

St Andrew's CofE Primary School

School Green Lane, North Weald, Epping, CM16 6EH

Inspection dates 22–23 May 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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher keeps everyone focused on driving improvements to teaching. She is supported well in this task by a thoughtful and challenging governing body.
- By increasing expectations of the more-able pupils and making lessons more demanding, the number of pupils working at higher levels of attainment has increased.
- There have been considerable improvements since the last inspection in the quality of the pupils' writing.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes develop into confident young learners. This is because all adults make sure activities capture their imaginations and move their learning forward.
- The school caters well for disabled students and those with special educational needs because it quickly and accurately identifies their needs before putting in place carefully targeted and effective support.
- Pupils try their hardest in lessons because they are keen to do well. They work well together when sharing ideas or planning tasks.
- The pupils' welcoming behaviour makes the school a calm place in which they learn and develop happily.
- Staff and governors take every care to ensure the pupils are safe at all times. As a result, pupils feel very safe and secure in school, and know who to approach if they have concerns.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not all teachers make the best use of time in lessons to drive forward the pupils' learning and progress quickly enough.
- Marking does not always make clear to pupils how they can improve the quality of their work in order to meet their individual targets.
- Teachers do not pay enough attention to developing the pupils' writing and number skills across different subjects.
- The school has not used examples of high-quality teaching to help teachers understand how best to improve their teaching.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons or parts of lessons, four of which were seen together with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, school staff and members of the governing body. A telephone discussion was also held with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 48 responses to the online parent questionnaire (Parent View) and held informal discussions with parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information on the pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors also listened to the reading of a sample of pupils in Years 1 and 2.

Inspection team

Martin Beale, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Edwin Powell

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is below average in size.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds, although the number from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds is rising.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for funding through the pupil premium is below average. This is extra money given to schools for pupils, in this case, known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is low.
- More pupils than in most other primary schools join or leave partway through their primary school education.
- The school has experienced a period of staffing instability caused by the absence of several teachers, including those with subject leadership roles.
- 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 teaching so that more is of an outstanding quality by:
 - enabling teachers to develop their skills by working alongside outstanding teachers
 - moving learning forward in all lessons at a consistently fast pace
 - providing planned opportunities for pupils to develop their writing and number skills in subjects beyond English and mathematics.
- Provide pupils with better guidance through their teachers' marking to help them improve their work and take the steps needed to achieve their targets.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Effective teaching across the school is leading to pupils making good and improving progress. Their attainment is rising. Greater challenge in lessons is leading to increasing numbers of pupils working at levels above those expected for their age. There is no pattern to any differences in the attainment of boys and girls and later arrivals make similarly good progress as the others.
- Children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception from skills on entry well below those expected for their age. This is because teaching is good, the children become independent and they support each other's learning by working happily together. Their attainment is rising but is below average by the end of Reception, particularly in writing.
- The school has successfully closed the gap between the pupils' attainment in writing and reading, and also improved boys' writing. This is partly because pupils have many opportunities for extended writing in English lessons and teachers use interesting resources to stimulate the pupils' imaginations such as still photographs and film clips.
- Pupils in the current Year 6 are on track to reverse the decline in test results that occurred in 2012. The investment in an additional teaching group for mathematics in Year 6 has led to several pupils working at very high levels. Similarly, the decline in attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 has been reversed, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- All pupils' key skills develop well, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who join the school partway through their primary education. Their understanding of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) has improved considerably and they apply their skills confidently when meeting unfamiliar words. Pupils develop and consolidate their calculating skills securely by solving problems which become quite complex by the time they reach Year 6.
- The school uses its pupil-premium funding well through very carefully targeted small-group work to support eligible pupils. The gap between their attainment and that of others has closed very considerably this year and is negligible, having been two years behind in English and mathematics in 2012 Year 6 national tests.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. This is because their needs are carefully identified and met well, including through early support for literacy and other personalised programmes.

The quality of teaching is good

- A major feature is that lessons are calm because teachers manage the pupils' behaviour well and make learning interesting through the imaginative use of resources. Their praise results in the pupils being confident to answer questions and share their ideas with others. Teachers are skilled at allowing learning to develop through their timely interventions and probing questions. Their secure subject knowledge is shown in the way they draw out ideas and extend learning through their questioning.
- Learning support assistants make a considerable contribution to the progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. They have a clear understanding of their individual targets and encourage the pupils they work with to become independent rather than

relying too much on their support.

- Teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes continually engages the children's interest so that not a moment is lost. Activities are thoughtfully planned to meet the children's needs and interests. The sharp focus by adults on teaching reading and numeracy is supported well by the resources available for children to choose when developing learning themselves. However, there are not enough opportunities for children to develop their writing skills when working independently.
- Where teaching is at its most effective, learning moves forward at a brisk pace with a good degree of challenge for all pupils. However, this is not always the case and there are occasions when teachers do not make the most use of the time available with a resulting slowing to the rate of learning.
- School leaders have identified that marking has become inconsistent in its guidance for pupils. The most effective marking supports learning by showing clearly how pupils can improve their work. However, this does not happen across all classes and at times pupils are left unclear about how well they are doing and what steps they should take to be more successful and meet their targets.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils engage enthusiastically in lessons and activities. They happily share tasks and ideas, and support each other with their learning. They also take pride in their achievements, which is reflected in the care they take over the presentation of their work including their neatly formed handwriting. Their enjoyment of school is seen in their rising attendance levels.
- Pupils behave well in corridors and at playtime because they are fully aware what is expected of them. They work and play sensibly and happily together. Pupils show much respect towards each other and adults. They are very helpful and take on responsibilities as they progress through the school such as leading assemblies and mentoring Year 1 pupils who need support with their reading. They happily support newcomers to settle into school and make sure that they make new friends quickly.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and are taught how to look after themselves such as when using the internet. They are clear what constitutes different forms of bullying and report that these are simply not an issue for them as everyone gets on so well together. They are confident that if an incident occurs it will be dealt with swiftly. School records confirm their views. However, this is slightly at odds with responses to the questionnaire from some parents who have concerns about how well the school deals with bullying.

The leadership and management are good

- In spite of staffing difficulties, particularly of subject leaders, the headteacher has led a period of sustained improvement. By successfully tackling shortcomings identified by the previous inspection, attainment and attendance have risen across the school. Planning for the school's improvement is focused on actions to increase the pupils' progress against challenging targets.
- The main reason for the school's improvement is the focus on eliminating weaknesses in teaching and improving the performance of all teachers. Regular checking of teaching is closely linked to individual guidance on where improvement is needed. The headteacher makes sure only good or better teaching is rewarded with pay rises.

- The school makes sure all pupils have an equal chance of success, hence any gaps in attainment between different groups are closing fast. Through the careful analysis of assessment data, leaders are able to spot and tackle any potential underachievement swiftly. Highly effective relationships with outside agencies bring additional expertise for pupils with special educational needs through music therapy and support for pupils with behavioural difficulties. Everybody knows that discrimination is not tolerated.
- The organisation of subjects meets the pupils' needs and provides challenge for more-able pupils in mathematics in Year 6. However, opportunities for pupils to develop and apply their writing and their mathematical skills across subjects are limited and unstructured.
- The school pays careful attention to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through assemblies and the personal development programme. Pupils develop their own values and learn the importance of trust and responsibility in relationships. Art plays an important part in school life and the school choir has sung publicly. Pupils have a wider understanding of how others live but there is scope for them to learn more about other faith communities.
- Local authority support has been effective in clarifying for the headteacher the action needed to bring about better pupil achievement. Training has recently been provided to improve the guidance provided for pupils through marking. However, the school has not brought in examples of high-quality teaching to help teachers understand how best to improve their teaching
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has increased its involvement in shaping the school's direction since the previous inspection. Governors hold the headteacher to account by posing challenging questions, and carefully monitor the impact of plans designed to improve the school. They participate in regular training, including in extending their expertise in assessment data so that they have a good understanding of pupils' achievement. This, and their visits to the school, gives them a secure understanding of its performance and where improvements can be made. They are aware that teaching is good and how its quality has been maintained during staff absence through setting challenging targets for teachers. They know how the school rewards good teaching and tackles any underperformance. They keep a close watch on the school's finances, checking carefully the impact of spending decisions such as the use of pupil premium funding.

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	115281
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	413118

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	206
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Moore
Headteacher	Gill Young
Date of previous school inspection	15 September 2009
Telephone number	01992 522283
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