

# Townlands Church of England Primary School

Meadow Court Road, Earl Shilton, Leicester, LE9 7FF

**Inspection dates** 17–18 April 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- Teaching is good throughout the school, and sometimes outstanding. Teachers use stimulating resources such as modern technology to make sure pupils of all abilities achieve well.
- Reading is given a high priority across the school. The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is particularly effective and by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils reach high standards in reading.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs benefit from effective specialist support. They make good progress and attain higher standards in English than similar pupils across the country.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are exemplary. They are nurtured from the moment they join the Reception class. They are happy in school, feel safe and are exceptionally polite and caring to one another.
- The headteacher is very ambitious and has high expectations of staff and pupils. Her strong leadership has been instrumental in fostering a strong sense of community.
- Leaders, governors and staff are committed to raising attainment through improving the quality of teaching and building on success. They have an accurate understanding of the strengths of the school, and clear plans to tackle areas which are less than outstanding.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always ask probing questions that help pupils, particularly the more-able pupils, to work things out for themselves and make as much progress as possible.
- Strategies for communicating with parents need to be strengthened to enable them to contribute further to all areas of school improvement.
- The design of the outside area in Reception is preventing staff from providing activities which are of the same outstanding quality as those available to children indoors.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors saw all teachers teach in the 14 lessons observed, two of which were seen together with the headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made a number of other short visits to lessons and learning areas.
- Separate meetings were conducted with governors, staff, senior leaders, an adviser from the local authority, the family outreach worker and two groups of pupils. The inspectors talked to pupils during lessons and also listened to pupils read.
- The 21 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the views of several parents who communicated with inspectors during the inspection were taken into consideration.
- The inspectors took account of the 22 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspectors looked at pupils' books, the school's information on how well pupils progress, planning documentation, records of behaviour, attendance and punctuality, and documents relating to safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Cathy Morgan, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jonathan Sutcliffe

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is a smaller-than-average primary school.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportions of pupils supported through school action, and through school action plus or a statement of special educational needs, are higher than average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is below the national average. This additional government funding only applies in this school to pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher is a member of the leadership team of the Affinity Teaching School Alliance, which provides accredited training opportunities for its members.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement to outstanding by:
  - improving teachers' expertise in asking questions that encourage pupils to work things out for themselves and challenge those who are capable of making more rapid progress
  - providing an outside space for the exclusive use of Reception children, to enable staff to plan and develop outdoor activities as effectively as they do indoors.
- Extend the opportunities for parents to become more actively involved in the work of the school and make a positive contribution to further improvements.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children typically start school in the Reception class with skills that are below the levels expected nationally for their age. They settle well and are happy, safe and well motivated. They make good and sometimes rapid progress in developing their confidence and independence, and acquiring early reading and writing skills. They take part in a range of stimulating activities across all the areas of learning, with a good balance of teacher-led and child-initiated tasks.
- Pupils make good progress in Key Stages 1 and 2, and by the end of Year 6 they attain broadly average standards. The more-able pupils in Years 2 and 6 are on target to reach the highest standards in the forthcoming national tests in English and mathematics.
- Teaching assistants provide highly effective specialist help and guidance to disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, to ensure that they make good progress. This group attains above-average standards in English because the pupils' individual difficulties are quickly identified and addressed.
- The school places great emphasis on fostering an enjoyment of reading for pupils of all ages. The exceptional organisation of the teaching, development and application of sounds that letters make (phonics) is having a highly positive impact on the standard of reading across the school. Pupils are able to blend letters well as they read and transfer this skill into their writing. An example of this was seen in the Reception class where at the close of the phonics session, two children proudly showed the inspector the complete sentences they had written and spelt correctly.
- The pupil premium funding is spent wisely on additional staff to provide small group and one-to-one tuition for pupils who are known to be eligible. This enables them to improve their attainment and to reach similar standards to their classmates in the national tests in English and mathematics. They make the same good progress as other groups of pupils.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good across the school, but not enough of it is outstanding to ensure that all pupils make the rapid and sustained progress necessary to raise standards further. Teachers show high expectations for pupils' achievement and behaviour. They use a variety of technology and well-designed resources effectively to motivate and interest pupils and ensure that they develop a wide range of skills.
- Good teaching in Reception ensures that pupils' achievement is good. Children are given an appropriate balance of interesting and exciting activities to choose from but, the lack of a dedicated outside area is preventing staff from building on the outstanding practice indoors to enable children to make more rapid progress.
- Teachers throughout the school make good use of 'talking partners' to improve the way pupils communicate in different subjects. This is enabling them to become confident, competent and skilful speakers and listeners. Teachers and their assistants make sure pupils are clear about what they are learning, so they can accurately judge the quality of their own and each other's work.
- The teaching of numeracy has recently been reorganised in Years 3 to 5, so that pupils can be taught by ability rather than age. This imaginative approach to learning is helping pupils to focus

on specific areas of difficulty, and they say that it is helping them to develop confidence in their mathematical ability. In one lesson, pupils from Year 4 made rapid progress while working alongside those of similar ability in Year 5. They produced work that was higher than the expected standard for their age when accurately solving problems in mental mathematics.

- Teachers make lessons interesting and ask questions which encourage pupils to explain their ideas. However, they do not always use pupils' responses to adapt questions so that they fully challenge pupils to work things out for themselves and ensure that they make as much progress as they are capable of. This particularly holds back the more-able pupils.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are outstanding

- Parents, pupils, staff and governors share similar positive views of behaviour. Pupils behave extremely well at all times. Their attitudes to learning are exemplary. Pupils are proud of their school and enjoy celebrating their own successes as well as those of others. They try hard to gain rewards for their good behaviour and regular reading, including the weekly ownership of the 'Townlands bear'.
- Pupils of all ages work and play extremely well together, especially in mathematics where they discuss what they have to do very sensibly and help each other over any difficulties. During lessons and assemblies, pupils are fully involved in their learning. The imaginative planning of 'R Time' personal and social education lessons is very effective in developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills and understanding. They show a high level of empathy and sensitivity to one another during these sessions. Consequently, pupils' self-esteem is high and they establish effective and respectful relationships with their classmates and with adults.
- School records show that poor behaviour is rare. The caring support for pupils who have difficulty in managing their emotions and behaviour enables them to work well in lessons. The school has a very clear 'reflection' policy which is applied consistently by staff. This ensures that pupils are aware of the consequences of their actions and know what is expected of them. Consequently, the school is a calm and purposeful place.
- Discussions with pupils show that they have a strong awareness of the different forms of bullying. Pupils say that bullying is rare but they have full confidence in staff to deal with any that does arise. Pupils are adamant that they are well cared for, safe and secure at all times. They enjoy coming to school, know how to keep themselves safe and are aware of the potential dangers presented when, for example, using the internet.
- The school and the family outreach worker have established productive relationships with parents. This has given them a better understanding about how they can help to improve their children's attendance, which is average and rising. Strategies for communicating with parents need to be strengthened to enable them to contribute further to other areas of school improvement.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher's determination and strong leadership have enabled the school to develop well since its previous inspection. Staff share the headteacher's ambition and desire to foster a strong sense of community and respect. All staff and governors are strongly committed to raising standards, and making sure that all pupils from every background have an equal opportunity to succeed.

- The headteacher has developed a thorough and effective system for monitoring teaching. This leads to focused training for all staff, which in turn has improved classroom practice. Only those teachers who meet required standards, which are suitably linked to pupils' achievement, move up the salary scale. Leaders have not shied away from making difficult decisions about teaching quality when these have been necessary.
- Pupils' progress is closely and regularly tracked. The information gathered from assessments and regular discussions in staff meetings ensure that teachers know if pupils are doing well enough. Additional help is provided swiftly where needed, especially for pupils who have special educational needs or are supported by the pupil premium. This additional funding is used well to provide additional help in classrooms and to boost pupils' emotional and social development.
- The school makes good use of the expertise of the local authority and external consultants. Positive collaboration and links with other schools through the Affinity Teaching School Alliance are contributing well to the improvement of teaching and greater accuracy in the way teachers assess pupils' work and progress.
- Pupils enjoy a wide variety of interesting activities, topics, clubs and a residential experience. Writing is promoted well across all subjects and homework is used well to help pupils practise and develop their skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology.
- The wide range of methods used to check the performance of the school and individual staff give leaders an accurate understanding of the strengths of the school and identify where further action is needed.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governors have worked closely with the headteacher to make sure they ask the right questions about the school's performance, and so they have an accurate understanding of the quality of teaching and how well the pupils are doing. They are clear about the priorities for improvement and hold the school's leaders to account for the progress being made against all the actions in the school development plan. They have agreed clear and appropriate targets for the performance of the headteacher and staff that are linked appropriately to pupils' progress. They have had suitable training to ensure that safeguarding practices and procedures and their other areas of responsibility meet current national requirements.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	120191
<b>Local authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	412297

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	201
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sue Burton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Dawn White
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 June 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01455 843859
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