

Tiffield Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

High Street South, Tiffield, Towcester, NN12 8AB

Inspection dates 27–28 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.

- Standards are rising throughout the school and most pupils are now making at least the progress they should, and often better than expected progress.
- Teaching has many strengths: a key feature is the high expectations teachers have of pupils of all abilities across the school.
- Pupils are confident, courteous and keen to learn. They feel safe in school and their behaviour is consistently good.
- The good leadership of the headteacher has led to better teaching and improved results, and the school is a lively place for pupils to learn.
- Leaders at all levels have grown in confidence and improved their effectiveness as a result of the opportunities offered through the federation with partner schools.
- Parents value highly the individual attention their children receive both in their academic and personal development.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The progress that pupils make overall has not been consistently high over time.
- There is not enough outstanding teaching. Teachers do not always make it clear to pupils exactly what they must do to produce high-quality work.
- The presentation of work in pupils' books is not consistently of a high standard in subjects outside English and mathematics.
- Improvements in the effectiveness of the governing body, in particular in the way governors challenge and support leaders, are too recent for their impact to be felt.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching in both classes, visiting five full lessons and three part lessons.
- All full lesson observations were made jointly with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with pupils, the headteacher and other leaders and managers, and representatives of the governing body and of the local authority.
- The inspector looked at a range of documents, including the school development plan, minutes of governing body meetings, safeguarding arrangements and, together with the headteacher, the work in pupils' books.
- Parents and carers were asked for their views at the beginning and end of the school day and the views of the 15 parents and carers who responded to the Parent View survey or wrote letters were analysed.

Inspection team

Simon Griffiths, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- It is part of a federation of schools including Whittlebury CE and Stoke Bruerne CE schools. It is led by an executive headteacher who leads all three schools.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is below the national average and the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The school receives no additional pupil premium funding.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate the rate at which pupils progress and raise achievement by ensuring that:
 - teachers consistently match work precisely to pupils' abilities, particularly in the case of older pupils
 - teachers make sure that all pupils, particularly younger pupils, fully understand what it is they are expected to have achieved by the end of lessons
 - whole-class discussions engage all pupils fully, including those working at less advanced levels
 - the standard of work produced by the pupils is as good in all subjects as it is in English and mathematics.
- Improve leadership by increasing the involvement of governors in checking how well pupils are achieving and in planning actions for further improvement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The number of pupils who join the school in Reception is very small but is rising. Each year is different but most pupils enter with skills and abilities in line with those expected. They all make expected progress and many made better progress in 2012 across all areas of learning.
- By the time pupils leave Key Stage 1, they reach levels above those expected, particularly in reading, where standards are much better than national averages. Given pupils' starting points this shows that they have made good progress.
- The school's tracking information shows that younger pupils' progress is accelerating and that progress is always at least in line with that expected. Often it is better than expected but this is not consistently the case and not enough pupils make exceptional progress over time.
- At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils reach levels which are above those expected in English and mathematics, although results vary from year to year as the number of pupils is so small. The percentage of pupils who achieved the expected levels in English and mathematics was higher than that found nationally in 2012.
- Pupils make good progress in reading because they quickly learn how letters and sounds link together. Older pupils read confidently and with enthusiasm and show a genuine enjoyment of reading.
- Attainment in writing is good. Pupils' writing is imaginative and they enjoy writing. In lessons, pupils learn about complex sentences and subordinate clauses but not all pupils are confident in their use of key literacy skills by the time they leave. The level of presentation and neatness of pupils' work is not always of a high standard.
- Standards in mathematics are good. In one lesson, for example, pupils were learning about co-ordinates effectively because the teacher checked pupils' understanding and adjusted the teaching during the lesson. Pupils work confidently in mathematics and are able to discuss and share their mathematical knowledge.
- All groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make good progress. This is because any extra support needed is given quickly and teachers have high expectations of all pupils, whatever their abilities. However, some less able pupils struggle when the work is pitched at too high a level for them to understand.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good across the school. All teachers work hard to plan lessons which are interesting. In the Reception and Year 1 group, the teacher knows the pupils well as individuals. She uses questioning well to probe children's understanding, to extend their learning and to prompt them to think for themselves. Children have many opportunities to explore topics and activities for themselves and to work independently of the teacher.
- Opportunities to learn outside the classroom are not as attractive as those inside. Although some good use is made of the outdoor area, for example when a teaching assistant worked with children practising forming letters on the ground with paintbrushes, it is generally not used well.

- Teaching in Key Stage 1 is well organised and pupils' behaviour is managed well. The teaching of reading across the school is good. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and younger pupils receive a good grounding in the letter sounds that they need to learn in order to read. Older pupils enjoy reading and talk about their favourite books and authors with enthusiasm.
- In other subjects, such as writing and mathematics, the teacher works hard to build on pupils' obvious enthusiasm by providing interesting activities which develop their skills, for example, creating an information book for the children joining the school next year. Pupils are motivated and enjoy the activities they are given and generally make good progress. However, pupils are not always told precisely what is expected by the end of the activity or what they should do to make their work the best it could be.
- In Key Stage 2, pupils are regularly challenged to work at a high level. Most pupils work confidently and tackle complex tasks. Tasks are demanding and make pupils think hard. The teacher's good subject knowledge allows her to keep careful checks on pupils' learning during the lesson and to change the teaching to push pupils' learning to new levels.
- Despite its other strengths, the teaching of older pupils is not always matched precisely to their abilities, particularly in the case of the less able. Although the teacher has high expectations of what she wants pupils to understand, the work is sometimes too hard for some pupils.
- Marking, particularly in Key Stage 2, is of good quality and pupils have a good grasp of what it is they need to do to improve. Pupils are given the opportunity to look at the comments and make corrections. There are, however, too few occasions where pupils respond in writing about how well they thought they did.
- In both key stages, teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to learning. They work well with the teachers and are confident to teach small groups and support pupils during class discussions.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress overall because the teaching is usually tailored to their needs and good use is made of small-group teaching. Occasionally, the demanding level of class discussion means they are not able to take a full part in the lesson.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are courteous and calm in lessons and around the school. Behaviour is good. Lunchtime is a pleasant time when they enjoy chatting together. They mix well at playtimes.
- In lessons, pupils are keen to learn and most engage well with the activities and questioning. They are generally confident when answering teachers' questions and readily give longer explanations. Sometimes, their obvious enthusiasm spills over and they do not take turns to answer and have to be calmed by their teachers.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They all have jobs and responsibilities, for example, the Junior Road Safety Officers take their role seriously and members of the Eco council help look after the school environment.
- The school works hard to ensure that pupils are well cared for. All pupils and younger children have a 'buddy' to help them settle into school easily. School values, based on the Olympic

values, are regularly explored and pupils are proud to wear their colour-coded wristbands

- Pupils and staff together have written the school charter and decided how they should be rewarded. Weekly celebration assemblies and 'Pupil of the Week' awards all help to encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own achievements and behaviour and make this a happy school.
- Pupils feel safe. They explain how they are taught about road safety and bicycle safety. They are less confident when discussing how to stay safe when using the internet and are not all aware of the different forms of bullying. Few pupils expressed concern about bullying. School records show that bullying is rare but, on the very few occasions when it does occur, it is investigated fully.
- Attendance has improved consistently and, although it dipped in the autumn term, it is at least average.

The leadership and management are good

- Leadership and management have ensured that both teaching and results have improved.
- The headteacher provides very strong leadership, which is highly valued by parents, carers, pupils and staff. She knows each child very well and is adamant that all pupils will make at least good progress and will be confident and secure children.
- Subject leaders are growing in confidence and have benefitted from the greater opportunities offered by the partnership of schools. They are developing action plans to improve progress in their areas of responsibility and work as a united team to improve teaching.
- Leaders have rightly concentrated on improving literacy and mathematics in the recent past. Pupils' progress is tracked carefully and teachers discuss the progress of individuals regularly with the headteacher. The systems used to improve teaching are clear to all staff, and teachers know what is expected of them and how to improve further.
- The curriculum has been improved. Pupils' enthusiasm and interest is often captured by 'wow days'. The school makes good use of visitors and assemblies to widen pupils' experiences and support their spiritual development. The work of the partnership has been very effective. The same themes are taught across the federated schools, which means that pupils can have enjoyable and effective opportunities to mix with more children, share visits out of school and participate in cluster sporting and team events. Pupils' understanding of Britain as a global society is a little less well developed.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet all statutory requirements
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have been active in establishing the federation of three schools. There is complete agreement that this has many benefits for the pupils, and this is borne out by the improvement in results. Training is being provided to sharpen governors' understanding of data and their other skills. Governors are improving their first-hand knowledge of teaching quality and pupils' achievement so that they can better support and challenge leaders. For example, they visit to observe teaching and to see pupils' work for themselves. This approach is new, however, and it is too soon for its impact to be evident. Governors understand the importance of linking teachers' pay to how well their pupils are doing, and understand how the

pupil premium should be allocated in the event that any pupils become eligible. They ensure that statutory requirements are met and that the school's finances are well managed.

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	122031
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	406073

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	29
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	James Luntz
Executive Headteacher	Eliza Hollis
Date of previous school inspection	26 January 2011
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