

# Bligh Junior School

Bligh Way, Rochester, ME2 2XJ

## Inspection dates

5–6 February 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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

- Pupils make good progress. Standards in reading and mathematics are above the national average and well above average in writing by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is typically good. Teachers use a range of approaches in lessons to help pupils of different ability levels to achieve well.
- Pupils behave well in most lessons and around the school. They are keen to learn.
- Leadership and management of the school are strong. The governing body and other leaders and managers have a very accurate understanding of the school's current performance and a clear understanding of what is needed to improve further.
- The school has rigorously addressed areas for improvement since the last inspection, and systematic checks are driving improvement in pupils' achievement.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching in the school.
- At times, teachers spend too much time talking and do not involve all pupils or check their understanding closely enough.
- Occasionally pupils are given too much support in lessons, which limits the chance to work on their own to show what they can do.
- Marking in mathematics does not always make it clear to pupils what they need to do next to make good progress in their learning.
- Subject leaders do not yet do enough to observe the quality of teaching to further drive improvement forward at a rapid pace.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 lessons or parts of lessons, of which five were joint observations with senior leaders. They observed teaching in a range of subjects, including letter patterns and the sounds they represent (phonics) and guided reading.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and attended an assembly.
- Meetings were held with pupils, senior leaders, subject leaders, representatives from the governing body and the local authority.
- The views of 17 parents were analysed through the Parent View website. Inspectors also spoke to parents at the start and end of the school day. They also analysed the results of 15 staff questionnaires.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including the school's improvement plans, information on pupils' current progress, monitoring evidence, minutes of governing body meetings and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding. Inspectors looked closely at pupils' books with a member of the senior leadership team.

## Inspection team

Linda Pickles, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Stephen Mellors

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a broadly average-sized junior school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional money for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked-after children, and pupils with a parent in the armed services) is above average.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported through school action is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The majority of pupils are White British.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school was federated with a neighbouring infant school, children's centre and day care nursery in April 2012. The federation is led by an executive headteacher.
- The school makes use of a local pupil referral unit as alternative provision off site.
- About three quarters of the teaching staff has changed since the last inspection.

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

- Improve teaching so that more is outstanding by:
  - making sure all pupils are actively involved in learning so teachers can regularly check their progress and understanding
  - giving pupils more chance to work on their own, particularly lower-attaining pupils
  - involving pupils more frequently in identifying for themselves what steps to success will look like
  - improving the quality of marking in mathematics by making it clearer to pupils what they need to do next to make good progress.
- Make sure that subject leaders observe the quality of teaching in their areas in enough detail to drive improvement forward at a rapid pace.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- From starting points that are slightly below expected, pupils make good progress to reach above-average standards in reading and mathematics and well above average standards in writing by the end of Year 6. Evidence from pupils' books and the school's progress information show standards are continuing to improve and standards in reading and mathematics are rising to match those of writing.
- Pupils' learning in lessons and their progress over time are good. They are enthusiastic, even on occasions when they are not actively participating, and are keen to do well. The school's analysis of its assessment information shows progress is speeding up across all year groups, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals make good progress and average point scores show they achieved considerably better than similar pupils nationally in 2012. This is because the pupil premium funding is effectively used to offer booster groups, small-group work and one-to-one teaching to speed up their learning. Consequently, there is no gap between their achievement and that of their peers.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similarly good progress to their peers because of the good provision that is set at the right level for them. Pupils who receive additional support outside of lessons make good progress because planned programmes effectively promote their reading, writing and mathematical skills. In a few lessons, however, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs have too much support from the adult they are working with and this limits their chance to work on their own.
- The school promotes pupils' reading skills well. Pupils read frequently and often read a range of texts across different subjects, which supports their good achievement. Pupils are confidently able to tackle unfamiliar words by breaking them down into sounds and putting the sounds back together again. Parents support pupils' reading at home well.
- Pupils enjoy their learning and are motivated and engaged by the topics they study and activities they do. They can confidently explain how well they are achieving and regularly assess their own learning at the end of the lesson. Pupils, however, are not always clear about what they need to do to improve their work further in mathematics.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has significantly improved since the last inspection. The well-established appraisal of teachers has rigorously tackled underperformance and promoted improvement through coaching and training. As a result, teaching is now typically good. Evidence from pupils' work shows excellent progress in writing for the oldest pupils.
- Teachers plan activities which are set at just the right level and they regularly check pupils' understanding and clarify misconceptions. In the best lessons, pupils are actively involved by sharing their learning and understanding with a partner, but this does not happen consistently.
- All teachers make it clear to pupils what they are expected to learn and in the best lessons teachers provide clear guidance for pupils about how they can check their learning against the 'steps to success'. However, pupils do not have enough chances to develop their own steps to success or work on their own.
- Most teachers aim high for pupils' behaviour, and classrooms are calm and well ordered. At times, however, some pupils lose concentration because the teachers talk for too long to the whole class which slows the pace of learning.
- Occasionally, lower-attaining pupils have too much adult support, which prevents them from attempting their work by themselves.
- Teachers frequently mark pupils' work in detail and respond regularly to pupils' own assessment of their own learning. Marking in writing, however, is currently stronger than in mathematics.

This is because teachers do not consistently give pupils clear enough guidance about what they need to do next to improve their mathematical understanding.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Pupils enjoy coming to school and are keen to do well. This is shown by their attendance, which has risen to above average since the last inspection.
- Pupils greatly enjoy the responsibilities they are given as play leaders and assembly helpers. The older pupils relish helping and playing with younger pupils at lunchtimes.
- Pupils are kind to each other and respectful to all adults. This pupil's comment is typical of many: 'I definitely like the teachers because they're kind to us.'
- Pupils usually behave well in lessons and around the school. In a small minority of lessons, pupils sometimes lose concentration because they are not actively participating and spend too long listening to the teacher.
- Pupils told inspectors that incidents of bullying are uncommon but if they do occur, they are dealt with promptly by the adults in school. Pupils understand that unkind name-calling, for example racist language, is not allowed and very rarely happens.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, particularly when using the internet, and can explain the potential dangers of giving out personal information to people they do not know.
- A small number of parents who responded to Parent View raised some concerns about how well the school deals with bullying. Discussions with pupils and parents over the course of the inspection indicate the school takes appropriate action to deal with any incidents.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- The strong leadership of the executive headteacher and the deputy headteacher has meant that the school has made rapid improvements since it was last inspected. Senior leaders are highly ambitious for the school, something which is understood and shared by leaders and managers at all levels. All those who completed the staff questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive about the school's leadership.
- Since the last inspection, the executive headteacher and governors have worked together to tackle underperformance and have been successful in improving the quality of teaching through setting robust targets for teachers. Rigorous tracking of pupils' performance and regular review meetings with teachers make sure any necessary training is undertaken to strengthen the profile of teaching further.
- Senior leaders, including the governing body, set demanding targets for improvement which reflect the school's priorities based on a detailed analysis of performance information. They carefully check the impact of any actions to improve the school. The school has effective procedures for gaining an accurate view of how well it is doing.
- Subject leaders are developing their leadership roles by analysing achievement information and checking the work in pupils' books. They are not yet observing the quality of teaching to further drive improvements, which is why leadership and management are not outstanding.
- The progress of different groups of pupils is closely checked and this means all groups achieve equally well and all pupils have equal access to all aspects of school life. The school's safeguarding procedures meet all statutory requirements. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- Parents spoken to during the inspection were overwhelmingly positive about the school. As one parent said, 'Teachers will listen if there is a problem and sort it out.' The large majority of parents who responded to Parent View were supportive of the school
- The local authority provides appropriate support for the school. The school improvement officer

has carried out joint lesson observations with the executive headteacher and coaching and mentoring support for teachers new to leadership roles.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governors have taken a key role in driving improvements since the last inspection. The governing body is well trained and effectively led. Consequently, governors have a good understanding of pupils' performance against the national picture and are able to ask searching questions of senior leaders and hold them to account effectively. Members of the governing body regularly visit the school and are involved in a wide range of activities, such as visiting lessons and running extra-curricular clubs. They are ambitious and passionate about the school's future and its role in the community. Governors have a good understanding of the links between performance and salary progression and receive regular reviews about the quality of teaching, including judgements which have been confirmed by outside experts. They know how the pupil premium funding is spent and the impact it is having.
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## 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>	118470
<b>Local authority</b>	Medway
<b>Inspection number</b>	401755

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	215
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Kate Broom
<b>Headteacher</b>	Tina Gobell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10–11 February 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01634 336220
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