 'Forest School' and a 'Beach School'. These provide outdoor education and play. They promote pupils' creativity, environmental awareness and teamwork as well as an understanding of how to keep safe in a natural setting. Trips and extra activities, including clubs, enrich pupils' learning and experiences.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well promoted and underpins pupils' good behaviour. Assemblies provide time for reflection and the promotion of tolerance and respect. Pupils develop a good understanding of different faiths and cultures. They are prepared well for life in modern Britain and know about the next steps in their education.
- Additional funding to provide support for disadvantaged pupils is used effectively. Gaps in the achievement of different groups have narrowed.
- Sporting activities have a high profile in the school. Additional funding is used mostly to enable the physical education leader to provide training for staff and to increase pupils' skills and enjoyment. As a result, there has been a significant increase in the number of pupils participating in after-school sports clubs. Pupils are adopting healthier lifestyles and are now more successful in a wide range of sporting activities.
- Parents are very supportive of the school. Almost all parents who responded to Parent View and those who spoke to inspectors are happy with all aspects of the school's work. The school website provides a good range of information which keeps parents well informed about the school's work.
- The work of the family liaison officer makes a strong contribution to supporting pupils and their families to help remove any barriers to learning.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet government requirements and are effectively implemented. Staff receive appropriate training in safeguarding and child protection.
- The local authority has recently supported the school very effectively to ensure improvements. It has worked with senior leaders to check on the school's performance. Training, including for phonics (the sounds that letters make) teaching, has also been provided. The local authority has every confidence in the school's capacity to continue improving and now provides 'light-touch' support.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is relatively new. However, it is knowledgeable and shares the acting headteacher's high expectations for pupils' achievement.
  - Governors undertake a range of training and review their skills to increase their rigour in challenging the school and holding it to account for its performance.
  - They are well informed by both the acting headteacher and their own monitoring visits, and so

understand the strengths of the school and the priorities for improvement.

- Governors use data effectively to check how well the school is doing in comparison to other schools nationally.
- They have a clear awareness of the quality of teaching. They ensure there is a close link between teachers' pay and the progress of pupils.
- The governing body is aware of how additional funding is spent and checks on the impact of spending for the benefit of pupils.
- The local authority has supported the governing body in developing its role and structure.
- Governors ensure that all statutory duties are met including safeguarding requirements.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The majority of pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Adults and pupils have good relationships. There is a culture of mutual trust and respect. This underpins the good atmosphere that exists around the school and in the playground. School records show that good behaviour is typical over time.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their above-average attendance. Almost all parents agree that their children are happy at school, behave well and are well looked after. Pupils say that behaviour is good and think that teachers deal promptly and fairly with any small incidents should they arise. They clearly know the difference between right and wrong.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to their learning, which helps them achieve well. They are keen to please their teachers and respond quickly to requests. As a result, pupils are mostly engaged in their learning and work well.
- Pupils know how they are expected to behave around the school. However, sometimes, some pupils need to be reminded about behaviour, for example not running around inside school.
- Pupils think the buddy system and having peer mediators in the playground are good ideas. These roles are taken seriously and carried out responsibly.
- The breakfast club provides a good start to the day. Pupils who attend behave well and are kept safe.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils, parents and teachers agree that the school is a very safe place in which to learn.
- Pupils know what bullying is and the different forms it can take. They say it is very rare in school but should any incident occur, they are confident that teachers would sort things out. They know they can talk to staff about anything that might be worrying them and that they would be listened to.
- Pupils have a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe. They are well equipped to make safe choices and avoid possible dangers both in and out of school. They have a good understanding of e-safety and know how to keep themselves safe online.

## The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is good because over time it enables pupils to make good progress and achieve well. The very large majority of parents who responded to Parent View agree that their children are taught well.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good and, as a result, pupils work hard and want to do well. They listen to their teachers and are interested in their work.
- Pupils are clear about what they are learning and what they need to do to be successful. Teachers ensure this by reminding pupils throughout lessons what it is they should be aiming for. This helps pupils make better progress.
- Displays and the use of technology are used well by teachers and pupils to support teaching and learning. A good range of reading resources, combined with teaching of early and more advanced reading skills, helps pupils read confidently. 'Working walls' provide prompts and reminders to pupils, particularly in

literacy.

- There are some good examples of marking and feedback. Pupils have a clear idea of how to improve their work because they have time to read, reflect and respond to teachers' comments. A group of pupils agreed with one who said, 'The teacher really makes us think about what we can do better and we can sometimes do things we didn't know we could do.'
- Good subject knowledge and skilled questioning to check pupils' understanding often challenges pupils to think deeply and extend their thoughts and ideas. Pupils' literacy and mathematical skills are generally taught well.
- Teachers generally have high expectations for pupils' behaviour and learning. In most lessons, the climate for learning is one in which pupils listen to and respect others' opinions. They are confident to ask if they do not understand and are willing to persevere with a task. This is because teaching fully engages and motivates them to learn. However, in some lessons, some pupils lose their concentration because teachers do not fully engage them. As a result, some pupils do not make the rapid progress of which they are capable.
- Homework is set regularly at the appropriate level and links well to extend work in the classroom.
- Teaching assistants generally contribute effectively to pupils' learning in the classroom and when working with small groups or individuals. They are particularly effective in supporting the learning of disadvantaged pupils and those who are disabled or who have special educational needs. This helps these pupils to achieve well and make good progress.

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils' attainment has improved since the previous inspection and is now above average.
- Improved standards in 2014 at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 have reversed the dip in achievement seen in 2013. This is as a result of good teaching and higher expectations, which have enabled pupils to make better progress. Teachers' records and pupils' work show that they are continuing to make good progress this year.
- In 2014, pupils at the end of Year 6 achieved standards in reading, writing and mathematics which were above the latest national averages. This represents good progress in relation to their broadly average starting points at the end of Year 2.
- The proportion of most-able pupils achieving the higher levels at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 improved in all subjects from 2013 and was above that found nationally.
- In 2014, the school took effective action to ensure that there was a more rigorous approach to teaching phonics. As a result, the proportion of pupils reaching the required level in the Year 1 phonics check was above average. This was an improvement from 2013 when the proportion was below average.
- Pupils of all abilities enjoy reading and, by Year 6, most pupils read with expression and good regard for punctuation. They talk about favourite authors and styles of writing, and give well-considered reasons for their opinions. They develop good understanding of the texts they read and use a range of strategies to help them read unfamiliar words.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress from their varied starting points, because their needs are well met.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is good. In 2013, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils by the end of Year 6 was similar to their classmates in reading and writing, and just over four months behind in mathematics. Compared to disadvantaged pupils nationally, they were around six months ahead in reading and four months ahead in writing. Attainment in mathematics was similar to that of disadvantaged pupils nationally. School records show that gaps are rapidly closing and disadvantaged pupils throughout the school currently are making similar progress to others.

### The early years provision

is good

- Children start in the Reception classes with skills and knowledge that are generally typical for their age, except in reading and writing, where they are below typical expectations. They catch up quickly and the proportions that reach a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year are usually above the national average. In 2014, results improved from the previous year because of good teaching and good leadership. Children are well prepared to continue their learning in Year 1.

- Good leadership ensures that staff are used well to help children make good progress. Teachers provide calm, purposeful and attractive learning areas.
- Children's achievements, interests and progress are checked regularly to help staff plan the next steps for their learning. Information about children's achievement is well used to enable staff to identify any groups of children or individuals who are not progressing as well as they could.
- There are very good relationships between adults and children. Staff get to know children well because there are good links with the children and their parents before they start at school. This helps children to settle very quickly and happily into the routines of the classrooms and the school.
- Children play with confidence, are kept safe and behave well. They learn to share and make friends. They enjoy learning, and are encouraged to develop their curiosity and creativity in all areas of learning.
- Children are very well cared for, and all the safeguarding and welfare 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	118583
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	444030

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	381
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Tony Carpenter
<b>Headteacher</b>	Janice Ross (Acting headteacher)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19–20 January 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01843 290050
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