

Wentworth Primary School

Viking Road, Maldon, Essex, CM9 6JN

Inspection dates 14–15 March 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		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Achievement is good. Pupils make good progress in all year groups. Attainment is now above average in reading and writing.
- Teaching is typically good and frequently outstanding as a result of thorough and regular checking of the quality of teaching by the headteacher and subject leaders, supported by well-chosen staff training.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and in and around the school is excellent and they feel very safe.
- Relationships throughout the school are excellent.
- The leadership of the school is good. The excellent leadership skills of the headteacher ensure that staff and governors, including the support and office staff, work very well together as a team.
- Pupils have outstandingly positive attitudes to learning. They really want to improve their work and are keen to do well.
- The work planned for pupils and the additional sessions provided for pupils out of school hours are excellent.
- Parents are very pleased with what the school provides for their children.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although the proportion of outstanding teaching has increased, there is not yet enough to support exceptional progress.
- Attainment by the end of Year 2 is not yet above average in reading and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons, five of which were joint observations carried out with the headteacher. Inspectors also observed pupils moving around the school, in the dining room and at break and lunchtimes. They also listened to pupils read in lessons and more formally.
- Meetings were held with pupils, including members of the school council, senior leaders, including subject and phase leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors took account of 65 responses to Parent View (Ofsted’s online questionnaire for parents) as well as parents’ spoken and written views. Inspectors also took account of 45 staff questionnaires and the school’s own most recent parental questionnaire.
- Inspectors looked closely at a range of documentation including the school’s data about the progress of pupils, the school’s self-evaluation, improvement plans, safeguarding policies and records relating to performance management.

Inspection team

Nichola Perry, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Diana Songer-Hudgell

Additional Inspector

Stuart Gray

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding (additional money given to schools for particular pupils, including those who are known to be eligible for free school meals) is well-below average.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported by school action is broadly average. The proportion supported by school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs is slightly above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Since the previous inspection there have been several changes of staff.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in reading and mathematics in Years 1 and 2 by:
 - increasing the proportion of outstanding teaching so as to accelerate pupils' rate of progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Considerable improvements in teaching and the way subjects are planned throughout the school now ensure that pupils make good progress in reading and mathematics and very good progress in writing. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs also make good progress. This represents good improvement from the previous inspection when pupils did not make as much progress as they should.
- Attainment on entry to the Reception classes varies from year to year. Generally children start school with knowledge and skills broadly in line with levels expected for their age, although a minority have less-well-developed language and communication skills. Children of all abilities make good progress because they are taught well and given interesting things to do. They quickly acquire knowledge, skills and understanding across all areas of learning so that they are well-prepared for Year 1.
- Phonics (the sound that letters make) is taught well so that pupils make good progress in developing their reading skills. In the recent Year 1 checks a higher proportion than in most schools reached expected levels. The least-able readers in Years 1 and 6 who were heard to read during the inspection make appropriate use of letter sounds to help them read new words. Across the school, pupils show good expression when they read and are able to make links between their reading and real-life experiences.
- Attainment by the time pupils leave the school is above average in reading and writing. Although attainment in mathematics is average, accelerated progress is ensuring that standards are rising quickly. The introduction of more structured learning has contributed strongly to sustained improvements. For example, pupils now write confidently, using basic skills effectively along with interesting language to produce work of above-average standards across the school. Similarly, accelerated progress in developing numeracy skills is increasingly enabling pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge to solve problems, including those in real-life situations.
- Learning in all classes is now consistently good, and sometimes better. The legacy of underachievement has been halted. No catch-up is required because learning focuses on moving pupils on through activities which now take account of the stage pupils are at. This includes higher expectations which ensure that all pupils, but particularly more-able pupils, extend their learning of new skills and apply this newly acquired knowledge from lesson to lesson. In Years 1 and 2 where the good progress has not yet resulted in raised standards in reading and mathematics, this is due to more recent changes in staffing.
- The progress of pupils supported by the pupil premium has been rapid because funding has been used effectively to provide additional teaching sessions, as well as other support, for these pupils. Test results and current school data show that the attainment of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is higher than for similar pupils nationally. Based on average points scores at the end of Year 6 there is no difference between the attainment of these pupils and their classmates in both English and in mathematics.

The quality of teaching is good

- Typically teaching is good and frequently it is outstanding. Information about the progress pupils are making is used effectively to set work which is more challenging than in the past. This leads

to lesson activities which are planned well for pupils of all abilities. During the inspection teachers often amended their planning to take account of the progress pupils were making. In the best lessons teachers were also amending their teaching when they could see that some pupils found the work easy.

- Lesson introductions make sure pupils understand what it is they are learning about so that only occasionally pupils faltered when explaining to inspectors what they were doing. Where teaching is outstanding introductions are superbly extended to give pupils the choice about the level of challenge they feel able to take on. Pupils, including those who are not necessarily the most able, are exceptionally well motivated to try the hardest challenge. They feel safe to take risks and in many cases this results in them making faster progress.
- Whilst work is demanding in most lessons this not consistently the case. In Years 3 to 6 the pace of learning really challenges pupils to extend and apply their skills. These teachers support and prompt pupils expertly to help them think hard and solve problems so that they achieve rapid success. In Years 1 and 2 the pace of learning is not yet sufficiently demanding of pupils. Although pupils are making better progress than in the past it is not yet fast enough to ensure that attainment is rising at the same rate as in Years 3 to 6.
- In the best lessons teachers are increasingly making links between learning in one subject and how this is relevant to learning in other subjects. Teachers are also more frequently helping pupils to understand how their learning is useful to them in everyday situations. This makes learning more meaningful to pupils and contributes to their great enjoyment of coming to school.
- In all lessons seen, and in pupils' books, teachers provide good opportunities for pupils of all abilities to practise their literacy and numeracy skills. This is helping them to improve at a faster rate than in the past. Pupils who find learning difficult are well supported by a team of well-trained adults who, like the teachers, ask searching questions and encourage a high level of discussion.
- Marking is generally effective in helping pupils improve their work, although in-depth marking is not consistent across the school. There are good examples of pupils being involved in amending, improving and marking their own work and that of others. This is helping them to take responsibility for their own work and progress. Work in pupils' books reflects teachers' high expectations regarding presentation.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' exemplary behaviour and their excellent attitudes to learning contribute strongly to the good progress they make and the delightful atmosphere which pervades the school. Pupils work constructively together. They are respectful and considerate towards each other and are very accepting of difference. Any low-level disruption is extremely rare so that learning is not interrupted.
- Pupils manage their own behaviour effectively because they understand what is expected. They know how highly their teachers value and reward their good behaviour and also what steps will be taken should their behaviour fall short of expectations. Pupils relish their roles as playground mediators when they help others to resolve their differences amicably. They love being buddies to the younger pupils, organising games and teaching them how to play well together.
- Pupils say that the excellent behaviour inspectors observed around the school, in the dining

room and playground and in lessons, is typical. They report that pupils get on well with each other and only rarely are there any issues in the playground. They consider that the playground is well-supervised and that they trust the adults to help and support them should they encounter any problems.

- The atmosphere in lessons is highly positive and frequently lessons are buzzing with enthusiasm. Pupils understand that their contributions in lessons are highly valued by their teachers so that they feel safe to take risks in the full knowledge that it is ok to be wrong. They participate confidently in discussions and actively seek to engage in conversation. They proudly talk about their school with visitors.
- Attendance is above average because the school works very hard to consistently promote the need for good attendance. Pupils recognise how important it is to attend regularly but above all, they simply love coming to school because they say 'learning is fun'.
- Pupils feel very safe and their parents agree. They talk knowledgeably and confidently about the different forms of bullying, including inappropriate use of language towards different groups. They understand exactly what to do and who to inform should it occur. Pupils demonstrate excellent knowledge about steps they need to take to keep themselves, and others, safe.
- The school provides strong support for pupils and their families whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Links with external support agencies are plentiful and fruitful. Tracking of pupils' academic progress and personal development is outstanding so that they consistently have good opportunities to learn well and achieve as well as their classmates.

The leadership and management are good

- Excellent leadership from the headteacher, with very strong support from the deputy headteacher, have been key factors in the rapid improvement since the previous inspection. All staff and the governing body aspire to excellence and are proud of the school.
- Rigorous and effective monitoring of teaching has eradicated inadequate practice and has considerably raised the overall quality of teaching so that frequently it is outstanding. The system which sets the targets for all staff to improve their performance is effectively managed so that all adults are held strongly to account for the quality of their own work and the achievement of their pupils.
- Planning which guides the school's progress towards improvement highlights the most important actions to be taken. This means that leaders at all levels have an accurate understanding of the strong aspects of their area of responsibility along with those that require further work. All staff speak highly about how much additional training has helped them to improve their work.
- The role of leaders who are in charge of subjects or other aspects of the school's work is developing well. Notably, effective leadership of English, mathematics and special educational needs has played a strong part in ensuring the work planned for pupils and the monitoring of their progress are constantly improving. Other staff, such as the Early Years Foundation Stage leader and the information and communication technology subject leader are also being well-groomed for leadership.
- Displays in classrooms and around the school are dynamic and reflect the excellent and varied work pupils do. Pupils find displays interesting as well as helpful to their learning. Visits, visitors and links with families and the local and wider communities enrich pupils' learning and help to

broaden their horizons. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is developed extremely well through the subjects and activities provided.

- Equality of opportunity is promoted well and any discrimination tackled effectively, including that from outside the school. The pupil premium fund is used especially well to support eligible pupils and their families. A wide range of extra adult attention and activities ensure that these pupils progress as well as their classmates.
- The local authority has provided effective support for this previously satisfactory school. It fully recognises the school's improvement which is now accelerating with improved progress and raised standards.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body support and challenge the school well. The members play a central role in shaping strategic direction and in taking important spending decisions. They increasingly make the best use of individual skills and training to support the work of the school. Governors show a thorough understanding of the school's performance such as the quality of teaching and increasing rates of pupils' progress. They understand actions to tackle underperformance and how teachers are rewarded for their good practice. Governors are well informed about how the school needs to improve further and are actively involved in planning for this. To this end they are involved in checking on the school's performance and this is helping them to provide challenge to school leaders. The budget is managed well and funding such as the pupil premium is used prudently to bring about improvements in pupils' achievement. Governors ensure that the school meets all current national requirements for safeguarding pupils.

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	114933
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	401477

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
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	
Number of pupils on the school roll	413
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	
Number of boarders on roll	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Geoff Skewes
Headteacher	Jan Myers
Date of previous school inspection	29 April 2010
Telephone number	01621 853572
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