

The Bishops' Church of England and Roman Catholic Primary School

Beardsley Drive, North Springfield, Chelmsford, CM1 6ZQ

Inspection dates 17–18 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
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

- Teaching is good. Teachers know their pupils as individuals, and give them tasks that they enjoy and which lead to good progress.
- Pupils are polite to one another and to adults in the school. They behave well in lessons and are successful learners.
- Pupils have many opportunities to extend their creativity. They all learn to play a musical instrument, and produce excellent artwork.
- Pupils who are at risk of not doing well make good progress because they receive good quality extra help as required.
- Additional government support (the pupil premium) is used well.
- Pupils practise their reading in the book club, which takes place before school. Reading standards are now consistently above average.
- Pupils enjoy taking responsibility, and take great pride in what they do.
- Parents appreciate what the school does for their children, especially in helping them to grow into confident young people who relate well to others.
- The school is very well led and has good capacity to improve.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally the work set for some pupils lacks sufficient challenge.
- Not all teachers do enough to help pupils to work independently or in small groups or to take responsibility for their own learning.
- Teachers do not always give enough time for pupils to follow up the advice they give about how they can improve their work.
- Some lessons are in need of improvement because pupils become restless when they are asked to sit still for too long listening to instructions.

Information about this inspection

- The school was contacted at noon on the day before the inspection. Inspectors observed 25 lessons or parts of lessons. Inspectors saw every teacher at work on at least one occasion and conducted joint observations with senior staff. They heard pupils read, and looked at their books.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils and staff, and members of the governing body; they also held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority. They took into account the views of 61 parents who completed the Ofsted on-line survey (Parent View) and met with 21 parents and guardians of pupils when they brought their children to school in the morning. They also took into account the responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents provided by the school, including data showing tracking of pupils' progress, policies, and minutes of meetings. They also examined the school's records relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

David Lewis, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Lynn Lowery

Additional Inspector

Natasha Campbell

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average primary school. The number of pupils in each year group varies considerably as do the proportions of boys and girls because about one in five pupils joins or leaves the school at other than the normal time. Three quarters of the pupils are White British, with any other White background and Black African the largest other groupings; the proportion who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- The percentage known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of disabled pupils and pupils who have special educational needs is below average.
- There is a very small number of pupils looked after by the local authority, and about one pupil in eight, who is at risk of not doing well, receive additional support funded by the pupil premium.
- The school provides care between 3.00 pm and 6.00 pm Monday to Friday for pupils registered with the *Little Fingers* after-school club.
- The School is a member of the Chelmsford Consortium of Schools, and has received a full International Schools Award.
- The school meets the current standards expected by the government (floor targets) that set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of consistently good or better teaching by
 - using the information from the new progress tracking system to plan work that is always at the right level of challenge for all pupils
 - extending appropriate opportunities for pupils to work on their own or in groups
 - making sure that pupils have time to respond to written comments made about their work
 - ensure all teachers achieve a balance between giving instruction and enabling pupils opportunities to work independently
 - sharing more widely the very best practice in teaching that leads to outstanding learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children typically start in the reception class with skills and knowledge in line with the levels expected for their age. Boys and girls make good progress in Years 1 to 6 because they are well taught.
- Standards have risen over the last three years, especially in reading, and standards in year 6 are above those seen nationally. Standards in mathematics are improving rapidly and the number of pupils reaching the highest level, level 6, is both high and rising.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy the book club which is supporting their better reading, and love the challenges set in mathematics which are helping increasing numbers to achieve the highest levels.
- Pupils of all abilities believe that they learn well and make good progress. Over 90 per cent of parents are pleased with their children's progress.
- Individual support for those who have statements of special educational need is good, and the school has some impressive successes in helping them to reach national standards.
- Pupils who are learning to speak English are well-supported and make good progress from their starting points.
- Government support through the pupil premium has enabled the school to provide an unusually broad curriculum including French, performing arts, and many musical activities. This approach supports the school's efforts to promote equal opportunities and to enhance the achievement of all groups of pupils.

The quality of teaching is good

- Inspectors judged teaching and learning in most lessons to be good. A few were outstanding, but the school has yet to make use of the best expertise available to increase the number of outstanding lessons.
- In the very best lessons, pupils work in groups to bounce ideas off one another when solving problems and in so doing so provide support for one another. In these lessons strong use of visual materials, varied activities that capture pupils' imagination, and opportunities to discuss ideas in depth, all contributed to an excellent learning experience and great enjoyment.
- Pupils' contributions are used well in most lessons. Carpet time is often used as a trigger for discussion, though sometimes for too long. In the better lessons, for example in Year 5, pupils discussed ideas at a high level in a lesson on press interview techniques in an historical context, and in Year 6 their discussions about number showed that they understood exactly how mathematicians apply their knowledge to solve complex problems.
- In the reception classes, children generally learn well because lessons are well planned and provide opportunities for activities to be chosen by children. Activities are well linked to their personal learning journeys. Support staff are usually well deployed but the most able children

are not always challenged sufficiently.

- Disabled children and those in need of extra help play a full part in all lessons and learn successfully because work is tailor made to their needs. Where necessary, they have individual help from a teaching assistant, and all teachers make sure their contributions are valued.
- Pupils for whom English is not their first language are supported well in the early stages of learning English, and as a result build confident language skills. The excellent support they get enables them to do as well as their class-mates.
- Government support through the pupil premium makes a big contribution to the school's ability to provide artistic and creative activities, and by doing so enhances pupils' confidence and self-esteem. For example, learning a stringed instrument and participation in the choir help pupils to develop skills that support their learning in other subjects such as English and mathematics.
- Discussion with pupils shows that they believe that they are well taught, and learn well. They confirm that their teachers mark their work regularly but they do not always have time to respond to written comments.

The behaviour and safety of pupils is good

- Attendance is above average, showing that the school's efforts to improve attendance are effective. Persistent absence is rare.
- Parents greatly value the work of the school. As one said in a letter to the school: 'Never underestimate the value of what you do, and the lifelong impact this has on the young people who pass through your care.'
- Behaviour around the school is excellent, and pupils are unfailingly polite to one another, and to adults. In lessons they are totally engaged with what they are doing, though in protracted carpet time sessions they can become a little restless. All, however, try to do well and have a real pride in their school.
- The school's systems for managing behaviour are clearly defined and themselves build on pupils' sense of responsibility. School records are meticulously kept. Behaviour incidents are rare and are dealt with effectively and consistently by the school. There are few instances of bullying.
- The governors, senior staff and pupils work with tremendous unity of purpose to ensure that pupils are safe, and to create an ethos of care and consideration for others, which contributes greatly to the calm and well-ordered environment around the school.
- Pupils have clear social and moral views of what is right and wrong and are proud of their community.
- Parents in particular have the highest praise for the care that pupils have for one another and their delight in taking on responsibility, for example through the work of the school council, and the influence that the school's ethos has had as their children mature into responsible young people.
- Pupils enjoy the opportunities provided to explore and find things out for themselves, for example when looking at a variety of bridge structures. However, sometimes over-directed

teaching dampens their curiosity and creativity.

The leadership and management is good

- Since the appointment of the current headteacher just before the last inspection, the governors, headteacher and staff have worked together relentlessly to help all pupils to do better, and to create a vibrant and harmonious environment in which pupils understand the joy of learning.
- The school now has an effective system for comparing pupils' progress with national standards, and tracking their achievements. This is helping to bring about the good progress seen throughout the school, although it has yet to be used to its full potential by all teachers.
- The appointment of a teacher with responsibility for managing the school's work with pupils with special needs and/or disabilities has played a big part in helping children who find school difficult to become fully involved in activities such as mime and dance where all pupils can work together as equals. Parents especially appreciate the 'awe-inspiring opportunities' provided for their children to experience at the Albert Hall, the O2 arena and more locally.
- Government support through the pupil premium has enabled the school to provide extra support to those most at risk of not making progress, and to ensure that all pupils have access to the wide range of opportunities the school provides.
- The school provides an unusually broad curriculum including French, performing arts, and many musical activities all of which support the school's efforts to promote equal opportunities and enhance the achievement of all its pupils.
- The checking of teaching, and how well pupils learn as a result, is accurate and effective. The work of teachers and support staff is observed regularly, and the information collected during performance management is used to identify how professional development can best be used to help teachers to improve and is reflected in the appropriate salary structure.
- The development of pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural skills is outstanding and the extensive range of sporting and other clubs organised by the school contributes strongly to this.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are effective in challenging the headteacher about what needs to be done to improve learning even further. They know the staff well, and contribute to the performance management of the headteacher. They visit frequently to see the work of the school at first hand. Governors work closely with the business manager to ensure that the school's finances are efficiently managed. The school meets the requirements for safeguarding of children.

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	115204
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	401504

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	335
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Marian Uzzell
Headteacher	Greg Waters
Date of previous school inspection	5 July 2010
Telephone number	01245 460107
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