

Catmose Primary School

Sandringham Close, Oakham, Rutland, LE15 6SH

Inspection dates 20–21 February 2013

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. Select

- Children in the Reception class make good progress from their below average starting points in communication and language, in reading, writing and learning numbers and in the use of technology.
- Pupils in Years 1 to 6 continue to make good progress. They reach broadly-average standards in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is good. Skilful questioning to raise pupils' expectations for learning, good use of well-chosen resources and good learning support are particular strengths of teaching.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Pupils are well-behaved in lessons and around the school and their attendance is above average.
- The executive principal and vice principal with good oversight of the governing body have raised pupils' achievements and improved the quality of teaching since the previous inspection. Consequently, they have shown good capacity for further improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding.
- The pace of learning is occasionally too slow because teaching is not always brisk enough.
- There are sometimes missed opportunities for pupils to learn independently.
- Pupils do not always know their next steps for learning when their work is marked.

Information about this inspection

- In 11 lessons observed jointly with the executive principal and vice principal, all teachers were seen teaching. Pupils were heard reading in lessons and six pupils read their books to an inspector.
- Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work jointly with the vice principal and records of pupils' progress were examined. Children's work in the Reception class was also seen.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents including: the school transformation plan, minutes of governing body meetings and policies and procedures for safeguarding.
- The inspection took account of 24 responses to Parent View (the online questionnaire for parents and carers). Questionnaire returns from staff were also looked at.
- Meetings took place with two members of the governing body and Academy Trust, subject leaders and a group of pupils. Informal discussions also took place with individual parents and carers on arrival at school.

Inspection team

Declan McCarthy, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

John Greevy

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average primary school.
- Almost all pupils come from White British backgrounds. A few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils receiving the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those in local authority care) is broadly average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who receive support at school action is below average. The proportion who receive support at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The school met the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum standards for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school does not use any other school or location to provide regular education for its pupils.
- Since the previous inspection the school has converted fully as an academy and entered into a formalised partnership with Catmose College through a multi-academy trust known as Catmose Federation, which is a company limited by guarantee. There is one senior leadership team for the federation, overseeing the work of both schools under the Academy Trust. There are two separate governing bodies, one for each school. A new Chair of the Governing Body is in post. Catmose College was inspected separately.
- The number of pupils on roll has increased significantly since the previous inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
 - ensuring lessons always proceed at a brisk and lively pace
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to learn independently
 - ensuring pupils always know their next steps for learning when their work is marked.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the Reception Year with below expected levels of attainment for their ages in communication, language, personal development, social development and physical development. They make good progress in each area of learning with most meeting the expectations for their ages by the end of the Reception Year.
- The school's close work with families of children prior to their admission and strong team work enable children to settle down to their routines quickly. They make good progress in linking letters to sounds in reading and writing (phonics). They develop good skills in using iPads to support their learning and also develop confidence in learning together.
- Attainment has been steadily rising since the previous inspection with pupils reaching broadly-average standards in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 with above-average standards in reading. More-able pupils throughout the school do particularly well with more reaching the higher levels by the end of Years 2 and Years 6 in reading, writing and mathematics than nationally. This represents good improvement in the attainment of more-able pupils and in writing throughout the school since the previous inspection.
- The school's robust analysis of its data shows that those pupils who receive the pupil premium reach levels of attainment similar to their classmates in reading writing and mathematics. Based on their average points score, the gap in pupils' performance in reading, writing and mathematics compared to other pupils' nationally has narrowed significantly.
- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics, from their relative starting points at Key Stage 1, with a steady rise in attainment since the previous inspection. The proportion of pupils meeting and exceeding expected levels of progress is broadly in line with the national average. There has been three years of sustained improvement in reading at the higher levels. In 2012, pupils in Year 1 did not meet the required expectations in the national tests on phonics. This was mainly because they were unfamiliar with the format of the test. However, school data shows that they met and sometimes exceeded the expected levels of attainment for reading and writing. Current pupils are now better prepared for the format of the tests and are on track to exceed the national expectations for this test.
- All groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs as well as the few who speak English as an additional language, make equally good progress as their classmates from their relative starting points.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved from satisfactory at the time of the previous inspection to good as a result of good management of teachers' performance and rigorous lesson observations by the executive principal and vice principal. Inspection evidence confirms the school's judgement that teaching is at least good and sometimes outstanding.
- Skilful questioning to extend pupils' learning and good use of well-chosen resources, especially in the use of information and communication technology, to motivate and stimulate learning were seen in all lessons. Children in the Reception class benefit from a good balance of teacher-led and child-initiated learning in the well-resourced indoor and outdoor learning environments.

They also used iPads enthusiastically to identify letter sounds and to trace over and sequence numbers. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 were constantly challenged through rapid questioning to identify the correct units of measurement for a variety of different lengths, weights and capacities. They then investigated measuring the capacity of various containers of different sizes further as the teacher challenged them to estimate the capacity of each container before confirming it by measuring.

- Lessons usually proceed briskly so that pupils' learning is maximised, although occasionally the pace of learning slackens. Teachers generally use a variety of methods such as whole-class teaching, working individually or in pairs and small groups, although sometimes there are missed-opportunities for independent learning.
- Teachers build on pupils' prior learning and make good use of assessment to plan a variety of activities which are matched to different learning needs so that all pupils are able to complete the tasks they are given. For example, in a Year 1 lesson about the history of the London underground, the more-able pupils wrote a sequence of six sentences about it whilst the lower-attaining pupils finished a few sentences by filling in missing words using pictures to help them. On a few occasions teachers miss the opportunity to inform pupils of their next steps for learning when their work is marked.
- The teaching of communication, literacy and numeracy is good throughout the school, with a strong focus on promoting the skills of reading, writing and mathematics across a range of subjects.
- The teaching of phonics and its use for reading and spelling is good and clearly evident from the good progress pupils are making in these areas from their starting points.
- Teaching assistants provide good support for learning for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs as well as pupils who speak English as an additional language. They break learning tasks down into smaller steps and demonstrate the meaning of technical words with well-chosen resources to clarify any misunderstandings. Skilful teaching assistants use individual or small group support for those who benefit from pupil premium to accelerate pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. They stay safe at all times taking care to walk quietly between classrooms and in the dining hall, and to use equipment including computers safely. They are polite and courteous to others and maintain good relationships with their classmates and staff.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and can go to anyone if they need help. They say that bullying is rare and any such incidents are dealt with effectively. Pupils have a good understanding of the various types of bullying. Good systems are in place to record incidents of inappropriate behaviour and exclusions are rare.
- Most parents and carers, who completed the Parent View questionnaire, agree that behaviour and safety are good. This was also confirmed during discussion with a few parents.
- In lessons pupils showed good attitudes to learning. They listened carefully to their teachers, tried hard and followed instructions. Their good attitudes, good behaviour and good attendance and punctuality have a strong impact on their learning and enable them to make good progress.

- Pupils respond well to the effective management of their behaviour so that instances of minor disruption in lessons are rare.

The leadership and management are good

- The executive principal provides strong and purposeful leadership to drive the school forward. He is ably supported by the vice principal and senior managers within the federation of the college and the school. Together they have developed good use of detailed data on pupils' progress over time and the regular and rigorous monitoring of teaching and its impact on learning. This has led to an accurate view of the school's strengths and to the development of well-chosen priorities for school improvement in the school's 'Transformation Plan'.
- This information is used well to support the development of teachers' performance by identifying clear objectives for each teacher to achieve, based on the national standards for teaching, and providing good guidance and training opportunities. This has led to good improvement in the quality of teaching and learning since the previous inspection.
- Funding for pupil premium is used flexibly to part-fund the salary of a family support worker which has made a significant impact on reducing unauthorised absence. It is also used to provide additional support for learning in literacy and numeracy, which has led to good promotion of equality of opportunity with the narrowing of any gaps in the achievement of different groups of pupils.
- Leaders have successfully developed a good curriculum known as 'the 3i curriculum' (individual, innovative and inspiring) which makes strong links between subjects and stimulate pupils' enjoyment of learning through different topics each term. There is a strong emphasis on developing literacy and numeracy across different subjects such as history, geography, religious education and art within termly topics such as Heroes and Villains.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual moral social and cultural development well. Pupils have good opportunities to learn Spanish, French and German and celebrate world religious festivals such as Purim.
- All pupils have good opportunities to use a variety of technology to consolidate their learning and research new learning.
- The availability of a rich variety of clubs, such as music and sports clubs together with a wider range of visits and visitors, including visiting teachers from Catmose College, support learning well.
- Good partnerships with parents and carers are reflected in the strong support for the school as seen in the Parent View returns.
- Strong links with the Catmose College enables a very smooth transfer of pupils from Year 6 to Year 7.
- The Academy Trust is providing good support for the school and is making good use of training opportunities within the local authority to support its work.
- **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body ensures that statutory requirements are met, particularly for safeguarding where procedures to protect the welfare of pupils are fully implemented. The members have an accurate view of the quality of teaching and are using data well to check the quality of the school's work. They have effectively supported the executive principal in dealing with underperformance in the past effectively and they ensure that good teachers are duly rewarded. Governors scrutinise expenditure including the use of pupil premium funding and are due to consider this in detail at their next meeting and well within the required timescale as laid down by the Academy Trust.

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	138113
Local authority	Rutland
Inspection number	406697

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

Type of school	Academy converter
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	155
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Atessa Bradbury
Headteacher	Stuart Williams (executive principal)
Date of previous school inspection	7 February 2011
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