

Cheynes Infant School

Cranbrook Drive, Sundon Park, Luton, LU3 3EW

Inspection dates 11–12 September 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.

- Pupils' progress is good because teaching is good. Teachers make good use of questions to help pupils think more deeply about what they are learning and to solve problems.
- Children in Reception make good progress because teachers make sure that they rapidly gain the confidence to talk to each other and work well together.
- Teachers provide interesting and challenging work. They focus well on reading, writing and mathematics and encourage pupils to work together and independently.
- Pupils enjoy school, like learning and are keen to do well.
- Pupils behave well. They say that bullying is rare and that staff deal with any problems quickly and effectively. They feel safe and are well cared for.
- The headteacher provides extremely good leadership. She works well with other leaders, staff and most governors to make sure that pupils make good progress and reach high standards.
- Leaders provide good training to help teachers improve their skills. Leaders are well trained to help them be effective. The school is improving well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always make sure that individual pupils working within groups are challenged enough.
- Teachers do not always check the work of all groups of pupils in their classes to make sure that they are working at the same fast pace.
- Occasionally, the next steps in learning teachers set pupils when they mark their work are not challenging enough.
- Some governors are not well enough informed about school policies or the progress pupils make, limiting how well they can support each other or challenge the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed nine teachers in 19 lessons or parts of lessons. Two of these were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with staff, pupils and governors, and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors also spoke to parents and carers bringing their children to school and to others in an arranged meeting.
- Inspectors examined documents about the school’s work, including information about the achievement of pupils, development planning and the school’s self-evaluation.
- Inspectors took account of 32 responses to the Parent View online questionnaire, and the school’s own survey of parents’ and carers’ views. They considered 35 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Edward Wheatley, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Alan Jarvis

Additional Inspector

Fatiha Maitland

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than most infant schools. The proportion of pupils coming from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average and the proportion who do not have English as their first language is also above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is well below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is broadly average. This is the additional government funding for children looked after by the local authority and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- There have been several changes to teaching staff in recent years.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and raise pupils' achievement further by making sure that:
 - individual pupils working in groups have challenging work that meets their particular learning needs
 - teachers check that all groups of pupils in their classes work at the same fast pace
 - teachers always give pupils challenging next steps in learning.
- Make sure that all governors are well informed about school policies, school information and how well pupils make progress so that they can support each other and challenge the school effectively.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start in the Reception classes with skills and experiences that are below those typical for their age; some children not having been either to a nursery school or pre-school setting. Many children have underdeveloped communication and personal, social and emotional skills for their age. They make good progress and by the end of their time in Reception reach a good level of development. Most meet and a small minority exceeds the expected levels for their age across the areas of learning, including in literacy and mathematics.
- Standards at the end of Year 2 are above average and are rising. Pupils are motivated by the activities they undertake and their positive attitudes to learning have a good effect on their achievement. They have been consistently above average in writing and mathematics in recent years, but have varied over time from above to average in reading. Pupils make good progress and the dip in reading results in 2012 has been successfully addressed.
- Pupils write well. They have a wide vocabulary, express their ideas clearly, and link them together well to write fluently and imaginatively.
- Pupils read widely and with enjoyment. Most read well. Those who find reading hard know how to link sounds and letters together to help them read words, although occasionally they do not manage to do so well enough. The results of the school's 2013 reading checks were broadly average, similar to the results of 2012. The school has recognised where pupils are having difficulties and has introduced a new whole-school scheme to help pupils read better. Initial indications are that this is promoting better progress in reading.
- Pupils have good mathematical skills. They practise mathematical skills daily. Since the school was last inspected, their problem-solving skills have improved considerably. This is helping them carry out calculations confidently and competently.
- Disabled pupil and those who have special educational needs make good progress. Learning assistants work well with these pupils to make sure that they gain independence in their learning and gain the skills they need to help them learn well in all subjects.
- Pupils at the early stages of learning English make good progress. They are well supported by learning assistants and other pupils talk to them and make sure that they are involved in learning activities. They learn to speak English quickly and this helps them make good progress in learning in all subjects.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium funding make good progress, and sometimes faster progress than other pupils in the school. Generally, they start Year 1 about two terms behind other pupils in their learning. The gap between them and other pupils is closing and by the end of Year 2 they are about one term behind in reading, writing and mathematics. Funds are spent well to provide books to help them read, for support to help them catch up, and to make sure that they have the same opportunities as other pupils for trips and out-of-school activities.
- The most able pupils do well and reach high levels in teachers' assessments at the end of Year 2. They are well supported with resources and activities that promote their interest in learning extremely well. For example, in a story reading lesson Year 2 able pupils enthusiastically explained how a crocodile would eat something using complex, descriptive sentences.

- It is too soon to evaluate the impact of the sports premium funding the school receives on their achievement in physical education. However, the school's records indicate that pupils make good progress currently in developing physical skills. The school's proposed programme aims to enable increased involvement in after-school sports activities and competitions, and to provide professional sports' coaching for pupils.

The quality of teaching is good

- Most of the time teachers provide work that is well matched to pupils' learning needs, catches their interest and helps them to be enthusiastic learners.
- Work for most pupils is challenging. For the most able pupils, work makes them think about and explain their understanding. For the least able pupils it is well organised to help them learn in small steps and gain confidence in their own abilities.
- Teachers assess pupils' performance accurately and mostly use the information well to plan learning activities.
- Where pupils' learning is most effective, teachers question pupils well and make them explain their understanding to each other and the whole class.
- Teachers provided many opportunities for pupils to work together in small groups. In these pupils learn to help each other, and to consider the ideas and opinions of others. This contributes well to their social, moral and cultural development and also helps to promote positive attitudes to learning.
- The range of activities in lessons is good. Teachers make sure that pupils read, write and use their mathematical skills in most subjects, and learn to solve problems. They make sure that pupils spend some time working independently, and this helps them become confident learners.
- Teaching in the Reception classes is good. Teachers and other adults establish good relationships with children quickly. They talk to them and encourage them to talk to each other. Staff make sure that children learn well through a wide range of well planned activities for them to do both inside and outside.
- Teaching assistants work effectively in supporting pupils, especially the lowest attaining ones, and those supported through pupil premium funding.
- Teachers usually monitor the work of different groups of pupils well, and make sure that they work fast and are challenged by the work they do. However, occasionally they focus on one or two groups for too long and do not check uniformly across a class to make sure that all groups are learning equally fast.
- In most lessons teachers make sure that work is demanding. However, sometimes work that is challenging for a group of pupils as a whole is not hard enough for a few pupils within the group.
- Teachers' marking is mostly good. It praises pupils for good work, provides guidance on how pupils can make better progress and tells them what the next steps in their learning should be. Occasionally, the next steps in learning are not challenging enough which means that, briefly, the pace of pupils' learning slows.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well and their positive attitudes to learning have a good impact on the progress they make in all year groups. Pupils say that unkind or disruptive behaviour is rare.
- Pupils know how they should behave. The school has effective, consistently used policies to make sure that that pupils' behaviour is good and that rare unacceptable behaviour is dealt with well. Parents and carers confirm that there are rare occasions of poor behaviour and that, when these happen, the school deals with them well.
- Relationships between pupils are good. They help each other and older pupils look after younger ones. Some older pupils help to make sure that other pupils behave well, especially at lunchtimes. They say that lunchtime staff are very good at helping to sort out any occasional disagreements between pupils.
- Pupils feel safe. Most are sure of what bullying behaviour is like and know who they would go to if they were worried about anything.
- Pupils' attendance is broadly average, though most pupils have high levels of attendance. The school works hard to improve attendance; a very small number of pupils are frequently absent which affects the progress they can make. The school uses a wide range of approaches and its strong links with external agencies to work with families to improve their attendance.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides extremely good direction for the school's improvement. Additional funding received from the government is used well and the school has appropriate plans to spend and evaluate the impact of the new sports funding.
- The headteacher is well supported by other leaders such as those for subjects and areas of the school's work. Their leadership skills are developed well. Together they have a good understanding of the school's weaknesses and act quickly to deal with them. For example, they quickly made sure that pupils improved their mathematical problem-solving skills and have trained all staff to implement a whole-school approach to improve pupils' reading skills.
- The school works effectively to improve teaching. Inadequate teaching has been eliminated, and high quality training provided to help improve teaching to at least good and to improve good teaching to outstanding. Senior leaders are fully involved in checking on the quality of teaching and in helping teachers improve their teaching skills.
- Teachers have targets to help them improve their work. These are linked to teachers' professional development, the school's areas for development and to the progress made by pupils. Teachers know that they have to meet their targets in order to advance along their salary scales.
- The local authority provides good support for leaders to help them gain the skills needed to check on the effectiveness of the school and to plan its improvements. The school provides valuable support for pre-school establishments to help them with teaching children before they come to Cheynes.

- The curriculum is well organised and includes many opportunities for pupils to practise and improve their reading, writing and mathematical skills. Subjects are linked together well. For example, the 'Gruffalo' story is used well to help pupils improve their writing, vocabulary, counting and to learn about different animals. The curriculum is enriched with music, sports and activities that teach pupils about other countries, different people and religions, and about respecting other people. This promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well and their interest and motivation to learn.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is well managed. Staff have very good links with families, nurseries and other pre-school providers. They work effectively to make sure that children settle into the school quickly. The school has a well-organised and attractive outdoor learning space that children are encouraged to use. Staff focus especially on developing children's personal, social and emotional development and speech as the basis of helping them to settle to work quickly.
- Parents and carers who spoke with inspectors during the inspection are pleased with the school. The responses to the Parent View online questionnaire and the school's own questionnaire reflect this. The school has effective ways to make sure that parents' and carers' views are considered and their concerns addressed. It provides activities to help parents and carers find out about how it teaches subjects so that they can help their children learn. It works hard with the small number of parents and carers who are hard to reach, especially to improve attendance.
- The school works effectively to promote good achievement by all pupils and positive attitudes to learning. Teaching is becoming even better, standards are rising and progress is improving. The school deals well with areas of underachievement. It continues to work hard to improve the attendance of pupils who are frequently absent. The school is demonstrating strong capacity for further improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Most governors support the school well and ask the headteacher and staff searching questions about pupils' achievement. They have a good understanding of how different groups of pupils perform compared with pupils nationally and locally. They plan expenditure carefully and check how it affects pupils' progress. They know that what they spend on supporting pupils funded through the pupil premium is having a positive effect on their progress, and that the gap between these and other pupils is closing. They have also been proactive in planning for the use of the new sport funding. Governors know how good teaching is and teachers have to meet their performance targets before they can advance on salary scales. They ensure that safeguarding requirements are met and that procedures to check the suitability of new staff are secure.
 - While visiting the school regularly and supporting staff where they can, a few governors are not well enough informed about the progress of pupils or about some of the school policies. This means they are not in a strong enough position to discuss pupils' progress with parents, carers and staff, or to support other governors in challenging the school.

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	109556
Local authority	Luton
Inspection number	425348

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	259
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Jesson
Headteacher	Linda Walsh
Date of previous school inspection	23 October 2008
Telephone number	01582 617800
Fax number	01582 617800
Email address	cheynes.infants.head@luton.gov.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

