

Chelmondiston Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Chelmondiston, Ipswich, IP9 1DT

Inspection dates 24–25 January 2013

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		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and achievement is good.
- The rate of pupils' progress is faster than for pupils nationally.
- Pupils known to be eligible for extra funds achieve well because of the good additional support they receive.
- Teaching is consistently good or better in almost all classes.
- The deputy headteacher has shown great skill in steering the school through a difficult period of uncertainty following the absence of the headteacher.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They take great pride in their school and support one another extremely well.
- The new headteacher has won the respect of the school community and successfully driven forward improvement in the short time she has been in post.
- The work of the governing body is outstanding. Governors have an excellent understanding of pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching because of their innovative approaches to checking the school's work.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Standards in writing are not as strong as they are in reading and mathematics because pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length.
- Work is not always set at the right level for pupils, especially in Years 4 and 5.
- Some pupils are unclear about what they must do to reach their individual targets in writing.
- There are some shortcomings in the management of special educational needs, particularly in measuring the impact of the support pupils receive.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 13 lessons or parts of lessons, several of which were joint observations with the deputy headteacher. Five teachers, a sports coach and most support staff, including higher-level teaching assistants, were seen working with the pupils.
- The inspector heard pupils read, attended two assemblies and, with the deputy headteacher, looked closely at examples of pupils' work.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of school documents, including development plans, policies, self-evaluation reports, monitoring files, safeguarding and curriculum materials, evidence of the school's partnership work and information for families.
- Meetings were held with pupils chosen at random. Discussions were held with the deputy headteacher, class teachers, the Chair of the Governing Body and other governors, a representative of the local authority and the improvement adviser.
- The inspector took account of the 50 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and spoke with several parents in the playground.

Inspection team

Nick Butt, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- A below-average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, those known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils with a parent in the armed forces.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for progress and standards in English and mathematics.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision for its pupils off-site.
- The headteacher took up her post in September 2012.
- At the time of the inspection, the headteacher was unwell and the deputy headteacher was running the school.
- From January 2013, the number of classes in the school reduced from six to five, with Year 2 pupils being moved to the former Year 1 and Year 3 classes to create mixed-age classes. Only Reception children and Year 6 pupils are taught in single-age classes.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in writing to match those in reading and mathematics by making sure that:
 - all pupils have the chance to write at length
 - work is always set at the right level for all pupils, especially in Years 4 and 5
 - all pupils know exactly what they have to do to reach their writing targets.
- Improve the management of special educational needs by:
 - measuring rigorously the impact of support for pupils who have special educational needs
 - checking the effectiveness of individual education plans and making sure that evaluations of pupils' progress against their targets are kept up to date.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- A successful focus on improving the sounds that letters make (phonics) has led to rapid progress in reading. As a result, the proportion of Year 1 pupils reaching or exceeding expected levels in last year's national reading check was above average.
- Standards by the end of Year 2 have been rising over recent years more steeply than nationally. In 2012, standards were above average in reading, writing and mathematics and an above-average proportion of pupils gained the higher levels of attainment.
- When children join the Reception class, they bring a wide range of skills and abilities that are generally in line with those expected. They make good progress because of imaginative activities that excite them and develop their early literacy and numeracy skills. Children were amazed by the 'hatching' of their 'dinosaur egg' after several days and this inspired them to write about what had happened.
- Pupils make good progress over time, and standards are above average by the end of Year 6. In 2012, the proportion of pupils meeting or exceeding nationally expected rates of progress was high, and compared very favourably with the national picture.
- There are minor variations between year groups, and the proportion of pupils reaching or exceeding expected standards is not quite as strong in writing as it is in reading and mathematics. This is because not all pupils are given sufficient time to practise their writing skills at length. In Years 4 and 5, the work set is not always demanding enough for pupils for them to do their very best.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive good individual support from teaching assistants which helps them to do as well as other pupils. However, not enough is done to check how well these pupils are doing as a discrete group, or to measure the impact of specific programmes on their performance, in order to speed up their progress even more.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium benefit from additional teacher-led one-to-one tuition and support in small groups. As a result, these pupils make good progress so that pupils known to be eligible for free school meals do much better than pupils in similar circumstances nationally and their attainment is above average.
- Pupils' speaking skills have improved considerably since the last inspection. Pupils are encouraged to share their views and discuss their learning through philosophy sessions, debates and sharing assemblies. Even younger pupils have the confidence to speak up in front of the whole school.

The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils are actively involved in their learning and enjoy sharing ideas in pairs, in groups or as a whole class. For example, Year 6 pupils discussed what skills they would use to create a high-quality presentation about how leaves make food for a plant (photosynthesis).
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage develops children's basic skills very well. For

example, children 'bought' their daily snack and had to say how much change they would expect back from a 10-pence coin. A particular strength of Reception is the way many of the activities are linked to the topic about dinosaurs and excite children to want to learn, for example in measuring the length of dinosaurs outside.

- All teachers share with pupils what they are learning, why they are learning it and how they can be successful. Teachers frequently involve pupils in this last element, encouraging them to think up their own ways of checking the success of a task. Good questioning means that teachers check what pupils understand and guide them into deeper thinking.
- Relationships are excellent across all classes. Pupils are very keen to learn and rise to any challenge they are given. As one pupil remarked, 'They teach you beyond your level and you want to push yourself harder.' While this is the case in almost all classes, including those that have recently received Year 2 pupils, in Years 4 and 5 it is not always clear to pupils how much is expected of them because they are often given the same work to do. For example, all pupils were asked to find out which numbers could be divided by two and five, when the task was too easy for many of them.
- Marking regularly celebrates pupils' achievements and sets them next steps in learning. While all pupils have 'I can' target books linked to the National Curriculum, the extent to which they understand what they have to do to improve, especially in writing, varies.
- Well-trained and experienced teaching assistants make a considerable difference to pupils' learning, especially when they are working with individuals or small groups, and they help these pupils to achieve well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary, both in class and around the school. The older pupils are very caring towards the younger ones, and friendly and welcoming to visitors.
 - Pupils have a love of learning, and take great pride in their work. They say they learn a lot and recall particularly memorable experiences, such as when they observed food decaying over a long period of time. As one pupil said, 'We were all a bit grossed out!'
 - Older pupils enjoy taking responsibility as house captains, librarians and members of a range of representative groups. Pupils sit on the 'Equalities committee' and have a say in making the school accessible and inclusive for all.
 - Pupils know all about keeping safe on the internet and how to deal with cyber-bullying. They are aware of different forms of bullying, but say there is none in school; a view supported by parents and staff.
 - A consistent approach to managing behaviour by all staff helps to create a very positive feel to the school, underpinned by its Christian values. Excellent pastoral care means that pupils who may face difficulties in behaving well make rapid gains in managing their behaviour.
 - Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep safe in a range of potentially dangerous situations, both in school, in the home and when out and about. Their excellent self-discipline
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and respect for others makes sure that the school is a place of safety for all.

The leadership and management are good

- The deputy headteacher has shown considerable leadership skills in taking on the running of the school since Christmas at a time of change, and handled a series of difficult situations, outside the school's control, sensitively and well.
 - The governing body has given her much support and has also taken the initiative in building the school's leadership capacity through securing the services of an interim headteacher during the absence of the permanent headteacher.
 - The school has good systems for checking its work so that leaders and managers form an accurate picture of its strengths and areas to improve. The permanent headteacher's expertise in teaching and learning has brought about rapid improvements to the quality of teaching since September. All staff support her clear vision for the school and have welcomed the positive impact of the changes she has brought in.
 - In particular, teachers have robust targets for improving their teaching, and know that pay rises have to be earned and are not automatic as time passes. High-quality training, offered both internally and from outside providers, has equipped staff very well, for example in teaching phonics.
 - Parents are very happy with the school and find leaders approachable. They say that any concerns they may have are sorted out quickly. The high response to Parent View reflects parents' enthusiasm for the school and desire to help out. One parent, echoing the views of several, remarked on how inclusive the school is and the excellent way it cares for families facing difficulties.
 - While individual pupils who have special educational needs do well, because teaching assistants give good support, the management of this area is flawed. Individual education plans are not as effective as they could be and their impact on pupils' progress is not evaluated rigorously or often enough. The leader of special educational needs does not check the impact of specific programmes on pupils' performance and is unclear how this group of pupils are doing as a whole.
 - Topics are taught in exciting ways, and there are good links across subjects. A good range of visits, visitors and clubs enhance pupils' experiences. Weekly cooking sessions for pupils from Reception to Year 3 (en masse in the hall) help them to apply their mathematical skills in real-life situations. High-quality sports coaching also benefits pupils and keeps them fit. A programme of philosophy and whole-school debates promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
 - The school makes sure that all pupils are treated equally and are fully included in all its activities. Discrimination is not tolerated at all. The school fosters excellent relations with parents, and has close links with the parish council and the local church.
 - The local authority has offered good support to the permanent headteacher as she settles into her role. The school's improvement adviser asks searching questions about performance
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information.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body gives excellent support to the school and has an outstanding understanding of the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. This is gained through setting up innovative working parties to study aspects of the school's performance in depth. For example, governors noticed how some pupils who gained Level 2B at the end of Year 2 did not always fulfil their potential, and so set up the '2B Group' to track the progress of all the pupils who gained 2B as they moved through the school. Governors compare the achievement of pupils with how all pupils are doing nationally. They are fully involved in making decisions about targets for teachers and linking pay rises to performance. Governors make sure that they receive training to enhance their effectiveness even more and to hold the school fully to account. All safeguarding requirements are met.
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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	124755
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	403563

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	115
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Louise Cullen
Headteacher	Amanda James
Date of previous school inspection	22-23 May 2008
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