

# Clifford Primary School

Clifford, Hereford, HR3 5HA

**Inspection dates** 10–11 October 2012

<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.

- The majority of pupils make good progress and learn well in many subjects.
- Progress has improved since the previous inspection, and attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is now above average.
- Children achieve well in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They grow in confidence so they are well prepared for later years.
- Teaching and learning are good across the school. Teaching is occasionally outstanding.
- Teachers convey warmth and high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour, and provide well-planned, interesting lessons that enable pupils to learn well.
- Pupils have pride in their school, enjoy lessons and know their views are valued. They feel safe because they place great trust in staff and respond well to the supportive atmosphere.
- The headteacher leads the school purposefully and is fully supported by staff.
- Leaders and managers make very good use of the expertise available through partnerships with other local schools to bring about improvements.
- The well-informed governing body keeps a close eye on the school's performance and holds it to account effectively.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In some lessons, teachers talk to the whole class for too long so pupils begin to lose concentration and progress is slowed.
- In some lessons, pupils do not have enough opportunities to talk to each other as 'talking partners' or in small groups to develop their own ideas and reinforce their learning.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed all teachers and seven lessons, two of which were observed with the headteacher. Additionally, a registration period, a playtime and one lunchtime session were observed.
- Meetings were held with staff, the Chair of Governors and another governor, a representative of the local authority, and a group of pupils.
- The inspector heard individual pupils read aloud.
- The inspector took account of 23 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent view) and spoke informally to parents and carers collecting their children from school.
- The inspector observed the school's work, and examined various documents, including the school's data on pupil's present progress, documents relating to safeguarding, records concerning behaviour and attendance, and planning and monitoring documents.

## Inspection team

Michael Farrell, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This rural school is smaller than the average primary school, and year groups are sometimes very small.
- The number of pupils in the school has increased since the previous inspection.
- No pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is very small compared with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is much smaller than the national average.
- The proportion who are supported through school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs is above average. Their needs include difficulties with reading and various medical conditions.
- Pupils are taught in four groups: Reception; Years 1 and 2; Years 3 and 4; and Years 5 and 6.
- The school has informal partnerships with other local schools.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Ensure that at the beginning of lessons, the teacher does not talk to the whole class for too long, especially in Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to be 'talking partners' and to talk in small groups, so they reinforce their learning and develop their own ideas.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- The levels at which children enter reception class vary from below to in line with expectations for their age, but all children subsequently make good progress because learning is so well planned. For example, Reception children particularly enjoyed a topic session where they created special places inside and outside the classroom. Their language and social and emotional development were especially strongly encouraged by this activity.
- Standards at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 also represent good progress in relation to pupils' starting points. In 2011 the Year 6 results in English and mathematics were above average, having risen from average for these pupils at the end of Key Stage 1. In 2012 they rose to average from below average at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils' current work shows that standards are again above average.
- All groups of pupils make good progress in reading, writing, communication and mathematics. Younger pupils enjoyed a lesson on shape poetry and achieved well because tasks were matched closely to their different abilities. Older pupils in a mathematics lesson achieved well because they were motivated by practical measuring tasks outside the classroom.
- A high proportion of pupils learn to play musical instruments, some achieving grade examinations in piano and guitar. They progress well in physical education, doing well in school tournaments. More-able pupils make good progress because their interests and talents are recognised and celebrated.
- Pupils read with interest and enthusiasm. They tackle new words confidently, using suitable strategies such as sounding letters and letter groups and using picture clues. Parents support the school's efforts well through reading at home. Good teaching of phonics (the sounds letters make) contributes strongly to pupils' good progress.
- The school is especially effective in ensuring smooth transitions as pupils move between year groups and when they enter secondary school.
- Pupils supported at school action or school action plus, and those with a statement of special educational needs, make good progress. Individual pupils, including those whose circumstances make them particularly vulnerable, sometimes make outstanding progress. This is because of well-considered individual and small group support and guidance, and teachers' high expectations of what all pupils are capable of in lessons.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching in most subjects, including English and mathematics, is good and sometimes outstanding. Reading, writing and communication are taught well, including through well-structured phonics teaching. Because the teachers choose activities with care, pupils' enjoyment levels are high. This was illustrated in a mental mathematics lesson when older pupils showed pleasure after completing a challenging calculation.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' progress and behaviour. Behaviour and discipline are confidently managed and pupils respond well to praise and guidance. Lessons have a positive atmosphere in which pupils are encouraged well and grow in confidence. In the Reception Year

this enables children to transfer smoothly from lively activities such as singing and acting a Spanish song to small group activities such as exploring the simple programming of the movements of a robotic creature on a treasure map grid.

- Lessons are well planned and teachers use a mixture of open and closed questions to search out what pupils do and do not know, and then amend lessons accordingly. In a lesson for younger pupils, following up a story about a witch, the teacher's skilful questioning extended pupils' understanding and expression well. Teaching assistants are managed effectively so that they contribute well to pupils' progress and well-being.
- Marking is thorough and up to date, and includes regular and relevant references to pupils' targets. This enables pupils to know what they need to improve and how to do so. Suitable homework is set regularly and strongly supported by parents.
- Sometimes the beginning sections of lessons, when the teacher speaks to the whole class, are too long and pupils' concentration begins to waver. Occasionally pupils are not given enough opportunity to talk to each other, either as partners or in small groups, to reinforce learning and develop their own ideas.
- Pupils and parents correctly regard teaching as good. Pupils readily identify a range of lessons in which they do well and that they enjoy. They know their learning targets and the steps they must take to get better because the school regularly reinforces their importance. Because staff know pupils very well, individual interests are nurtured and individual needs are met so that achievement is encouraged and valued.

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

- Behaviour is good in lessons because it is well managed and pupils enjoy their learning. It is also good around school, including at break times and lunch, because the pupils embrace the school's high expectations of conduct. Sometimes behaviour is excellent.
- Pupils' attitudes to school and to learning are very positive. As one said, 'I like to learn'. Pupils of all ages behave with courtesy and consideration for others. There are individual examples of very good improvements in behaviour. Close links with the local community and the enjoyment of sporting competitions help to further the supportive atmosphere.
- Pupils are aware of different types of bullying, including name calling. They helped to write the school's bullying policy and made an anti-bullying video on its web site. They recognise that bullying is very rare in the school, but are confident that if any should occur it would be dealt with quickly and effectively by staff.
- Pupils feel safe. They can give examples of how to keep safe, for example when activities involve water safety and the safe use of the internet. Parents and carers, too, are confident about their children's safety and well-being.
- Attendance is above average and the school works hard to maintain it at high levels. Absences are largely related to medical reasons and to the inaccessibility of the school in very severe weather conditions. Punctuality to lessons is excellent.

**The leadership and management are good**

- Leaders, managers and governors are ambitious for their pupils and convey high expectations. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and the resulting targets for improvement are realistic and challenging. A clear policy encourages good progress in literacy, and includes details of judicious use of individual support and guidance.
- Where pupils and groups of pupils could be doing better, this is identified and effective action taken. The school promotes equality of opportunity well and works hard to prevent discrimination in any form.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements. Adults are conscientiously 'vetted'. Risks for different activities and trips out of school are realistically assessed and suitable steps taken to reduce them.
- The headteacher and coordinators regularly and accurately check pupils' progress and the quality of teaching. The management of staff performance is effective, because the results of checks are used well to inform training needs and give teachers opportunities to learn from good practice within the school and beyond.
- Teaching programmes meet pupils' needs well. They promote good progress by drawing together interesting and relevant activities to provide strong personal, health and citizenship education. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted strongly through religious education and special weeks on, for example, Africa and Japan, and story telling.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - is productively involved in checking and improving teaching
  - is aware of the effective use and impact of funding such as the pupil premium on developing pupils' achievement
  - evaluates the school's performance, including pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching, accurately and uses governors' wide-ranging interests and skills well to hold the school to account
  - reflects the high level of trust and respect between governors and the headteacher and staff so that discussions are open and constructive, helping to secure improvements.
- The school engages with parents very well, as indicated by the inspectors' informal discussions with parents and very positive responses to parent questionnaires (Parent View).
- The local authority provides good support through annual school evaluation visits and occasional support requested by the school, such as advice on educating children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Extensive partnerships enable pupils to benefit from opportunities the school alone could not provide. Links with other schools, businesses and services, including specialised therapists to identify and support disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, are carefully nurtured.
- Since the previous inspection pupils' achievement, Early Years Foundation Stage provision and governance have all improved. This, together with accurate self-evaluation and strong ambition, indicates a good capacity to improve further.

## 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>	116668
<b>Local authority</b>	Herefordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	401612

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>	77
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Kate Thomas
<b>Headteacher</b>	Marie Thomas
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 October 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01497 831202
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