

Chesterton Primary School

Aspley Road, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 1SS

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

- Teaching is good throughout the school. As a result, pupils make better than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics to reach standards that are above the national average at the end of Year 6.
- The headteacher, who is well supported by the deputy headteacher and governors, has provided strong leadership and moved the school forward rapidly.
- High expectations, rigorous monitoring of pupils' progress and well-chosen training for staff have improved teaching and pupils' learning.
- Pupils behave well. They enjoy school, try hard and want to do well. They feel very safe in school and help each other at playtime and in their lessons. Attendance is now good.
- Teachers make lessons interesting and so motivate the pupils to learn. Relationships through the school are very positive and pupils' personal skills are developing strongly.
- Reading and mathematics are becoming real strengths due to many successful ways of teaching.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, teachers miss opportunities to challenge pupils' thinking or use talking to develop better use of words for writing.
- Pupils' handwriting is often untidy, and pupils do not always put spellings and punctuation right when a teacher marks their work.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- Inspectors observed 15 lessons taught by nine members of staff. Many of these were joint observations undertaken with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors held meetings about the school with three members of the governing body, with groups of pupils and with a representative from the local authority. In addition to a number of meetings with members of staff, the questionnaires completed by nine members of staff were taken into account.
- One letter from a parent and 30 parental responses to the Ofsted on-line questionnaire (Parent View) were taken into account.
- The inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentation including the school's analysis of pupils' progress, teachers' lesson plans, the school's action plan, local authority reports, leaders' monitoring records and pupils' work.

Inspection team

Hazel Callaghan, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

David Westall

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is of average size.
- Almost all the pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding for schools) is similar to that found in schools nationally. These pupils include those entitled to free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at the school action level is broadly average.
- The proportion supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is also broadly average.
- The school meets the current floor standards set by the government, which determine the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- Several teachers have left the school since the previous inspection.
- One of Her Majesty's Inspectors carried out a monitoring visit to the school in 2011 and it was judged as making good progress.
- A separate nursery is housed on the school site but was not part of this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in writing throughout the school by:
 - improving pupils' spoken vocabulary and communication skills in order to inform their writing
 - ensuring all activities challenge pupils of all abilities, especially the most able
 - ensuring pupils follow up on teachers' comments in marking so preventing errors in spelling and punctuation re-occurring
 - improving the presentation of pupils' work, especially their handwriting.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children's attainment when children start at the school has been declining since the previous inspection. Currently, they start in the Reception class with a narrower range of skills and knowledge than is expected for their age. They make good progress, but because they start with lower attainment do not reach average standards by the time they move into Year 1.
- Progress in Years 1 and 2 has improved in the last two years and is now good. More pupils in the current Year 2 are on track to reach average levels, particularly in reading and mathematics. The results of a recent test of pupils' knowledge of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) in Year 1 were above the national average and another indicator of improving attainment.
- Progress is also good in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6, with the result that standards have been rising for the last five years and have been above average for the last two. Attainment in mathematics has been a strength, with attainment in reading not far behind.
- Attainment in writing has also improved. It is above average in Year 6, but it is not quite as strong as reading and mathematics through the school. Untidy handwriting sometimes undermines the presentation of pupils' work, and spelling and punctuation can be weaker areas.
- Pupils of all abilities usually make at least the expected progress and a good proportion make more than expected progress over their time in Key Stage 2. Disabled pupils and those who have special needs are well supported and also make good progress from their various starting points.
- Pupils eligible for free school meals who are supported by the pupil premium funding are also well supported, both in class and through specific group sessions. A good range of strategies are used to enable them to achieve well. Gaps in their attainment compared to other pupils within the school have been successfully closing. Last year those in Year 6 all reached Level 4 (the nationally expected level) in mathematics and almost all in English.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is typically good throughout the school. Teachers have good understanding of the subjects they teach, plan activities that interest the pupils and use their good understanding of how pupils learn to promote good learning. Lessons are structured well so that new skills are introduced steadily, building on what pupils already know and can do.
- In most lessons boys and girls achieve as well as each other. Sometimes writing activities could be more finely tuned to challenge better some groups and extend their learning more effectively, but usually the match of activities to pupils' learning needs is good. The pace of lessons is usually brisk and pupils are thoroughly engaged and involved so their progress moves forward quickly.
- Pupils start school with a narrower range of language skills than is usual for their age and, although a good range of literature is used to broaden pupils' vocabulary, opportunities are missed to extend their communication skills and develop their ideas through talking, which would support their writing further.
- Reading is taught well. The teaching of letters and the sounds they make is good, particularly in the youngest classes. This aids the progress of all pupils because they are carefully taught to blend and build sounds so they can read new words. Reading and writing provide a secure basis for pupils' good learning in other subjects and can be seen well promoted in pupils' topic work, for example.
- Teachers use the computerised whiteboards well to support teaching and to help pupils understand new ideas and knowledge quickly. Teaching assistants also play a very important part in pupils' good learning.
- Teachers check pupils' work thoroughly and identify accurately what the next steps in the learning should be. Pupils are given targets for them to work towards so they can improve. These targets are carefully based on what pupils have already learnt and provide an effective

ladder for improvement.

- Teachers monitor pupils' work in lessons well and adapt the activities so that pupils' progress is maintained. They use their marking to celebrate pupils' good work and to explain how the work can be improved.
- Excellent relationships and clear expectations for good behaviour result in all classes having a calm and purposeful atmosphere. All pupils are treated equally and there is no element of discrimination.
- Teachers offer lots of praise and this helps to build the pupils' confidence and self-esteem well. Teachers plan many opportunities for pupils to work in pairs and in small groups. As well as successfully promoting the pupils' social and moral skills, this enables them to share and support each other in their learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are polite, friendly and get on well with each other. They show good levels of confidence and self-esteem. Their positive attitudes and high levels of involvement contribute to the good learning environment.
- Pupils enjoy their lessons and are keen to do well. This was clearly seen in the pride one little girl showed when receiving a 'smelly sticker' for her good effort. Pupils celebrate each other's good work and listen with attention to each other's ideas. They show empathy for others and there is no discrimination evident in their relationships.
- Teachers successfully encourage pupils to develop many good learning habits, for example good concentration and the ability to work without an adult directly supervising. However, pupils do not always respond effectively to teachers' comments in marking and so mistakes in punctuation and in spelling are often repeated unnecessarily.
- The good quality personal and social education programme helps to support pupils' understanding of how the pupils keep themselves and their friends safe. Older pupils are keenly aware, for example, of the potential risks in the use of social media.
- Pupils say behaviour is good and bullying of any kind is rare, especially any physical, emotional or cyber bullying. Any name calling is to do with minor arguments or frustration and pupils say any problems are quickly sorted out by the staff. Parents and carers believe that behaviour is at least good and few had any concerns.
- Pupils say they feel very safe at school. They identify possible hazards around them and develop sensible strategies to keep themselves and others safe at school. They recognise the need for sensible and considerate behaviour, for example when participating in the school's many trips and visits.
- Attendance has improved and is now above average. Persistent absence is rare.

The leadership and management are good

- The effective improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' learning are the result of the headteacher's strong leadership and high expectations. Teaching is monitored carefully and staff provided with a good range of professional training that is well matched to their developmental needs. The headteacher sets challenging targets for staff as part of their performance management, which are now consistently met.
- The school has strong systems for monitoring pupils' attainment and progress. Leaders analyse the results rigorously and identify any underachievement quickly. They then take quick action, such as providing extra help and support groups, which enable pupils to make improved progress in their work.
- Middle managers have a good understanding of their subjects and roles of responsibility and make a positive contribution to school improvement. Leadership for the provision for pupils with special educational needs, for example, is good; teaching assistants who help pupils with special

needs are well supported and their skills effectively promoted.

- The school has improved its provision and performance in many ways since the last inspection. The work of the learning mentor, for example, has improved attendance and links with families and support for pupils with barriers to their learning have all enabled pupils to make better progress in their learning.
- Senior leaders have a strong appreciation of the school's strengths and are quick to identify where it can be improved. The capacity for further improvement is equally strong.
- The range of subjects and activities provided matches pupils' learning needs well. Pupils say their topics, such as a recent one in Year 5 on Spies, are great fun and they really enjoy their lessons. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well promoted.
- The partnership with parents is good. The response to the questionnaire, Parent View, was limited but very positive.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have high expectations for the school, use data effectively to compare the school to others, and provide suitable challenge to the headteacher and his staff. They welcomed the opportunity for a local authority review to provide an outside check on the school's improvements. The governing body gained good levels of information from this review and are able to challenge leaders effectively about the school's performance. Governors seek information about the outcomes of teachers' performance management discussions and support the headteacher's strategies to improve teaching. They are aware of how staff pay is aligned through this process, although opportunities to influence salaries are limited in a school of this size. The governing body is fully involved in deciding the use of pupil premium funding and governors evaluate its impact on raising achievement. Child protection and safeguarding arrangements meet regulatory requirements in full.

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	115575
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	401522

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	187
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Andrea Pellegram
Headteacher	Mr David Williams
Date of previous school inspection	October 2009
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