

Cold Norton Primary School

St Stephens Road, Cold Norton, Chelmsford, CM3 6JE

Inspection dates 20–21 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- All pupils make outstanding progress. They learn well in all subjects and do much better than their peers nationally.
- The school promotes an enjoyment of reading and pupils read widely.
- Since the last inspection the gap between reading and writing has closed and pupils achieve well above the national average.
- Reading, writing and numeracy skills are used confidently by pupils throughout the school.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding and children make accelerated progress from their starting points, especially in language and communication.
- Teaching and learning are outstanding across the school. Teachers set high targets for their pupils so that pupils know how to improve their work. Teachers plan their lessons thoroughly and set work at the right level.
- Pupils really enjoy being at school and are given excellent opportunities to be involved in a variety of clubs and activities. They are well cared for and benefit from a calm and nurturing environment.
- Pupils' outstanding behaviour contributes to the exceptionally good learning atmosphere.
- The excellent curriculum contributes to the mature and sensitive spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils.
- The two headteachers are very effective and inspirational leaders and are supported by a committed and energetic staff. They share a wide range of expertise, which benefits the pupils and ensures that the school does very well.
- The governing body knows the school exceptionally well and shows outstanding support for the professional development of the teachers.
- There are too few opportunities for teachers to observe and benefit from the outstanding practice current in the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons, of which eight were joint observations with the senior leaders. In addition, the inspectors made other short visits to lessons and to learning areas.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, a member of the governing body, senior and middle managers and teaching staff.
- Inspectors took account of the six responses to the on line questionnaire (Parent View), a recent survey done with parents and spoke to parents as they brought pupils to school.
- The information from 13 staff questionnaires was taken into consideration.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' books and at a number of documents, including the school's own data and monitoring of how well pupils progress, planning documentation and records of behaviour, attendance, punctuality, as well as documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Mandy Snook, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Janev Mehmet-Christofides

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Cold Norton is a smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, including those supported at school action, school action plus and with a statement of special educational needs, is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is below the national average.
- At the time of the inspection the school had two headteachers, both of whom had been at the school for a number of years.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Extend the already outstanding teaching by sharing excellent practice.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Progress over the last three years has been significantly above the national average and the proportion of pupils achieving above the expected progress is well above national average. This consistently high level of achievement continues to be seen in lessons and in pupils' books.
- Almost all pupils achieve or exceed the nationally average in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6, even from very low starting points. This is exceptional progress. The excellent monitoring system shows that progress for current pupils continues to be outstanding.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage the outstanding teaching ensures that children's development and readiness for their next stage of education is exceptional. They make outstanding progress, especially in communication, language and literacy and do very well when linking sounds to letters.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs benefit from the excellent support provided by capable and caring teaching assistants. Small groups and one-to-one interventions effectively guide pupils to find solutions to mathematical problems and help to reinforce literacy skills.
- Scrutiny of pupils' books showed examples of exceptionally good extended writing in Key Stage 2, following a drama lesson on evacuees in the Second World War, and mature letter formation and use of vocabulary was seen in Key Stage 1. Exemplary practice in the delivery and application of literacy skills was seen in many lessons. The monitoring of literacy is well focused and is at the heart of every subject area.
- The school tracks pupils' progress robustly and analytically. Pupils' ability to achieve challenging targets is monitored closely and regularly. The very small number of pupils who benefit from pupil premium funding do exceptionally well at this school, attaining above the national average by the time they leave.
- Pupils read with confidence, good expression and have competent skills in making sense of what they are reading. They enjoy a wide range of books and their reading logs show them to be avid readers.
- Speaking and listening skills are well developed, with pupils able to explain their ideas and express themselves very clearly.
- Parents and staff unreservedly agree that the learning needs of the pupils are met and that they make exceptional progress.
- Pupils are extremely well prepared for their next stage of education. They are given opportunities to solve challenging problems and to learn new skills.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Pupils benefit from outstanding teaching, which is challenging for all ability levels. Higher ability pupils are extended and respond well to demanding tasks. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are ably supported to achieve their targets.
- Teachers have excellent subject knowledge, which they use to set clear objectives and to

plan stimulating activities. Pupils make accelerated progress, which was demonstrated in an exciting mathematics lessons in Year 6, where all pupils were investigating the properties of trapeziums.

- Teachers plan their lessons in impressive detail using creative ideas that link together across the subject areas. They change the details of lessons to meet the needs of their pupils and judge what worked well and what needed to change to make the lessons even better.
- Pupils' responses in lessons show excellent skills and knowledge in literacy and mathematics that have been learnt over time. They are also able to indicate if they managed their work well or if they need further help in order to make progress. Pupils are encouraged to check each other's work as well as their own, to help each other learn better.
- Teachers always check on how well pupils understand their work during lessons and use skilful questioning to see what they understand, what they already know and to encourage pupils to use their excellent thinking skills. This results in pupils making very rapid progress.
- Observation of lessons over time by senior leaders indicates that the pupils benefit from consistently good and outstanding teaching.
- The school's wealth of excellent resources makes learning exciting, practical and memorable, resulting in pupils learning exceptionally well across all subjects.
- Pupils say that learning is fun and that they do not like to be away from school in case they miss out on their lesson time. They especially like the many opportunities they get to learn in the extensive school grounds and in the outside classroom.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Behaviour is outstanding both in and out of lessons. Pupils have an extremely positive attitude to learning, which promotes excellent engagement, confidence and independence. They behave impeccably in all group situations, whether in intervention groups or in whole-school assembly.
 - Pupils listen well to each other and help each other to learn and to solve problems. They work very well in groups, allocating responsibility roles and sharing ideas.
 - Incident logs reveal no recorded behaviour problems, bullying or racist incidents in the last year. Pupils have a clear understanding of different types of bullying and they receive excellent quality guidance on confronting cyber-bullying.
 - Pupils show the utmost respect for their teachers and other adults. Their manners and courtesy are exemplary. They show a caring and considerate respect for each other and say that 'no one ever hurts us or calls us names'. They love being at the school and describe it as 'the best school in the world'!
 - Conduct during break and lunchtimes, and to and from school, is orderly, happy and well managed.
 - Pupils said that they felt safe in school, and their parents and teachers overwhelmingly agree.
 - Attendance rates are above the national average and pupils are always punctual to school.
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The leadership and management are outstanding

- The school is led exceptionally well, with the senior leadership team demonstrating an exemplary work ethic and modelling professional standards in their expectations of excellence. Some staff say, 'The headteachers lead by example...we are a united team and we all work very hard.'
 - Regular and rigorous checking on the quality of lessons, followed by informative feedback, promotes outstanding teaching and professional development. Performance management is used highly effectively as a tool to bring about further improvement. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and continues to develop.
 - Teachers benefit from high-quality training and development and trainee teachers have particularly positive experiences which enable them to become outstanding teachers. The excellent quality of teaching in the school is not currently shared enough and used to ensure consistently outstanding practice in all teachers.
 - The leadership team has successfully adapted the curriculum in order to meet the needs of all pupils and to maximise their achievement. It is creative and develops excellent thinking and learning skills across all subjects. It is enriched with visits to places of interest and with innovative activities, both in the classroom and in the extensive school grounds. The pupils especially enjoy their residential trips, which incorporate excellent opportunities for learning and independence
 - Self-evaluation is accurate and challenges the school to constantly improve through well-organised action plans. Data tracking is used very effectively to check and improve how well pupils are doing.
 - The school has a very strong network of support from enthusiastic parents and committed governors and staff members.
 - The thematic approach to learning encourages an empathetic understanding of cultures and history, contributing to the school's promotion of outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is reflected in the pupils' ability to be self-reflective and kind, leading to a cohesive and close school community.
 - The school is inclusive and provides exceptional and intensive support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
 - The local authority provides very light touch support for this outstanding school.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - is pro-active and positively supports the school and its development
 - provides strategic direction and ensures a secure financial base for the school
 - visits every term, where governors engage with pupils in the classrooms and during lunchtime
 - holds the senior leaders to account and scrutinises all aspects of the school's performance
 - ensures that all statutory requirements are met, including those relating to the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils.
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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

Unique reference number	114904
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	403248

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	157
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Glen Symons
Headteacher	Patricia Dowsing and Lois Ashforth
Date of previous school inspection	16 June 2008
Telephone number	01621 827086
Fax number	01621 829561
Email address	admin@coldnorton.essex.sch.uk

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