

Stebbing Primary School

High Street, Stebbing, Dunmow, CM6 3SH

Inspection dates 26–27 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	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 greatly enjoy learning, work hard in class and, over time, achieve well, reaching standards in English and mathematics in most years that are above average.
- Teachers generate high levels of interest and enthusiasm from pupils, ensuring they are actively engaged in lessons and have many opportunities to discuss their ideas.
- Excellent relationships between teachers and pupils, and very clear routines ensure there is a very positive ethos throughout the school, where pupils are ready and eager to learn.
- Children get off to an excellent start to school in the Reception class, quickly becoming confident and independent learners.
- Pupils' outstanding behaviour is supported by excellent provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils feel extremely safe in school and get on very well together.
- The wide range of exciting activities provided across the curriculum contributes strongly to pupils' extremely positive attitudes to learning.
- Good leadership and management have ensured that teaching and achievement are consistently good. Governors play a full part in the school's success.
- The school makes excellent provision to ensure all pupils are fully included in all the school has to offer.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding to make achievement outstanding.
- In some lessons, adults do not check frequently enough on the progress of all pupils.
- For parts of some lessons, pupils of high ability are set tasks that are too easy for them.
- The excellent practice seen in some marking of pupils' written work is not consistently evident in all classes.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector made extended observations in eight lessons, three of these as joint observations with the headteacher. A number of shorter visits were made to lessons to observe pupils' learning across a range of different subjects. Several pupils in Year 1 read to the inspector.
- Extensive data was examined about the progress of different groups of pupils in the school. Other documentation was checked, including that relating to safeguarding and the management of teachers' performance.
- Formal discussions were held with several groups of pupils, and the inspector also spoke to other pupils informally. Meetings were held with members of staff, representatives of the governing body, and a representative from the local authority. A senior officer of the local authority was spoken to by telephone.
- Samples of pupils' work were analysed.
- The inspector took account of 37 replies to the online questionnaire, Parent View. Eighteen responses to a questionnaire for staff were also examined.

Inspection team

Steven Hill, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than average for a primary school. It has increased significantly in size since the previous inspection.
- Most pupils are White British. A small but increasing proportion comes from other ethnic backgrounds, with those of Traveller or Eastern European heritage being the largest of these groups. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported at school action is average. The proportion who are supported at school action plus or who have statements of special educational needs is average. Most of the latter group have statements which reflect a high level of need.
- The proportion of pupils who start at or leave the school other than at the usual times is high.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium funding is broadly average. Pupil premium is extra funding provided to the school to support those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, or who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets current government floor targets, which are minimum standards set for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There is a private pre-school provision on the site which is inspected and reported upon separately.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement by making teaching more consistent, so that more is outstanding, by ensuring that:
 - adults always check frequently on the progress of individuals and groups in the class, so that any misconceptions can be addressed quickly, and pupils who are succeeding can be challenged to refine their work.
 - good practice in marking is extended so that pupils are more often given extra practice on particular work when they need it, and challenged to attempt more difficult work when they succeed
 - teachers always give more-able pupils tasks that challenge them throughout the lesson.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start in the Reception class with achievement that varies between individuals and from year to year, but which is overall below that expected for their age. They make at least good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because of the very effective provision, particularly in developing their independence and their social skills.
- Pupils make at least good progress as individuals throughout the school, but the overall picture is often distorted for these small cohorts by significant amounts of pupil mobility into and from the school, and by high levels of special educational needs in some year groups. This leads to wide variation in attainment. In 2012, for example, attainment at Year 2 was below average but pupils nonetheless made good progress from their starting points. In the current group, standards are much higher.
- Achievement by the time pupils leave Year 6 is generally good over time. In 2012, results dipped but this was partly due to the very challenging circumstances facing a small number of pupils, over which the school had no control, as well as to the fact that a number of pupils had only recently arrived from other schools. This cohort made progress at least in line with expectations during Key Stage 2, and excellent progress during Year 6.
- In the last year, the school has greatly improved its tracking of individual pupils, so that any issues in performance are picked up quickly and addressed. Current data show that pupils in Year 6 have made good progress since Year 2. Attainment is likely to be well-above average for the current group. Progress by other year groups is variable from class to class but always meets expectations and is good overall.
- Pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding make the same progress as their classmates. The school uses this funding to provide additional small group and individual teaching for eligible pupils, as well as making sure that these pupils can take part in the full range of the school's activities. In some year groups, their attainment is better than that of other pupils in the class, and in others it is lower. For the current pupils in Year 6 who are entitled to pupil premium support, their attainment lags behind others by about two terms in English and a term and a half in mathematics. This is smaller than the gap seen nationally.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because of the specialised support they receive, and the provision of work that is carefully matched to their specific needs.

The quality of teaching is good

- All teaching observed during the inspection was at least good, with about a third being outstanding. Work in pupils' books and records of pupils' progress show this is typical of teaching over time.
- Teachers routinely use the good assessment data available, as well as their close knowledge of individuals' social and emotional needs, to provide different tasks for different pupils. This is particularly effective in ensuring that those who struggle with academic work are able to make good progress, and often ensures that the more able are given challenging work. For parts of some lessons, however, the tasks for more-able are the same as for everyone else, so that their progress is not as rapid as it should be.

- Teachers are extremely successful in motivating and enthusing pupils. They are particularly skilled in actively involving them in lessons so that they are very keen to learn, and join in activities with great enthusiasm.
- Teachers form very positive relationships with pupils, who trust and respect them, and are keen to please them through hard work and excellent behaviour. Lessons have a good pace and a lot of learning is often accomplished in the time available.
- Teachers make very effective use of the skilled assistants and other adults to support pupils' learning, particularly those who are disabled or who have special educational needs. Adults show good skills in intervening as pupils work, correcting any misconceptions, and challenging those who are doing well to refine their work and to aim higher. In some lessons, the adults do not get around all groups during the session, so not all pupils get this extra challenge, or the mistakes made by a few are not addressed quickly enough.
- The marking of pupils' work clearly identifies for them what they have done well, points out mistakes, and often makes suggestions of ideas to apply to future work. Although there are exceptions, pupils are not often given extra reinforcement work to help them sort out any errors or misunderstandings, or to extend their learning when they have been very successful.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The pupils' outstanding enjoyment of learning and their high levels of concentration play a strong part in their good progress. They are very keen to succeed and take a great pride in their accomplishments.
- Pupils' extremely good relationships with each other mean they work collaboratively, listening attentively to each other's views and contributing their own ideas with great confidence. They show equally strong levels of independence, because they are encouraged to make thoughtful choices from their start in the school.
- Pupils feel completely safe in school and cite their great confidence in the adults as the main reason for this. They have learned a lot about keeping themselves safe, including on the internet, both from school staff and from a variety of outside agencies, such as the 'Crucial Crew', who provide specific training in keeping safe in a range of situations.
- Pupils are given a good understanding of different forms of bullying and of how it should be dealt with. They insist it is rare in the school, and have great confidence in the adults to sort out any problems.
- Pupils from a range of different backgrounds get on very well together, and new arrivals soon make friends and are fully involved in different aspects of school life. Boys and girls work and play together cheerfully, whatever their ability or background.
- Pupils' delight in school activities is not fully reflected in their attendance, which is average. Figures are distorted by low annual attendance of some Traveller pupils who still pursue a traditional lifestyle, and of some pupils who regularly have to be out of school for medical reasons.
- The school has a strong record of dealing very effectively with pupils who have major emotional

or behaviour problems. There are notable examples of such pupils making great improvements in their behaviour, settling very happily in school, and subsequently making good progress academically.

The leadership and management are good

- A major strength of the school is its great commitment to equal opportunities and its determination to admit and help succeed pupils with a wide range of backgrounds, many with high levels of special educational needs. It is very successful in integrating all pupils into the full life of the school, so they enjoy learning and make good progress.
- The use of pupil premium funding to help relevant pupils both personally and academically has been successful, with the result that the progress of these pupils shows no significant difference from their classmates.
- Well-organised and imaginative teaching programmes contribute significantly to pupils' outstanding attitudes and to their very strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Specialist teaching in music, art and sport makes major contributions to learning. The availability of swimming lessons for all pupils twice a week in the summer leads to high standards, and high levels of enjoyment.
- The well-established 'Forest School' has allowed the school to provide excellent opportunities for outdoor learning for all pupils. During the inspection, for example, the chances to build their own pizza oven from local clay, to collect and examine a variety of 'bugs' from the pond, and to collect specimens from trees completely engrossed the attention of pupils in Years 4 and 5.
- Pupils have excellent opportunities to reflect on and discuss moral issues, and do so extremely thoughtfully. They have learned respect for others regardless of their background, and have been enabled to gain excellent social skills.
- Leaders provide a clear sense of priorities and common goals, and staff work well as a team to fulfil them. Teacher's performance is managed well, and regular observations of lessons and the analysis of data about pupils' progress help staff to improve their work. The use of data has been greatly strengthened in the past year, although this is only just being formally included in targets set for teachers' performance.
- The local authority provides good support to the school, increasing its monitoring appropriately in response to the weaker results in the national tests in 2012.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have greatly improved their systems to check on the school's strengths and weaknesses, including the analysis of data, so have a clear understanding of these. They use this knowledge to provide a good balance of challenge and support to the school. Funding is spent effectively, particularly pupil premium funding. The governing body has worked well with staff to ensure that safeguarding requirements are met. Governors are working closely with staff and other local schools to refine the school's practice in managing the performance of teachers and to ensure that all teaching is as good as it can be. They ensure that any issues arising in relation to teaching are speedily addressed and that teachers are rewarded for effective work.

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	114888
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	411833

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
Number of pupils on the school roll	129
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kate Atherton
Headteacher	Karen Wallace
Date of previous school inspection	17 June 2009
Telephone number	01371 856260
Fax number	01371 856091
Email address	admin@stebbing.essex.sch.uk

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