

Orsett Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

School Lane, Orsett, Grays, RM16 3JR

Inspection dates 21–22 November 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		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Governors and school leaders have a very clear vision and work relentlessly to improve the school. As a result, pupils make rapid progress and achieve well.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good. Teachers provide interesting lessons and train pupils to be responsible in their learning, particularly in checking their own work and that of their classmates.
- School leaders ensure that parents and carers are involved in their children's education. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly pleased with what has been achieved in the past two years since the current headteacher was appointed.
- The process by which school leaders develop and check how well teachers make progress in their work is exemplary. This drives the improvement in teaching.
- Pupils enjoy learning and are keen to improve because they are able to choose some of the topics they study.
- Pupils' behaviour across the school is excellent. They are polite, mature and feel safe and happy in school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although teaching is consistently good, it is not yet outstanding. Teachers do not always provide inspirational teaching.
- Pupils do not make exceptional progress in all lessons or have opportunities to become independent in their learning.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons, of which four were jointly seen with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. In addition, the inspection team made a number of shorter visits to lessons to focus on specific aspects, such as links to pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and how well teachers check pupils’ ongoing learning. Inspectors listened to pupils read and visited an assembly.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, the headteacher, senior and subject leaders and members of the governing body. A phone call discussion was held with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 40 responses to the Parent View online questionnaire. A member of the inspection team also spoke to parents and carers while they were bringing their children to school.
- The inspection team observed the school’s work and scrutinised a number of documents, including school improvement plans, data on pupils’ current progress, pupils’ written work, minutes of governing body meetings and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Janev Mehmet-Christofides, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Kelly Stock	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school.
- A low proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and looked after children).
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported at school action is above the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is low.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage but the rest are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion learning English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress.
- A subject survey by Ofsted in November 2011 judged that provision for design and technology was satisfactory.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2010.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by:
 - continuing to provide focused observations of lessons and training for teachers so that they develop a clearer understanding of what outstanding teaching and learning look like
 - developing a wider range of opportunities for pupils to become more independent in their learning
 - building more inspirational learning opportunities into the daily timetable for pupils.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the school with attainment that is below national expectations for their age. They are tested early on to check what they can do well and what they need to improve. With clearly defined support and well-planned teaching, progress is consistently good across all year groups and among pupils with differing needs.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children are quickly introduced to routines and begin to develop their independence. They choose activities for themselves and play well together. They are provided with daily musical activities that enable them to practise their skills of movement and maintaining balance. This contributes to their ability to write and draw accurately.
- All pupils make good progress and there has been a rise in standards since the last inspection. At the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment in 2012 was significantly above average overall and in mathematics. At the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment has been at least average and, in 2012, the school's results were above average. Pupils currently in Years 5 and 6 are working at a higher level than that expected for their age.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress as a result of individual support provided by trained teaching assistants. This helps them to improve their reading, writing and mathematical skills. Similarly, pupils who are new to speaking English receive specialised lessons to improve their reading and speaking skills.
- In lessons, pupils achieve well. They are interested in what they learn and are challenged to improve by teachers and teaching assistants, who provide fun activities which help them to make good progress.
- The pupil premium funding is used to support a small number of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals by providing reading support and opportunities to develop their social skills through excursions. This has had a positive impact on these pupils' self-esteem and, particularly, on their literacy skills.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching meets the needs of all pupils well, ranging from disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs to pupils with particular gifts and talents. As a result, teaching is often outstanding and only occasionally less than good.
- Teachers use clear language, and expectations for learning are communicated at the start of every lesson. Behaviour management is exceptionally good and work is always planned so that all pupils are provided with tasks appropriate to their ability.
- Teachers use their teaching assistants effectively. For example, during a lesson in a Reception class, the teacher agreed with the teaching assistants on a number of questions they would use as key questions to practise children's thinking skills. The repetition of these questions during different activities reinforced children's good learning.
- Teachers know what levels pupils are working at, and their planning, questioning, and activities provide challenge for pupils. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils were set the task of marking each other's literacy tasks. Pupils successfully used techniques modelled by their teacher to praise and advise

each other on their writing skills. This challenged them to think about what needed to be done to improve for next time.

- Teachers use information and communication technology in a creative way, particularly with the themed subjects they teach in the afternoons. For example, when learning about superheroes, a theme chosen by Years 3 and 4, pupils used photography to illustrate their own work on superheroes.
- Teachers provide pupils with a clear understanding of how well they are doing and marking in pupils' books is of a consistently high quality.
- Subjects such as science and geography are sometimes taught in a very inspirational way which makes learning memorable for pupils. For example, a visiting 'mad scientist' involved pupils, parents and carers in outdoor scientific activities as part of the themed curriculum.
- There are not enough memorable and inspirational activities built into the daily timetable for all pupils in order to provide consistently high-quality, outstanding learning. Teachers do not allow pupils to make enough choices about their learning through thinking for themselves and solving problems independently.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of all pupils is excellent, both in lessons and around the school. They are polite, positive and confident to speak and express their views. All pupils are always excited to learn, and participate well in lessons.
- Pupils are confident in school, and are aware of how to keep safe. They can talk about e-safety and actively take part in keeping one another free from bullying. For example, pupils in Year 5 are assigned as friendship buddies in the playground to all. Pupils feel safe and speak about their learning experiences with pride.
- Throughout the school, pupils are mature and responsible. They take on leadership roles, such as playground leaders and choir leaders, as well as being actively involved in making decisions around the school. For example, they contributed to decisions about signage for the outside area and helped to prepare for a 'Prospective Parents Open Day'.
- Pupils are considerate and reflective. Often, they take time out to write a prayer for someone in the prayer book that is held outside the school library, and they are caring to their teachers and their classmates. Pupils say there is no bullying in school and that all pupils get on exceptionally well with each other. There are no records of racist bullying or exclusions.
- The attendance rate is above the national average. Pupils are always punctual to lessons and to school. They enjoy coming to school and, on days when the school has been closed because of excessive snow, they have been keen to keep up with schoolwork using online activities through the school portal.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Senior leaders are dynamic and have galvanised staff, parents and carers in their drive to improve the school. They provide training for teachers, and check rigorously and supportively to ensure that their skills in teaching raise pupils' progress. As a result, almost all the teaching is at

least good compared with 2010 when only half was good.

- Systems for measuring the effectiveness of teaching and tracking pupils' progress are exemplary. Teachers are provided with clear targets to improve their teaching which link to pupils' progress and to the published national guidance in *Teachers' Professional Standards*.
- Effective planning and organisation of subjects reinforce good practise of pupils' skills such as calculation, investigation and communication. The effectiveness and rigour of teaching these skills is measured termly by senior leaders through a tracking document which highlights the skills teachers have taught effectively, and those which need more practice.
- Pupils gain a good understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues through studying two languages and learning about other countries and religions. They like choosing their topics and when they wanted to learn more about earthquakes, staff reconstructed a virtual town, which had been 'hit' by an earthquake. Pupils were inspired to find out more using their investigational skills.
- The local authority provides effective support for the school. For example, it has provided help with the teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and this has improved the quality of teaching in this area.
- Equal opportunities are promoted extremely well throughout the school. Discrimination is non-existent: all pupils are provided with opportunities to do well.
- The school has transformed the relationship it has with its parents and carers, having worked consistently hard to improve the dialogue and participation with them, and to raise a more positive profile of the school. Almost all parents and carers now feel that their children are safe, happy and learning well. Quotes from parents and carers describe the headteacher as 'amazing' and 'transformational'.
- The governance of the school:
 - Governors ensure that school leaders carry out their responsibilities effectively to improve teaching and raise achievement. They ensure that pupil premium funding is allocated for the best interest of the pupils concerned, and are involved in tracking the improvement of these pupils. The governing body shares its expertise to support the school, for example, by carrying out health and safety audits. Governors take part in whole-school training as well as specialised training provided for them by the local authority. Governors use data to understand how well the school is doing compared with similar schools nationally. They know how well teachers are performing because they visit lessons and scrutinise documentation provided by the headteacher, which highlights teachers' performance. They are closely involved with rewarding good teachers, and supporting those who may need to improve. The governing body has a clear understanding of its financial responsibilities, and has moved control of the budget onto a healthier footing. All governors are trained in safeguarding and the governing body ensures that requirements for safeguarding are met. Governors visit the school regularly and carry out audits to check its effectiveness. The Chair of the Governing Body has a very clear understanding of how well the school has improved over the past two years and is confident, as are all governors, that the school is a good one.

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	115171
Local authority	Thurrock
Inspection number	401498

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	209
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Christopher Coles
Headteacher	Ellalyn Godfrey
Date of previous school inspection	11 February 2010
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