

# The Grange School, Daventry

Staverton Road, Daventry, NN11 4HW

**Inspection dates** 25–26 September 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- School leaders and managers are passionate in their drive and determination that the school continues to improve.
- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. They know how to keep safe and they get on with each other exceptionally well.
- Pupils make, at least, good progress from their various starting points.
- Standards are often above national averages when pupils leave the school. There are strengths in the arts with some very high quality art, music, dance and drama presentations enjoyed by everyone.
- Teaching is good. Staff have strong working relationships with pupils. The marking of their work is very thorough and identifies what they need to do to improve further.
- Senior staff lead the school very well. They make clear their expectation of everyone in seeking further success. Governors are supportive and share everyone's pride in what has been achieved so far.
- Parents and carers are pleased with the quality of education and care provided.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some groups of pupils do not achieve quite as well as others.
- Parents and carers are not as fully involved as they could be in supporting their children's learning at home.
- In a few lessons the pace of learning is not fast enough and the level of challenge provided is not high enough.
- Staff do not always plan enough tasks that enable pupils to develop independent ways of working.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of 29 lessons across the full age range in school. Several of these were joint observations with the headteacher and acting deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, acting deputy headteacher, the literacy and numeracy leaders, the Early Years Foundation Stage leader and staff working with disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Discussions also took place with groups of pupils and representatives of the governing body. A discussion with a representative of the local authority took place on the telephone.
- Inspectors took account of 31 parents and carers from the online questionnaire (Parent View). They received a small number of written communications from parents and spoke to several others at the start of the school day. Inspectors also reviewed the 37 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including data on pupil's progress and planning and monitoring information. Inspectors also listened to individual pupils reading and scrutinised a sample of recent work. They also considered in detail records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Sue Hall, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Janet Watson	Additional Inspector
Graham Gossage	Additional Inspector
Debra McCarthy	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a larger than average sized primary school.
- Around 15% of pupils are from minority ethnic groups, which is less than the national average. Just over half of these pupils speak English as an additional language.
- Around 30% of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is a little above the national average. This provides additional funding for those known to be eligible for free school meals, those looked after by the local authority and others.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs identified at school action is about half the national average. The school has slightly more than the average proportion of pupils identified at school action plus or with a statement of special educational need.
- The school has specially resourced provision for special educational needs in a Designated Special Provision (DSP) for autism. This is currently managed by staff from a local special school. The provision is for ten pupils, with six places taken and is often integrated into The Grange School's activities.
- The school also has specially resourced provision for speech and language in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The provision can provide for up to ten children.
- The school holds numerous awards including Artsmark Gold, Healthy Schools Gold and a gold Anti-Bullying Award.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

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

- Accelerate pupils' rate of progress and raise achievement even higher across the school by:
  - checking that all groups of pupils, especially boys and a few of those who are entitled to support from the pupil premium, attain as well as their classmates
  - encouraging parents to support more actively their children's learning at home.
- Ensure that all teaching across the school is always effective by:
  - checking that learning in lessons always proceeds at a brisk pace and that activities are well matched to the pupils' different abilities
  - making sure that pupils have sufficient opportunities to develop the confidence to complete tasks independently.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with an unusually wide range of skills and early experiences. About half the pupils who attend the school's Nursery then move to their local schools and the others stay on and enter Reception. Others enter the Reception Year group with little formal early education.
- Observations show that the group of children who have just started school have, overall, skills that are close to those typical for their age. School records indicate that previous groups have often had lower-level skills which were below, and sometimes well below, the expectations for their age, especially in communicating with others.
- As pupils – including the most able – move through the school, they make good progress. Their exceptionally positive attitudes to learning contribute to their success. A growing proportion makes excellent progress but this is not consistently so for all groups and is, therefore, why progress is not yet outstanding overall. Standards have improved in the last few years and when pupils leave the school, attainment is often slightly above national averages. Excellent progress was sometimes seen during the inspection – including in Year 5 when pupils were so interested in finding similes and metaphors related to the theme of 'water, water, everywhere' that they did not notice it was playtime.
- The school teaches children to recognise letters and the sounds they make (phonics) very successfully, with pupils doing particularly well in checks at the end of Year 1. Many pupils develop their reading skills effectively, although the school recognises that not all pupils achieved as well as anticipated in reading tests at the end of Year 6 in the last year. Some pupils read regularly in school although some older ones indicate they have not read to a trained adult recently.
- The school employs additional teachers to support those who struggle to read and staff are very keen to further involve parents and carers who lack the confidence to support their children's reading at home. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are very varied with many becoming confident and articulate communicators while others struggle to express themselves in detail.
- A major focus of senior leaders for some time has been to improve pupils' writing skills. The school has been involved in several initiatives and met with some success. This has been reflected in the proportion of pupils achieving at least what they should and in the proportion working at the higher levels. Similar improvement has also been seen recently in mathematics where more pupils reached the higher levels in their work than in reading and writing.
- While pupils generally achieve well, and a growing proportion does very well, in Key Stage 1 boys do not make as much progress as girls and do not always achieve ahead of national results. Although the gap between boys' and girls' attainment is closing, this remains a priority for the school, including in Key Stage 1.
- Pupils entitled to support from the pupil premium make good overall progress. Standards have lagged behind those of their classmates with a gap of approximately two terms between this group and other pupils in the school. In the last year, the gap closed in reading and writing but not as noticeably in mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including those in the DSP, make good progress and some achieve very well in relation to their category of disability and special

educational need. Autistic pupils communicate better. The few children in the Early Years Foundation Stage specially resourced provision also make good progress in speaking and language skills in general. Pupils who speak English as an additional language also make good and, sometimes, very rapid progress. All these groups achieve well because the school tailors a very effective programme of support that meets pupils' individual needs effectively.

## **The quality of teaching** is good

- Lesson observations and samples of pupils' work show that teaching is consistently good, with a few examples of outstanding teaching and a little that requires improvement. School records indicate that the proportion of good or better teaching has improved in the last year and the percentage that requires improvement is much reduced as the result of focused support from the leadership team.
- A strong feature of teaching across the school is the excellent relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils are given lots of praise which raises their self-esteem and confidence. Very good verbal feedback is given to all pupils. The marking in pupils' books is extensive and clearly identifies what they have done well and the next steps to improvement.
- The most effective teaching was illustrated by high expectations of what all pupils can do. This was seen to excellent effect in Year 4 when pupils were fully focused in a series of short, related tasks naming and classifying different shapes using their properties. The most-able pupils were very well challenged through additional questions to explain the properties of a trapezium and rhombus while disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs worked with more straightforward shapes.
- Occasionally, teaching is less effective because the pace of learning is too slow and the level of challenge for some groups, including the most able, is not good enough. In Key Stage 1, for example, explanations of the task to investigate how to make given amounts of money with coins were not clear. Because the pupils did not understand they were to find how many ways they could make 10p or 20p, this slowed their learning and adversely affected the progress made. At times pupils do not have enough opportunities to make choices in their learning or develop independence.
- School leaders and the special educational needs coordinator work effectively with other staff to check where help is most needed. Particular support is provided to disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including those with autistic spectrum disorder in the DSP. Effective support is also provided for pupils entitled to the pupil premium. This support is often very well matched to individual need.
- The school employs several additional teachers, identified as particularly skilled, to work with groups of pupils including for reading support. Reading records of some low-achieving pupils show that they read on a daily basis to a trained adult and with this help are developing a good range of strategies to work out unfamiliar words.
- The school has some skilled teaching assistants who provide individuals and groups of pupils with challenge in the work they are doing. However, at times staff do not ask follow-up questions and some pupils answer very briefly, which does little to develop their speaking skills.
- The teaching of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is consistently good with effective use of the outdoor areas to provide an interesting range of activities. The very small number of children in the specially resourced provision for children of this age make similarly good progress to that of others. Very occasionally, staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage do not monitor the

behaviour of the youngest children outdoors well enough to ensure they are working appropriately.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** is outstanding

- Pupils typically behave in an exemplary manner both in lessons and when moving around the school. They are unfailingly polite to each other, saying 'please' and 'thank you' on a regular basis with numerous unprompted acts of kindness to each other. Older pupils show a great deal of pride in being chosen to take on roles of responsibility, including helping the youngest children at lunchtime.
- Pupils are consistently polite to adults and value the close working relationships they have with those around them. Unprompted, they hold doors open for others and their behaviour in whole-school events such as assembly is outstanding. For example, even when there are more than 400 pupils together they sensibly discussed their ideas of school 'values' with a partner. Their contributions show they are very responsive and reflective about their own learning.
- Parents speak with pride about their children's enthusiasm for activities, including music, dance and drama presentations. Pupils speak joyfully about how many of them have taken part in concerts at a local theatre with photographic evidence showing numerous examples of pupils' huge enthusiasm for such activities. Very high-quality artwork is widely displayed around the school and illustrates the care pupils take with their creations.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are consistently exceptionally positive. When teaching is outstanding, they are particularly enthusiastic and respond to the level of challenge provided. Very occasionally, some pupils are quiet in discussions but this is linked to the quality of teaching, including whether tasks allow them to develop the skills of independence in their learning.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe. They believe there is little bullying in school and feel confident staff would act upon any concerns they might raise. They identify different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying, and know this would not be acceptable in any form.
- Attendance is, currently, above average. The school has worked hard to raise attendance year on year with careful monitoring of attendance and punctuality by staff.

### **The leadership and management** is good

- The enthusiastic headteacher is well supported by a knowledgeable, acting deputy headteacher and the leadership team. Senior staff share a very clearly communicated passion for the education of pupils at The Grange and a determination to continually improve what is provided. Clear vision of a well-defined route for improvement has contributed to rising standards and more effective teaching.
- The school has considerably improved in recent years. Senior staff fervently believe this is now an outstanding school. However, at times they find it challenging to stand back and be objective about exactly where they are on the school's journey of improvement.
- The school has extended the use of data on pupils' performance to check and track the progress they make. A particularly effective feature of recent improvement has been the employment of skilled additional teachers to provide further help for pupils entitled to support from pupil premium funding, and disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. This high-

quality work has made a positive impact on the achievement of the most vulnerable pupils.

- The school has an extensive programme of monitoring teaching and learning. Senior leaders, and the English and mathematics subject leaders, all carry out formal and informal checks of how effective teaching is. While some are new to their positions and have had limited time to make an impact in areas for which they hold responsibility, they have a clear understanding of their roles. Monitoring is well linked to a programme of continuing professional development that is impacting well on the quality of teaching. The school provides effective help to subject leaders to develop their management skills. There are clear procedures to ensure that the most effective staff are recognised and paid more.
- Teaching assistants are included within the school's procedures to manage staff performance. Many take part in regular staff training activities, although some activities observed during the inspection indicate their effectiveness is variable.
- Nearly all parents are very appreciative of the quality of education and care provided for their children. The school works with parents to involve them in their children's learning – but with mixed success.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has particular strengths in the arts. The extensive display of high-quality artwork is an admirable feature of the school environment. School leaders have prioritised the development of the school accommodation in recent years. Some parts of the school, such as the atrium, are exceptional examples of how the learning environment is valued by staff and governors.
- The school provides an interesting range of subjects and activities which are appropriate to the age and stages of development of the pupils. The use of the primary school sport funding is being well considered and targeted to support a range of sporting activities. However, the impact of this work has yet to be fully seen because of the limited time the school has had to take action.
- Because the school is identified by the local authority as successful, it is right to provide 'light touch' support that helps to maintain a focus on what the data tell leaders about progress and what action they take.
- Procedures to safeguard pupils meet current requirements. Staff ensure that pupils have equal access to activities and the school fosters excellent relationships and tackles any discrimination. With the many improvements made in the last few years, the school shows that it has the capacity to continue to improve.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governance of the school is good with governors clearly appreciative of the school's many strengths. Governors are very supportive of the school. They have made a good job of helping to maintain a healthy financial position, prioritising the development of high-quality and very well-maintained accommodation. They have similarly ensured funding is used effectively to provide additional teachers, which is making a positive impact on the progress made by several groups of pupils, including those eligible for the pupil premium. The governing body understands what the quality of teaching is and supports the headteacher in managing teachers' performance. Governors help to ensure that pay matches performance. Long-serving governors are keen to encourage greater parental representation on the governing body to ensure new ideas are considered. Governors are aware that they are, sometimes, too dependent on the school's leaders for information and not all have yet had recent training to enhance their skills. However, most visit the school and have a good understanding of pupils'

improved achievement. In general, governors are able to challenge leaders and hold them to account for the school's performance.

## 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>	121897
<b>Local authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	419848

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	458
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Peter Banks
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gaynor Yates
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 October 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01327 705785
<b>Fax number</b>	01327 709729
<b>Email address</b>	bursar@thegrange.northants-ecl.gov.uk

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