

# Quainton Church of England Combined School

Lower Street, Quainton, Aylesbury, HP22 4BJ

**Inspection dates** 19–20 June 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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 school is managed and led well. Governors have a realistic view of the school and challenge senior leaders to do better.
- Senior leaders show a strong determination to continually improve the quality of teaching through a well-thought-out training programme and by regularly monitoring pupils' achievement and teachers' performance.
- Pupils make rapid progress in their learning across the school and achieve well in English, reaching above average standards at the end of Year 6. Standards in mathematics are not yet as good.
- Pupils read very well as a result of the good teaching strategies. They develop wide vocabularies and speak with great confidence.
- Most of the teaching is good and some is outstanding. Teachers make lessons interesting and check pupils' progress regularly.
- The school provides a calm, harmonious and well-ordered atmosphere based on Christian principles. It promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils feel safe and valued. They enjoy coming to school and behave well.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always move pupils on to harder work in mathematics lessons soon enough.
- Pupils are not given enough information about how well they are doing and what steps they need to take to improve.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to practise their mathematics skills in other subjects and to apply them in solving real-life problems.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 19 lessons or parts of lessons, including five joint observations with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with four members of the governing body, including the Chair.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other school leaders and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke to two groups of pupils and listened to some pupils reading.
- Inspectors took account of 66 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), two letters from parents and the views expressed by parents as they arrived at school in the morning.
- They took account of 16 questionnaires returned by staff.
- A number of the school's documents were examined. These included the school's most recent data about pupils' progress, the school's self-evaluation and its development plan, an external review of the school by the local authority, evidence about the senior leaders' monitoring and evaluation of teaching, and school records relating to pupils' behaviour, safeguarding and attendance.

## Inspection team

Jim McVeigh, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Carol Worthington

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Quainton Church of England Combined School is smaller than the average primary school. Most of its pupils are from a White British background.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (extra government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children in local authority care and children of service personnel) is well below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with 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 above average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Key Stage 2.
- The school runs a breakfast club for its pupils.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching by making sure that teachers let pupils know what standard they are working at and what they need to do to improve.
- Improve achievement in mathematics by:
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to practise their mathematical skills in other subjects and apply them in real-life situations and to solve problems
  - moving pupils on to harder work in lessons as soon as they are ready.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils make rapid progress in their learning across the school. They achieve well in English and reach standards significantly above average at the end of Year 6. Standards achieved in mathematics have not been as high as in English, but school data and work seen in lessons and pupils' books show that pupils are on track to exceed national averages in mathematics this year.
- Children begin school with knowledge and skills that are broadly those expected for their age. They get a good start in the caring atmosphere of the Reception, settling in well and quickly becoming self-assured. They are taught well and make good progress.
- Pupils have many opportunities to discuss their ideas and opinions. They develop wide vocabularies and speak articulately and confidently. The school effectively encourages pupils to read often and parents to listen to them regularly. Pupils enjoy reading and learn to read well as a result of good teaching strategies, such as regular phonics (linking letters with the sounds they make) and well-structured guided reading sessions. Less-able readers in Year 2 have learned good strategies for tackling the unfamiliar words they come across.
- Pupils develop their numeracy skills well in mathematics lessons across the school. Teachers make sure pupils are confident in using a range of strategies, including number lines and partitioning, before they move up to the next level. Short, sharp interventions are put in place for any pupils who are underachieving until they catch up. However, there are too few opportunities to practise their developing mathematical skills in a wider range of subjects or to apply them in real-life situations in order to accelerate their progress even more.
- The school has used an effective strategy to improve writing. Pupils have many opportunities to practise their writing in different subjects and for different purposes, for example in reporting science observations and persuading people on a course of action. In a Year 6 lesson, all pupils made good progress in using emotive language to persuade others to support a charity, because their teacher knew their individual learning needs and planned the lesson accordingly.
- Disabled pupils or those who have special educational needs in all years make good progress in English and mathematics and achieve at least the same standards as similar pupils nationally. The school makes good use of external agencies to identify and support disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and closely monitors their progress and the effectiveness of additional provision.
- In 2012, the few Year 6 pupils who were eligible for the pupil premium were a year ahead of their peers in school in English and about half a term behind in mathematics. The school is effectively closing the gap between these pupils and their peers. The pupil premium is partly used to purchase hot school meals and extra resources for mathematics.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and the quality of their work. They plan interesting activities in their lessons that engage pupils well. For example, Year 3 pupils were enthralled by a game involving calculating times and made outstanding progress.
- The Reception class caters well for the needs of children. They flourish in its exciting environment and the stimulating activities available really help them develop their imagination and curiosity. For example, children were seen working very cooperatively organising a race; some were 'riding horses' around an obstacle track while others were timing, photographing and recording winners on the results board. At the same time, two children were engrossed observing chicks in an incubator and discussing intently with their teacher how they were developing.
- Teachers check pupils' progress regularly by formal assessments and through frequent marking, and use the information to plan suitable lessons. Teachers' marking in books shows pupils what

they have done well and usually gives some advice on how they can improve or a question to further test their understanding. However, pupils are not clear enough about the standard they are working at or what they need to do to move up a level.

- Teachers do not always assess how well pupils are doing in mathematics lessons quickly enough so they can move them onto harder work promptly and so accelerate their progress. For example, in a mathematics lesson about multiplication of decimal numbers, some pupils who knew the calculation method well were not set hard enough problems straight away.
- Reading is taught well. Teachers model how to produce the sounds that letters make clearly and accurately. They provide engaging activities, such as using the sounds learned in new words and sentences, that help pupils to consolidate their learning well.
- Teachers use questioning well to help pupils extend their understanding. In a Year 6 lesson, the teacher skilfully led a whole-class discussion on ways to improve pupils' persuasive writing. Pupils understood the nature of rhetorical questions and how they could be used in emotive text.

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

- Staff and pupils worked together to establish the nine values behind Quainton Church of England Combined School. All forms of discrimination are discouraged and there is equality of opportunity for all. Pupils feel valued and mutual respect is evident between all members of the school community. Pupils learn to look out for one another. Older pupils take the responsibility to make sure younger pupils are happy and have someone to play with at break times.
- Pupils know the school's behaviour policy and try hard to follow the rules. Their behaviour makes a significant contribution to the school's calm and harmonious atmosphere. Around the school, they are usually courteous and helpful to one another and to strangers. In lessons, they generally have positive attitudes to their learning. However, sometimes, when the pace is too slow, pupils' concentration wanes.
- Pupils enjoy lessons and they like their teachers. Attendance is above average and punctuality is good. Pupils cooperate well with each other in group activities, sharing roles and materials fairly, and listen to one another considerately during discussions.
- Pupils are aware of the different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying. They say there is little bullying at school and that any that might occur is tackled quickly and effectively. Playtimes are monitored well and pupils feel safe and secure, although one pupil said some play could be too rough and sometimes there is name calling.
- The school records all incidents of misbehaviour thoroughly. There have been very few in recent years and no external exclusions. The school uses restorative approaches to resolve the occasional disputes between pupils successfully.
- Pupils know how to be healthy and keep themselves safe. They remember learning about such things as road and e-safety from the police and first aid from a nurse.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well through assemblies, acts of collective worship, celebrations of religious festivals and lessons. Pupils visit a range of religious buildings, such as a Sikh Gurdwara, and have strong links with another local school with a richer diversity of cultural backgrounds so that pupils are aware of and respect the variety of beliefs and cultures that exist.
- Parents are pleased with the school's breakfast club, which is well run and has a warm and friendly atmosphere.

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

- The leadership team has high expectations and a clear vision for the school shared by staff and governors. There is a palpable sense of teamwork within the school. Senior leaders are relentless in their drive to raise the quality of teaching. Since the arrival of the new headteacher two years ago, the quality of teaching and pupils' progress have improved further. Nevertheless,

leaders realise that achievement, particularly in mathematics, has to improve still further.

- Leaders are rigorous in monitoring the quality of teaching, including the performance of teaching assistants. They closely monitor pupils' progress to identify quickly any who need extra support and check that the support is effective.
- The school engages well with parents. Information evenings about such topics as mathematics and e-safety are well attended and parents are regularly canvassed for their opinions. Parents spoken to agreed that their children are making good progress and praised the friendly, caring attitude of staff.
- Leaders are well aware of the strengths and areas for improvement in their school. The clear plans for improvement being implemented are proving effective. Teachers have a well-planned programme of professional development based on the needs of the school, such as further whole-staff training in mathematics. Leaders ensure teaching assistants share their good practice across the school.
- The school provides a broad and balanced range of subjects with a suitable focus on discrete English and mathematics lessons. Other subjects are linked through themes, such as 'fire' and 'heroes,' that appeal to boys and girls. A number of exciting visits or visitors related to the theme, such as to a fire station, enrich the learning even further. There are a variety of well-attended clubs for a range of sports and including science, computers and origami. The school's garden (the orchard), with a range of trees and a pond, is a wonderful resource for science studies and there is a very active gardening club.
- The local authority supports the school well by providing up-to-date training for teachers and governors and reviewing the impact of the school's initiatives.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body has a wide range of skills and takes full advantage of the training provided by the local authority. Governors act as challenging friends. They have an accurate view of the school's performance, including the achievement of pupils, through focused visits and regular updates from the headteacher and subject leaders. They know the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' progress. They make sure the rewards teachers receive are warranted and set robust targets for the headteacher to meet. Governors make sure the school makes sound financial decisions and allocates the pupil premium effectively. All statutory arrangements for safeguarding are securely in place.

## 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>	110447
<b>Local authority</b>	Buckinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	411871

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 aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	198
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Peter Bragg
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gareth Mirams
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25 May 2010
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