

# Little Hallingbury Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique reference number</b>	115182
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	379030
<b>Inspection dates</b>	29 February–1 March 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Martin Beale

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>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	147
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Lynn Petts
<b>Headteacher</b>	Barbara Coates
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 January 2007
<b>School address</b>	Wrights Green Lane Little Hallingbury Bishop's Stortford CM22 7RE
<b>Telephone number</b>	01279 723382
<b>Fax number</b>	01279 721286
<b>Email address</b>	admin@littlehallingbury.essex.sch.uk

---

<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	29 February-1 March 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	379030



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)  
[Store St](#)  
[Manchester](#)  
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2012



## **Introduction**

Inspection team

Martin Beale

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Six hours were spent observing parts of 11 lessons taught by seven members of staff, holding discussions with pupils about their learning and hearing pupils read. The inspector held meetings with staff and members of the governing body. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. He observed the school's work, and scrutinised pupils' books, assessment data and case studies of specific pupils. He also looked at evidence of the school's self-evaluation and improvement planning. The inspector analysed 97 responses to the questionnaire returned by parents and carers.

## **Information about the school**

Most pupils are from White British backgrounds in this smaller than the average-sized primary school. Few pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is well below average. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a Reception class and pupils in Key Stage 2 are taught in three mixed-age classes. The school has recently received The Quality Mark for Primary Schools. The school currently meets the government floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- This is a good school. It has developed some outstanding features in the exciting curriculum, the pupils' excellent behaviour and their very positive attitudes to learning. The school is not outstanding because teaching is good but not consistently so. Furthermore, insufficient attention is paid in Reception to promoting systematically the children's personal and creative development.
- Pupils make good progress in almost all aspects of their learning. The school promotes their writing well by providing a wide range of stimulating contexts through which pupils show much creativity. Basic reading skills develop well and the pupils' facility with number is deepened as they frequently solve problems and undertake investigations.
- Many lessons are challenging and fast-paced. The most effective tackle the next steps in each pupil's learning through interesting activities. However, there are some inconsistencies, particularly in how well teachers match lessons to the needs of all pupils; and at times they miss opportunities through their questioning to engage pupils more in talk and discussion.
- Pupils are very polite and show great respect towards school staff and other adults. They work and play in a harmonious atmosphere and are taking an increasing role in helping each other to understand how they can all behave well at all times. Visitors to school and others, including members of the general public encountered on school trips, frequently commend the school for the pupils' behaviour.
- Through her clarity of vision and high expectations, the headteacher has moved the school forward and developed a strong and committed staff team. There is a consistent and effective drive to improve teaching with teachers working closely together to share expertise and learn from each other.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

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

- Increase the proportion of good and better teaching in order to accelerate progress by:
  - making better use of assessment information to plan lessons that meet the learning needs of all pupils
  - develop teachers' questioning skills so that they engage pupils more in talk and discussion.
  
- Improve provision for children in Reception by:
  - planning and providing activities that promote the children's personal and creative development more systematically
  - making more effective use of the outdoor environment so that children's learning is linked more closely to their activities inside the classroom.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Inspection evidence supports the strongly held view of parents and carers that their children make good progress. Pupils acquire basic skills in literacy and numeracy at a good pace and secure their understanding by their application across subjects. As a consequence, Year 6 test results have been consistently above average in both English and mathematics. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs also make good progress.

Children enter Reception with skills broadly as expected for their age. They make good progress in Reception in the key areas of literacy and numeracy, but their progress is not as rapid in their personal and creative development. A significant number of children do not readily initiate learning themselves or work collaboratively.

In Reception, children's knowledge of the sounds made by letters develops well and the more able can apply this to read simple texts and write short sentences. These skills continue to develop well so that attainment is above average in reading at the end of Year 2 and well above average by the end of Year 6. Many Year 6 pupils are reading lengthy novels and can talk clearly about the reasons why they enjoy certain types of books and some of the authors they find engaging.

Although the attainment of boys in writing is lower than that of girls the gap is starting to close as pupils move through the school. Key factors have been providing interesting contexts that boys find more engaging, such as the Year 6 tourist guides of London following their recent visit, and setting clear targets for their improvement.

The good learning in a Year 2 English lesson typified much seen during the

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

inspection. Pupils brainstormed words relating to their feelings about fire before writing in pairs the start of poems. Effective collaboration was a feature here as it was in most lessons observed, particularly when pupils had the chance to discuss and share their ideas with their 'talk partners'. Good learning was also seen in the way pupils used their refined information and communication technology skills to present their work more effectively such as 'London '66' a newspaper account by two Year 6 girls of the 'Fire of London'.

### **Quality of teaching**

Parents and carers are strongly of the view that teaching is good and the particular needs of their children are met. The teaching in a highly effective mathematics lesson for Year 5 and 6 pupils typified many of the characteristics of the school's teaching. There was challenge throughout from the starter activity which included an investigation of prime numbers to the main activity where pupils represented three-dimensional shapes in two-dimensions on isometric paper. The classroom was calm and the pupils' behaviour well-managed. The teacher balanced the requirement for pupils to think for themselves with well-timed interventions to support those struggling. Pupils chose from a range of activities those they needed to undertake based on a self-assessment of their previous success and confidence. These features are not always seen consistently. In a few lessons teachers talk too much, miss opportunities for pupils to discuss their ideas and do not fully engage the pupils in their learning.

Teaching of reading and particularly the sounds made by letters is typically fast-paced and focused sharply on the next steps in each pupil's learning. This enabled the teacher in a Year 1 lesson on letters and sounds to focus on new letter blends, while the classroom assistant extended the learning of a group of more-able pupils as they wrote well-crafted sentences including words containing the 'ee' sound.

Sessions led by the adults to develop literacy and numeracy in Reception are well taught. However, opportunities to promote the children's personal and creative development are not planned sufficiently carefully to meet each child's needs. Furthermore, learning does not always flow freely between the well resourced classroom inside and the extensive outdoor area.

Many opportunities are taken by teachers to enhance the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, for example through the use of 'talk partners' and the consideration of ethical issues as seen by the presentation by two Year 6 boys on fair trade. Teachers generally adapt the planned curriculum well to meet the needs of all pupils, although at times assessment information is not used effectively to modify their teaching, particularly in mixed-age classes. The early identification of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs enables carefully tailored and personalised action to be put in place either in class, through specific programmes or with the guidance of outside agencies.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Parents and carers are in strong agreement that behaviour has improved this year and that well behaved pupils make for the happy family atmosphere. They recognise that when behaviour has failed to meet the school's high standard it has been effectively resolved through the action of staff and governors. Pupils also agree with their parents and carers that there is a clear structure for managing behaviour that is consistently implemented by all staff. Evidence supports the view that there has been strong improvement and the excellent behaviour seen during the inspection is now typical for the school.

The pupils' exceptionally positive attitudes to learning are a major contributory factor to their good achievement. They are very attentive of their teachers. Team work is a major feature, whether this is collaborating in lessons or when participating in sport. Pupils are also very sensitive to others as shown by their charity fundraising efforts. Although there have been incidents of hurtful name-calling in the past, the school council has taken a lead, along with staff in the continuing anti-bullying initiatives. Pupils report that bullying is no longer a concern. Attendance is well above average and has also improved since governors implemented a 'zero-tolerance' policy towards term-time holidays.

The pupils' view that they feel safe in school is one that is echoed by the vast majority of parents and carers. By integrating safety issues into the curriculum pupils feel safe and become equipped with the skills to deal with potentially risky situations, such as through e-safety and cycling proficiency training.

## **Leadership and management**

Parents and carers say that the school is well led and managed. Inspection evidence supports this view. Many features contribute to the school's good capacity for further improvement. The qualities noted at the last inspection have been maintained and successful action has been taken to improve achievement, teaching and the pupils' behaviour and attendance. The headteacher is supported in the drive to improve teaching and the pupils' achievement by an effective team of subject leaders. The well-led governing body challenges staff to improve achievement, such as that of the boys and their writing. Governors monitor the school's work formally through their visits and informally by attending school functions.

The rigorous monitoring of teachers' performance is enabling the headteacher to have a clear picture of their strengths and where improvements are needed. The 'lesson study' programme where teachers work together to improve a specific aspect of their teaching is proving very effective. This is not just in improving the quality of teaching but bringing greater consistency to key features such as how to focus on the learning of different groups of pupils.

Promoting equality of opportunity is at the heart of the school's work and reflected in

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

the effectiveness of support for potentially vulnerable pupils. By checking assessment data carefully, the school is able to take action if any underachievement or gaps in the performance of different groups emerge. This has led to gaps closing in writing between boys and girls. The harmonious environment reflects the school's success in tackling any forms of discrimination. Governors have established effective policies so that pupils and staff work in a safe environment and they ensure that they are rigorously implemented.

The curriculum is outstanding because it provides a wide range of interesting experiences on a daily basis and is enriched by many additional activities including sports. The themed approach linking subjects through topics such as 'The Fire of London' is a major factor in the pupils' good achievement. The curriculum makes a major contribution to the pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through art and music. Pupils talk about how much they enjoyed watching 'The Tempest' by 'The Young Shakespeare Company' which they then performed themselves.



## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## **Common terminology used by inspectors**

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



2 March 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Little Hallingbury Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Bishop's Stortford CM22 7RE**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave me when I visited your school recently. I saw that you work very hard and are proud of the part you play in school life. I was particularly impressed by your confident answers to my questions. I have judged that Little Hallingbury is a good school because the headteacher, staff and governors try hard to help you all achieve of your very best. These are the things I liked most.

- Members of staff take very good care of you and make sure you are kept safe.
- Your exceptionally positive attitudes to learning and exemplary behaviour contribute significantly to your good progress.
- The curriculum provides many enjoyable experiences for you through the topics you study and events such as the recent visit to London.
- Those of you who find learning difficult are given good support so that you can make the same rapid progress as others in your classes.
- Teaching is good and in most lessons, but not all, effective use is made of assessment data to support your learning and progress.
- You understand very clearly how to keep yourselves safe and deal with any risks you might face.

I have asked the school to improve learning further by ensuring that teachers use questions to make you think more deeply and pitch their lessons more closely at the next steps in your learning. I have also asked for aspects of planning for the youngest children in Reception to improve. You can play your part in helping the school to get even better by continuing to work hard.

Yours sincerely

Martin Beale  
Lead inspector

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234**, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**