

White Notley Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Vicarage Avenue, White Notley, Witham, CM8 1RZ

Inspection dates 24–25 April 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- Pupils make good progress and by the end of Year 6, standards English and mathematics are above national averages. They do well in reading throughout the school.
- Teaching is typically good and a growing amount is outstanding.
- Lessons are planned carefully and pupils respond well to the way they are taught, showing interest and enthusiasm for learning.
- Leaders at all levels are supported well by the governing body. Their work has helped to improve teaching and the progress pupils make.
- Behaviour around the school and in lessons is outstanding. Pupils feel safe. They are courteous and polite, and are good at managing their own behaviour.
- Pupils develop a strong feeling of care and consideration for others. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding.
- All those linked to the school work well together. Staff, pupils, the governing body and parents have successfully brought about improvements, such as higher standards in Key Stage 2.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In some lessons work is not matched precisely to the needs of different ability groups.
- As a result more-able pupils are not always challenged to reach the high standards they are capable of, particularly in English.
- Pupils do not always have enough time to respond to the guidance given in marking.
- Leaders' school improvement priorities do not always take full account of what they know about pupils' progress.

Information about this inspection

- Eight lessons were observed, one of which was seen together with the headteacher.
- The inspector looked at pupils' work and listened to pupils from Years 1, 2 and 6 read.
- Meetings were held with pupils, a representative from the local authority and school staff, including senior and subject leaders. A meeting was held with governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body.
- School documents were looked at, including those for safeguarding arrangements, information on pupils' achievement and school improvement plans.
- The inspector took account of the views of 51 parents through the online website Parent View. A discussion took place with a parent and three letters from parents were also considered. The views of staff were looked at through 16 staff questionnaire returns.

Inspection team

Peter Lacey-Hastings, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- White Notley Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School is smaller than the average primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average and none are at the early stages of learning English.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is below average, as is the proportion supported through school action plus or a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium is lower than average. This is additional funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care and those from families in the armed services.
- 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?

- Improve the progress made by more-able pupils, especially in English, by:
 - always planning tasks with high levels of challenge for this group in lessons
 - using the full range of higher National Curriculum levels when assessing their attainment at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Make school improvement planning more effective by:
 - taking full account of the detailed information collected on pupils' achievement when deciding the actions to take
 - matching the setting of targets for teachers to improve their work more closely to pupils' progress.
- Make sure pupils always have time to respond to marking, so they use the advice to better their work and show how well they are improving.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start Reception with skills and capabilities that vary because of the low numbers each year, but are broadly in line with those typical for their age. The progress they make in the Reception class has improved over the last three years. They make best progress in developing their reading and speaking and listening skills, and in their personal, social and emotional development. At the end of Reception, attainment in writing remains lower than in other areas of learning.
- In Key Stage 1, attainment has been higher in mathematics than in reading or writing in the past. Pupils have made similar progress across different subjects, but current Year 2 pupils are making better progress in writing. As a result, the gap in progress between writing and other subjects is closing.
- In Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress in both mathematics and English. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 have been above average for two of the last three years. Attainment in mathematics has been lower in the past, but has risen each year since the previous inspection and is now at the same level as English.
- Pupils read well. They are able to link letters with sounds in order to read known and unfamiliar words. They use pictures to help them work out what unknown words might be and often correct their own mistakes to read more accurately. Older pupils also read well. They can say which types of book they like to read, why they choose them and which authors they like. They are keen to read and respond well to the enthusiasm of teachers and opportunities to learn about authors.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. They achieve the personal targets in their individual plans, and progress well in English and mathematics in response to well-chosen help and guidance.
- The small number of pupils who are supported by additional funding through the pupil premium achieve well. Last year they made better progress than other pupils in both English and mathematics, and their attainment was higher than that of other pupils.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers plan stimulating lessons that engage pupils, who show enthusiasm and interest in learning. This is because work is mostly matched well to pupils' different abilities but could be more challenging for those capable of doing harder work. For example, they found the work easy when they drew a shape and then gave co-ordinates for another pupil to try and make the same shape.
- Teachers provide a broad range of activities that are set at different levels of difficulty and skill. This helps most pupils to make good and sometimes rapid progress, although the more-able are capable of making greater strides in their learning.
- In the best examples, teachers and other adults work from detailed plans. Other adults are clear about their role. They understand what the pupils need to learn, and support them accordingly. In these lessons all adults use their good subject knowledge enthusiastically to successfully

encourage pupils to try hard and enjoy their learning.

- Adults set a good example to pupils. They pay attention to detail and help pupils achieve good standards in speaking, for example. Younger pupils are encouraged to correct themselves when they pronounce sounds incorrectly. Adults use accurate mathematical language to help pupils learn important vocabulary, and challenge them to use it for themselves.
- Marking is used well to help pupils improve their work. The comments made show pupils how well they have done and what they need to do to improve. Sometimes pupils only show their responses through verbal feedback, and are not always given enough time to correct misunderstandings and mistakes.
- Teachers sometimes set work for the more-able pupils that is particularly challenging, and they respond well. However, the teachers do not always use the full range of higher National Curriculum levels available to assess pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2. This means pupils are sometimes reaching higher levels in their work than school records show, and their rapid progress is not made clear.
- Teachers use one-to-one or small group teaching to help pupils catch up. This is carefully planned so the needs of different groups or individuals, including those for whom the school receives the pupil premium funding or have special educational needs, are met well. Their progress is carefully monitored and this helps to ensure they progress at least as well as other pupils.
- The teaching of reading is good. Reading books are set at the right level of challenge for individual pupils. Pupils are taught to link letters and sounds, and they use this as a key way of reading words they know and words they have not met before.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour is consistently excellent, both around the school and in lessons. Pupils are always polite and courteous to each other and to adults. They hold doors open for others and move around the school in an orderly way.
- Pupils feel safe in school, particularly the younger ones. At break times, older pupils play with younger ones. Some older pupils have a role as play leaders. They help, encourage and monitor the behaviour of other pupils very well. Other pupils also say they like this way of being cared for. Play leaders help to sort out any arguments and are well respected by other pupils.
- Pupils understand and like the reward system for behaviour, such as merit points and an 'excellence cup'. They say this makes them feel that good behaviour is valued and that they are appreciated. As one pupil said, 'This school cares about the children.'
- Pupils have an awareness of a wide range of types of bullying. They know how words can be used to hurt the feelings of others and to encourage discrimination. This includes the use of homophobic language. Pupils say there is no bullying that they are aware of, and if there was they are confident it would be dealt with. They understand about internet safety and why passwords are used.
- Attendance each year is above average. This is because the school works hard to encourage attendance and pupils enjoy coming to school.

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders at all levels know the school well, and their actions have brought about better progress for pupils and improvements in the quality of teaching. Their evaluation of how well the school is doing is mostly accurate and has resulted in a clear set of priorities, demonstrating the school's good capacity for further improvement. Leaders are rightly ambitious for the school to become outstanding.
- Leaders and staff share a clear vision about what the school is trying to achieve in developing a style of teaching that fully meets the needs of its pupils. This is monitored and evaluated in order to maintain and improve the work of the school. However, leaders do not consistently measure the school's success by referring to pupils' learning.
- All staff strongly agree that the school is led and managed well, and the vast majority of parents agree. Staff are proud to work at the school, and are effective in their areas of responsibility.
- Leadership is shared amongst staff and uses a wide range of expertise in monitoring the school's effectiveness and making improvements. For example, subject leaders analyse information on pupils' achievement, as well as carrying out lesson observations and looking at pupils' books.
- Targets for teachers to improve their work are linked appropriately to pupils' achievement when considering pay rises. Training is used well to help teachers improve.
- The subjects taught provide a good range of different learning opportunities, both in lessons and beyond. The many after-school clubs cover a range of interests and, for example, include tennis and drama. The way subjects are taught, the support for vulnerable pupils and the range of activities offered all help to create a school where there are equal opportunities for all pupils.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils have an extensive knowledge and understanding of major religions and faiths. They have opportunities to reflect and consider, as part of their learning style, and in assemblies. This encourages deeper human reflections. For example, in a philosophy lesson pupils discussed abstract paintings and the artist's intentions.
- Pupils know right from wrong and apply this in their consideration towards each other and to adults. They have a strong cultural awareness and the school has close links with a school in Kenya, whose headteacher was visiting the school during the inspection. Creativity is encouraged. All pupils learn to play the recorder and the majority learn an additional instrument.
- The local authority has taken a 'light touch' approach to supporting the school because it was judged good when last inspected. The headteacher has been used to support other schools and this has had a positive impact by developing a range of skills and knowledge that can be applied to school improvement. It has also helped to increase the role of other leaders on days when the headteacher has been working with other schools.
- At the time of the inspection, national safeguarding requirements were met. Appropriate checks have been made on all on adults working with pupils. Health and safety and site security are diligently monitored to ensure pupils' safety and security.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governors share the staff's aspirational vision for their pupils, and for the school to

improve further. They hold the headteacher to account through setting challenging performance targets for staff that link to pupils' achievement. They check how well pupils are achieving by asking for information on their attainment and progress, which they clearly understand. They know about how well the school is performing against other primary schools. They are involved in planning for improvement and play an active role, for example by using 'learning mentors' and asking teachers to make writing targets more precise. They have a good awareness of how effective teachers are, and set appropriate targets to help them improve. Governors have a full knowledge of the pupil premium funding and monitor its impact on the achievement of eligible pupils. They understand why it is spent on actions such as individual and small group support and employing teaching assistants. They ensure statutory requirements are met.

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	115111
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	403257

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	103
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev John Hall
Headteacher	Penny Smith
Date of previous school inspection	24 September 2007
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