

Ide Hill Church of England Primary School

Ide Hill, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN14 6JT

Inspection dates 9–10 June 2015

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.

- The new headteacher leads the school with enthusiasm and purpose. This ensures that the effective practice noted in the previous inspection has continued. The school's effectiveness is good and the school is improving.
- Pupils generally reach higher than expected levels in national test results, with some reaching levels more typically found in secondary schools. Pupils are well prepared to start their next schools because their mathematical and writing skills have developed well.
- The quality of teaching is typically good throughout the school. It enables pupils to achieve well and enjoy their learning.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, or who are eligible for additional funding, achieve well.
- Children have a secure and happy start when they join the Reception class. The outdoor early years learning area has improved.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils are confident when speaking to adults or each other. Pupils enjoy going to school and say they feel very safe as staff quickly deal with any problems. Not surprisingly, attendance has improved since the previous inspection.
- Pupils take their roles on the school council responsibly, as the whole school are members. Pupils who are anti-bullying ambassadors take their role very seriously.
- Governors give good support. They know the school well and are familiar visitors to both staff and pupils. They support staff well, are not complacent and rightly identify ways the school can still improve.
- Pupils speak clearly, articulately and listen well to each other and their teachers. They are keen to tell visitors about their school.
- Parents are very positive about the way the school provides for their children.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils are not always expected to refine or present their writing to a high standard.
- Pupils are not fully confident in explaining their mathematical thinking.
- Pupils are not fully aware of the differing backgrounds and beliefs of others in more distant or contrasting areas of their country.
- There are not enough resources for pupils to extend their technology skills fully within lessons.

Information about this inspection

- Teaching and learning in nine lessons or part lessons were observed by the inspector. Three of these observations took place jointly with the headteacher. In addition, the inspector listened to reading by pupils from Years 2 and 6.
- The inspector met with groups of pupils, school staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other members, as well as a representative from the local authority. He also held informal discussions with a number of parents at the start of the school day. He observed playtimes and lunchtimes.
- In planning and carrying out the inspection, the inspector took account of the 47 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View. He considered 16 questionnaires completed by teaching and support staff. Two letters from parents were also considered and the inspector took account of results from the school's recent parental questionnaire.
- The inspector observed the school's work. He looked at a wide range of documents including safeguarding policies, the school's systems for judging its effectiveness and pupils' past work in their books and on display around the school.

Inspection team

Kevin Hodge, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Ide Hill is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The headteacher started in January 2015 after being the acting headteacher from September to December 2014. There have been a number of staff changes since the previous inspection.
- Most pupils are White British. The school has six classes and one class has both Years 5 and 6 pupils.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils who are looked after or known to be eligible for free school meals) is well below average. As there were fewer than five Year 6 pupils eligible last year for funding, their attainment is not reported.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- Children attend full time in Reception.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement in the school by:
 - ensuring that teaching helps pupils in Years 1 to 6 to refine and present their written work more carefully
 - ensuring that there are enough resources for pupils throughout the school to develop their technology skills
 - ensuring pupils are more confident in explaining how they arrive at an answer when investigating or solving mathematical problems.
- Develop pupils' awareness of others in this country who have different backgrounds and/or beliefs.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Since her appointment, the headteacher has successfully maintained existing strengths whilst introducing new routines. Supported by staff and governors, she has continued to foster Ide Hill's 'small school' Christian ethos. Staff are positive about working in the school and their willingness to embrace change underpins the school's desire to improve teaching still further. Pupils' levels of behaviour and maturity are key strengths.
- Most parents are very supportive of the school and the work it does. Many highlight increased communication, such as weekly newsletters, pupils' good behaviour and the family atmosphere. One parent said she was 'thrilled' with the school, whilst another liked the school's welcoming nature.
- Staff have many middle leadership roles and responsibilities that they carry out well. Not all staff have equal responsibilities, but this is being reviewed at the end of term to accommodate changes in staffing and class arrangements.
- Close links with other local primary schools provide staff with the opportunity to share expertise and identify effective features of teaching.
- Over time, initiatives to help improve pupils' writing, attendance and improved resources for early years children have worked. However, leaders acknowledge that pupils need more help to present their writing even better to show it in the best light.
- The headteacher monitors the quality of teaching taking into account pupils' work, the views of pupils and direct observations of lessons. The expectation is that pay progression links to improved progress by pupils.
- The new coordinator for the work of pupils who have special educational needs has already evaluated the effectiveness of the support provided to help pupils to achieve well. Links made with outside professionals widen the expertise available to help pupils with any particular needs.
- Good use is made of the primary sport premium to promote a wider range of sporting opportunities and involvement. The school provides a range of traditional sports to basketball and gymnastics. A local rugby club provides extra coaching and the school is looking forward to taking part in a triathlon event. These initiatives are successfully raising activity levels for a greater number of pupils to boost their health, while broadening the choice of different sporting activities.
- The school uses the very small amount of additional pupil premium funding well. Pupils benefit from extra support in class, small groups and one-to-one teaching to ensure they keep pace with others in the school and nationally.
- The range of subjects taught is wide and makes good provision for mixed ages and abilities. In English, pupils write for a good range of different purposes, study plays such as Macbeth, and they enjoy reading activities. Mathematics activities develop pupils' essential number skills well, although the school recognises that pupils need more opportunities to explain their reasoning when solving mathematical problems. Activities for children in the Reception class incorporate all the required areas effectively.
- The school has a clear policy for developing Christian and British values, including pupils taking part in activities to explore the meaning of democracy, tolerance, and in the church-based community. For example, pupils held mock elections, prompted by the recent national election. They also study local village life. However, while pupils know their local area well, planned activities do not always sufficiently extend their knowledge of others in this country in contrasting localities or with different beliefs.
- All staff, supported well by governors, ensure good standards of safeguarding routines. Site security is reviewed regularly. Procedures for checking new staff appointments are thorough and recorded accurately. All staff give regular reminders to staff, pupils and parents about the potential dangers posed by inappropriate internet use and access.
- Staff, governors, and pupils work together well to ensure everyone is treated equally and fairly. Staff and governors tackle any discrimination quickly. This sense of equal opportunities for all ensures pupils treat others fairly and respect others' views.
- The local authority provides clear and insightful support. It has ensured that recent changes of leadership have been handled smoothly. The local authority's accurate evaluation of the school's effectiveness has helped the new headteacher and governors to gauge the pace of improvement since the previous inspection.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is effective and has successfully tackled issues identified at the previous inspection. Governors have succeeded in ensuring the smooth running of the school during the period between inspections. Governors are acutely aware of how pupils' results compare to that of others locally and

nationally. They are regular visitors to the school, both formally and informally. Their reports about what they see are informative, but do not always pinpoint what they thought went well or what they might need to seek further information about. Governors know how the headteacher maintains the quality of teaching and that performance links with pupils' progress. Governors use this information effectively to assess the quality of teaching to agree or withhold pay awards. Regular training helps to keep governors up to date with current requirements.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are helpful and polite to each other and to visitors. Pupils readily tell visitors what they like best about the school. Many say their teachers are kind and considerate.
- In lessons and around the school, pupils generally apply themselves enthusiastically to their work. However, their presentation is not consistently of a high standard, particularly in some written work.
- Pupils like the range of responsibilities they have, such as everyone being members of the school council, and having fortnightly opportunities to seek the views of others in each class. They confirmed that relationships between pupils are good. They say that only very occasionally do some pupils find meeting the school's high expectation of behaviour difficult.
- Pupils are very knowledgeable about others living abroad, often through their work to raise funds for charities overseas. They also know their village local area and well. They know about significant national events or news. Although they are very clear about what is meant by British values, they are not always as aware about the range of backgrounds and beliefs represented in other British localities.
- Parents are quick to point out that staff know pupils and their families. This helps their children to be keen learners. Anti-bullying ambassadors like their role, particularly in looking at the school's 'worry' and 'sorry' boxes to see if they need to address or resolve any issues arising. Pupils' attendance is good and this is a better picture than was found at the previous inspection.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that the school deals with any problems about safety or disputes among pupils very quickly. As some said, 'We always have someone nearby who is willing to help if we are feeling sad.' A recent initiative to teach pupils about different causes or types of crime raised their understanding about how to avoid potential problems.
- Pupils are knowledgeable about using the internet, as well as knowing how to keep safe in their local rural surroundings. They know they must not share any details about themselves or their families. Older pupils benefited from specific guidance from a visitor about online safety, films, and online gaming. Pupils' recent drive to promote local road safety, by producing road safety posters, was recognised and valued by local police officers. Good welfare and first aid arrangements ensure that any pupils needing assistance are spotted and helped quickly.
- Site security is good and parents agree that children are safe, particularly when walking to the playing field. The school also tries hard to make sure that safety is high profile; staff and governors have worked hard to address any areas noted in recent checks on security or health and safety routines.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching has remained at typically good levels through the school. The headteacher has sought to maintain the positive features of teaching, while not being complacent or reluctant to tackle weaker teaching. Visits to lessons, past work in pupils' books and displays across the school show that the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is consistently good.
- The teaching of writing has improved throughout the school, so that pupils are keen to write at greater length or for different purposes, such as developing play scripts. Their stories are often creative and interesting. Pupils are knowledgeable about grammar and punctuation, knowing the differences between verbs, adverbs, and conjunctions. Pupils are also creative. In one lesson, pupils readily thought of interesting words to describe the characteristics of imaginary animals, using words such as 'creepy', 'adorable', or 'cute'. In another lesson, pupils used their writing skills well in a science-based lesson when thinking up scientific questions to ask each other after looking at, and handling, their visiting gecko called Pablo. Across the school, however, pupils are not always expected to present their work, particularly writing, to the highest level, and this sometimes detracts from the quality of their work.
- Teachers regularly provide pupils with mathematical activities that extend their thinking. As a result, most

pupils confidently work out a variety of simple and more difficult number problems. Additional regular problem-solving activities also give them different ways to use their skills, such as working out fractions and percentages of different shapes or in costing out a forthcoming party. They are not always as confident in justifying or explaining how they have worked out answers or their approach to the problem.

- Pupils read confidently throughout the school as teaching ensures that key skills, such as learning letter sounds and combinations (often known as phonics), are taught effectively. As a result, pupils are enthusiastic readers. They say how much they enjoy reading both at home or school. The most able read difficult and challenging books. Those who find reading more difficult know how to sound out unfamiliar words as staff teach phonics thoroughly.
- When available, pupils use their computing and technology skills effectively, but a lack of resources means that these opportunities are relatively infrequent, so their skills are not fully extended. Pupils say that they occasionally use audio-visual equipment to record activities, but say this is infrequent and would like there to be more opportunities.
- Teachers work well with skilled teaching assistants to make sure that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are fully included in, and benefit from, all classroom activities.
- Teachers assess and mark pupils' work regularly using a detailed assessment system. Pupils like the school's system of colour coding to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of their work. They like to have 'pink to think' comments, along with 'green for growth' comments when their teachers spot how their work could get better. However, they are not always as clear about the additional ways staff mark their work using different codes to highlight strengths and weaknesses.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils continue to make good progress from their different starting points; they achieve well. Results in national tests at the end of both key stages have, with some exceptions, usually exceeded national averages. They rose last year at the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6, particularly in mathematics which had dipped the previous year. They are on track to rise again this year. Past work and current checks on pupils' progress in writing and mathematics indicate that pupils are on course to reach higher than expected levels this year in both key stages.
- A focus on developing pupils' writing has been largely successful in enabling pupils to write at greater length, but occasionally this is at the expense of good presentation. Words are usually spelled accurately and writing has appropriate punctuation such as full stops, commas and capital letters.
- Pupils speak very clearly and confidently. They like explaining to visitors about what they like best about their comparatively small school. This includes their appreciation of the teachers and visits away from the school, such as their residential trip which is taking place soon. Most listen carefully to each other, staff, and visitors.
- In mathematics, pupils confidently work out problems, for example using multiplication facts or calculating areas of shapes. Pupils enjoyed an activity to see how to divide food equally so there is a 'fair feast'. Problem-solving activities give them the opportunity to apply their skills. However, they are not always as confident in explaining why they chose a particular method to work out the problem.
- The most able pupils generally achieve well. This is reflected in their past work since the beginning of the year and in their current progress. For example, a higher proportion of pupils is on track to reach levels more typical of secondary pupils. Some most able writers spoke enthusiastically about spending a day at a local school learning how to improve their writing to an even higher level.
- As there were fewer than five pupils eligible for additional pupil premium funding last year, their specific attainment and rates of progress are not reported. Overall, they achieve well.
- Pupils read widely and many have favourite authors and types of story. Year 1 pupils reached above average levels in the national phonic screening check last year, reflecting their confidence in reading and writing unfamiliar words. Pupils say they enjoy reading the school based newspaper.
- The few disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well. Well organised activities within lessons, small groups or combined with occasional support from outside professionals, help these pupils make good progress.
- Reception class children achieve well from their individual starting points, particularly in their social and emotional development. They enjoy playing together and achieve well by learning, speaking, reading, and writing skills.
- Pupils achieve particularly well at a variety of sports, such as swimming, netball and are looking forward to competing in a local triathlon event. Pupils also learn a variety of musical instruments and to speak French.

The early years provision**is good**

- Children achieve well from their various starting points, as they did in the previous inspection. They settle quickly in the class, benefiting from increasingly effective links from feeder schools. They achieve particularly well in their early language and number skills, along with their social and emotional development. They consistently reach a good level of development by the time they start in Year 1.
- Teaching has remained good. It is effective because it ensures that children of differing abilities are catered for successfully. Activities are planned effectively, such as sand and water play, and children particularly enjoyed arranging a visit and providing a passport for the inspector in their imaginary travel agent's office.
- Children behave well. Helpers in the class are also quick to point out if any children are unhappy. Children use their new outside area safely, often sharing equipment sensibly or willingly transporting their classmates on their double-seated bicycles. When working independently, children are usually happy to play unsupervised, although occasionally this means that they lose interest if left too long on an activity.
- There is a good combination of activities that take place in and outside of the classroom. Teaching of early reading and writing skills is effective. Children enjoyed learning about different letter sounds, while doing hops or skips in the playground. They particularly liked being able to draw the letter combinations on the playground using chalks.
- The leadership of early years is effective. Leaders have a clear understanding about the needs of the youngest children in the school. Relationships with parents are very positive and parents spoken to said that their children really enjoy being in the Reception class. Welfare arrangements are clear and helpers are quick to spot any children needing help or who are upset.

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	118722
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	448812

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	125
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anne Fletcher
Headteacher	Louisa Hillman
Date of previous school inspection	15–16 July 2010
Telephone number	01732 750389
Fax number	01732 750802
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