

Bentfield Primary School

Rainsford Road, Stansted Mountfitchet, Stansted, CM24 8DX

Inspection dates 20–21 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- Children in the Nursery and Reception make good progress from the moment they start school and are well prepared for Year 1.
- All pupils make good progress. Results at the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics are higher than the national averages.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are given the support they need to make good progress.
- Teaching is good with some outstanding. There are good relationships between pupils and teachers, who have high expectations of the pupils.
- Pupils enjoy being at school and their attendance is above average. They behave well, in and out of lessons.
- The head-teacher is ably supported by a strong team of leaders who work well together.
- The governing body and senior leaders have a clear vision for improvement in the school and are focused well on ensuring all pupils make better progress in every year group. They have worked relentlessly to ensure the teaching is of, at least, a good quality.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils are not always given enough opportunities to learn without the help of the teacher and so they do not make as much progress as they could, especially in their writing.
- Occasionally, teachers do not make sure that lessons proceed briskly or that work is demanding enough for the more-able pupils, whose progress, consequently, slows.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to check each other's work and so understand how to improve their own work.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 12 lessons. In addition, the inspectors made a number of short visits to other lessons and sampled pupils' work.
- Meetings were held with: groups of pupils, both formally and informally, the headteacher, teachers, teaching assistants, members of the governing body, a local authority adviser and the school's improvement adviser.
- The inspectors also considered the views expressed in 25 questionnaires returned by school staff, along with the 27 responses submitted by parents and carers to the online Parent View survey.
- Inspectors scrutinised a variety of school documents, including the school's self-evaluation, the school development plans, behavioural records, and documents relating to the management of teachers' performance.

Inspection team

Margaret Lewis, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Keith Brown

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school.
- It serves the village where it is based and surrounding villages.
- A below-average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils in local authority care, those known to be eligible for free school meals and those with a parent in the armed services.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. Few pupils have minority ethnic heritages.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is below average, but the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is about twice the national average.
- The governing body manages specialist resource provision for pupils with severe learning difficulties and profound and multiple learning difficulties. The school is a local authority base for 15 pupils with complex health, physical, developmental and learning needs.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Pupils are educated onsite. There is no alternative provision offsite.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make more teaching and learning outstanding by:
 - ensuring learning always runs at a brisk pace and more-able pupils get demanding work in every lesson
 - giving pupils more opportunities to learn actively and independently, especially in written work
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to check each other's work, so that they gain a better understanding of how to improve their own work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The ability of pupils on entry to the school varies widely from year to year. However, many children start at the school with knowledge and skills below those that are typical nationally. Good progress is made in the Nursery and Reception Years. When children enter Year 1, they are working confidently in all areas of learning.
- Pupils make good progress throughout Key Stage 1 and 2. By the end of Year 6, pupils' results in the national English and mathematical tests are above average.
- Pupils make a good start to their reading in the younger classes because the sounds that letters make (phonics) are taught well and pupils are ahead by the end of year 1. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have effective, well planned, daily guided reading sessions. They have developed good skills for reading new and difficult words because they are well supported by teachers and other staff. Older pupils read regularly and with enjoyment.
- To tackle any underachievement in mathematics, the school makes effective use of a national system to help pupils struggling with this subject. Pupils who are falling behind are quickly identified and given one-to-one tuition and, as a result, they make good progress. The success of this process has led to the school's expertise being bought in by other schools.
- Achievement in other subjects and skills is good. Although pupils make good progress in writing, there are too few opportunities for the more-able to work independently in developing their written skills. However, pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills are often used independently. For example, Year 2 pupils found information about the Great Fire of London on the internet, and then used software successfully to paint pictures of the fire.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well. They receive well-judged help, as needed, from teachers and teaching assistants, which ensures their rate of progress is as good as that of other pupils.
- The pupils in the specialist resourced provision receive knowledgeable and sharply-focused help from both teachers and teaching assistants. Work set is matched closely to the pupils' ability levels. They are effectively integrated, wherever possible, with the rest of the school's classes and learn successfully. Consequently, they learn well and make good progress.
- The school gives special support to the pupils eligible for the pupil premium. Help, such as one-to-one tuition, additional reading, mathematics teaching time, and funding for educational visits are becoming more focused and effective in overcoming the barriers these pupils face in their learning. As a result, any gap between these pupils' attainment and progress and that of their peers closes rapidly.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good with some outstanding. Teachers have strong subject knowledge and explain clearly what they want pupils to do. They create a positive climate in the classroom, where pupils share in each other's success and are not afraid to voice their opinions.

- Although teachers plan learning effectively, occasionally, they do not include opportunities for pupils to learn actively and independently – especially in writing tasks. In a few lessons seen, teaching did not demand enough of the pupils and the pace of learning was not fast enough, particularly for the more-able pupils.
- Teachers mark pupils' work thoroughly. They praise pupils' high-quality work appropriately and give clear directions on how pupils can improve. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to learn from each other by checking each other's work more regularly in lessons, so that they can understand better how to improve their own work.
- In the best lessons, teachers set pupils demanding work well matched to their abilities. They use questioning well to check pupils' understanding. For example in a Nursery lesson, the teacher's questioning ensured that the children had a good grasp of the Hindu story of *Rama and Sita*.
- Teachers make good use of data which show pupils' attainment and progress over time so as to measure pupils' current rates of progress. This practice enables teachers to identify pupils who are falling behind and to set them targets to aim for which will fully stretch their thinking and effort.
- Work is carefully modified for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs outside the specialist resourced provision and, consequently, they make good progress.
- Teaching in the specialist resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs is consistently good. Teachers involve teaching assistants closely in lesson planning and the tasks set are highly effective in accelerating these pupils' progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils have positive attitudes towards learning. The good behaviour in the school contributes to the calm, purposeful atmosphere. Pupils are confident and polite in conversation with staff and visiting adults.
- Parents and carers are very positive about behaviour in the school. Pupils are aware of possible discrimination against pupils who may be different. They are considerate of the needs of pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs and include them in all aspects of school life.
- Pupils know about different types of bullying, including cyber bullying and prejudice-based bullying and know what to do if it occurs. Pupils say bullying is very rare but if there are any incidents, they are dealt with quickly and effectively. The school carefully records these very rare occurrences and the action taken.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and parents and carers agree. It provides a safe and secure environment that is valued and appreciated by all pupils, including those supported by the specialist resourced provision. Pupils particularly enjoy using the safe 'forest' learning area.
- Older pupils are keen to take on extra responsibilities and they take these very seriously. They enjoy being sports leaders and act as 'buddies' at lunchtime.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and senior leaders provide strong leadership. They have high aspirations and a clear vision for the future of the school. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and recognises strengths and areas for improvement. The actions of all staff and the governing body are successfully focused on improving pupils' achievement through good teaching.
- The school development plan sets out clear strategies for reaching ambitious improvement targets. Careful tracking of the progress of groups and individual pupils contributes to good educational provision, ensures equal opportunity for all and combats discrimination.
- Leaders' close checking on teaching quality has identified areas where individual teachers have weaknesses. Strong support and effective training are provided to secure improvements in teaching. There is now a sound base of outstanding teaching which is shared more widely across the school.
- Teachers are held accountable for the progress of their pupils and for the subject areas they lead. This approach is reflected in setting targets for teachers to improve their performance, where discretionary pay awards are, and have to be, earned.
- The specialist resourced provision for pupils with disabilities and special educational needs is well led. Well-directed help enables these pupils to make sustained progress and their achievement is good.
- The range of subjects and activities that pupils receive is well matched to their learning needs and helps to secure their positive engagement and good achievement. However, opportunities for the more-able pupils to write without close direction from the teacher are too limited. Pupils say they enjoy the regular 'theme' days and recently pupils learned a lot about French customs, food and clothing on a 'France Day'. The school offers a wide range of art, dance, music and sports activities which promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- The local authority plays a helpful role in supporting senior and subject leaders, as well as providing useful governor training. It currently provides the school with 'light touch' support because pupils make good progress.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body holds leaders to account for the performance of the school. The governors have a good awareness of the quality of teaching. They receive precise analyses of pupils' progress, which give them a deep insight into the school's strengths and weaknesses and enable them to compare its performance to that of other schools nationally. The governing body works well with senior staff to evaluate the school's performance and to set improvement priorities. The governors have an effective oversight of the management of finance and resources and ensure that the salary progression of staff is justified. They ensure that additional funding by the pupil premium is focused appropriately to improve the achievement of the particular pupils who are entitled to it. Consequently, any gap between these pupils' attainment and that of others closes quickly. Governors rigorously check safeguarding practice. As a result, safeguarding procedures meet current legal requirements.

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	114978
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	400093

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	239
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Robert Coop
Headteacher	Cathie Bonich
Date of previous school inspection	16 November 2010
Telephone number	01279 813 626
Fax number	01279 816 696
Email address	admin@bentfield.essex.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: 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.



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 and as part of the inspection.

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, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: 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.

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
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012

