

Great Sampford Community Primary School

Finchingfield Road, Saffron Walden, CB10 2RL

Inspection dates 9–10 October 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		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 make good progress from their various starting points, especially in mathematics.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage also do well, especially in developing their communication, literacy and reading skills.
- Teaching is consistently good and some of it is outstanding. As a result, pupils of all abilities learn rapidly.
- Lessons are well planned and teachers use their knowledge of pupils to meet their needs well.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding in lessons and around the school. They feel very safe, enjoy their learning and apply themselves to their work at all times.
- Good relationships in the school help to motivate and engage pupils in their learning.
- Leaders work well with parents, who are very satisfied. Leaders, including members of the governing body, work well with staff to bring about improvements to teaching and pupils' achievement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some new leaders are not fully effective in their areas of responsibility yet.
- Leaders do not analyse and evaluate information about pupils' achievement in writing in the same depth in all year groups.
- Not enough teaching is outstanding and teachers' assessments do not always reflect pupils' real abilities.
- Rates of progress and levels of attainment in writing are not as good as they are in reading and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed six lessons, all of which were joint lesson observations with either the headteacher or the deputy headteacher.
- The inspector looked at pupils' work and listened to pupils from Years 1, 2 and 6 read.
- Meetings were held with pupils and school staff, including senior leaders and subject leaders. A telephone conversation took place with a representative from the local authority. A meeting was also held with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body and another governor. A meeting was held with an external adviser.
- School documents were also looked at, including safeguarding, information on pupils' achievement and school improvement plans.
- The inspector took account of the views of 23 parents through the Parent View website. The views of staff were considered through the responses to an inspection questionnaire from 15 staff.

Inspection team

Peter Lacey-Hastings, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Great Sampford Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. A small minority of pupils are from minority ethnic groups.
- 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 average.
- 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 the quality of teaching so that more of it is outstanding, especially in Key Stage 1, by making sure that:
 - teachers use their subject knowledge to check consistently how well pupils are doing in lessons to help them improve
 - assessments are accurate and robust, so teachers can plan activities that help pupils make rapid progress.
- Increase rates of progress, especially in writing, by leaders and teachers using information on pupils' achievement to identify in more detail areas for improvement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children join the school with skills that are in line with those expected for their age. When they start their skills are higher in communication and language, and in their physical development. Their skills are lower in mathematics, understanding of the world and in their personal, social and emotional development.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress in their literacy skills, especially reading. They also make good progress in their communication and language skills. This is because activities for these areas of learning are well planned and taught.
- Attainment at Key Stage 1 in 2013 was higher than in 2012. Over time attainment is higher in reading than in writing or mathematics because reading is encouraged and taught well across different subjects. Pupils make quicker progress when they are in Year 2. This is because when pupils are in Year 2 teachers give them more detailed help.
- At Key Stage 2 pupils' attainment is good. In 2012 attainment was above average in all subjects and especially so in mathematics. In 2013 attainment was also above average in all subjects. It was higher in mathematics than in English. This is because teachers plan and check pupils' work in mathematics in more detail than they do in English. Attainment in reading was similar to attainment in writing.
- Last year pupils at Key Stage 2 made quicker progress in mathematics than in English. This was because the best teaching takes place during mathematics lessons. Pupils make good progress in different subjects and year groups. This is because teaching is consistently good in all classes at Key Stage 2.
- In reading pupils are able to apply their knowledge of phonics (the sounds that letters make) to read unfamiliar words. A few more-able pupils can read the words but are not always clear about the meaning of the text. Reading books are well matched to pupils' abilities.
- Older pupils say they enjoy reading and can say which kinds of books they like, such as horror and adventure. They can also say which authors they like and why they choose books. They are clear about which strategies they use to help them read such as using context clues to work out difficult words.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar good progress to other pupils. Pupils with a statement of special educational needs make better progress than other pupils, especially in reading. This is because extra support and teaching in reading for individuals is good.
- In 2012 the attainment and progress of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium was similar to that of other pupils. Their attainment was similar to other pupils in both English and mathematics. Compared to other pupils they have made approximately an extra term's progress in mathematics and in English they made similar progress.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching in all classes is consistently good and some of it is outstanding. Lessons are well

planned and teachers give pupils clear guidance on what they need to do to improve their work.

- Teachers and other staff know the pupils well, and there are good relationships. This helps to engage and motivate pupils who show a very positive attitude to learning. For example, in lessons a high proportion of pupils volunteer to explain their thinking or answer questions.
- Assessment of pupils' work is mostly accurate and this also helps teachers plan work that is based on what they know about pupils' progress. However, some assessments are not always accurate and this means that teachers are not always clear about pupils' attainment.
- Teachers set work that is well matched to the different ability groups. Sometimes this is through setting more difficult work for the more able and sometimes pupils learn different skills. This helps more-able pupils to be challenged.
- In the best lessons, teachers use their subject knowledge to check and question pupils about their progress and make sure they fully understand. For example, in a mathematics lesson the lesson was paused because the teacher realised that some pupils were not clear about finding factors of numbers. However, this is not done consistently by teachers in all lessons.
- Marking is regular and accurate. There is a clear code used across the school which indicates where pupils have been successful and also where they need to make improvements. This helps pupils to make good progress.
- Other adults are used well in all lessons. They support pupils, but also challenge them through effective questioning and encouraging independence. This is true for small groups of pupils and for individual pupils who have learning needs.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons is outstanding. Pupils are always polite to each other and to adults. For example, they hold doors open for adults and for each other without any prompting.
- Pupils say they feel extremely safe at school. They know why rules are in place and say they obey not just because they might get into trouble, but because they see the rules as being there to help everyone. As one pupil said, 'We all get along really well'.
- Pupils line up at the end of playtime in a very orderly way and walk into school calmly. Teachers at the end of play prepare pupils for learning by asking them to go in quietly and to get ready for the next lesson.
- Pupils are very aware of different kinds of bullying and have received help on how to keep safe on the internet. They understand the dangers of other technologies such as mobile phones. Pupils say there is no bullying in the school.
- Pupils take on responsibilities that help the school run smoothly. Pupils say these roles make them feel proud of themselves and of the school. For example, there are lunchtime helpers, playground helpers and a school council. As one pupil said, 'It teaches people to be responsible with equipment'.
- Pupils say they enjoy coming to school. Attendance is consistently above average and has been

for the last three years. There have been no exclusions at all, either temporary or permanent, in a number of years.

- All parents and all staff say that behaviour in the school is good. All parents agree that pupils at the school are safe.

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders at all levels work effectively together. The school's view of itself is accurate and reflects the evidence found during the inspection. Leaders use this knowledge to plan improvements such as to the teaching of writing.
- Leaders check and improve the effectiveness of teaching through the use of performance targets. These are linked to pupils' achievement, the national 'Teachers' Standards' and to pay progression. Weaker teaching in the past has been tackled and there are examples where teachers have not performed well enough to progress through pay scales. Staff are also given training as required.
- New leaders are beginning to be effective. However, they have not had time to bring about sustained improvements in their new areas of responsibility. Leaders at all levels do not always analyse and use information on pupils' achievement to plan improvements in teaching enough detail, especially in the teaching of writing.
- Partnerships are used effectively to maintain and continue the good achievement of pupils. For example, a consultant supports the school with lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and evaluating information on pupils' achievement. This has helped to identify and plan improvements.
- Levels of satisfaction among parents are high. All parents who responded to Parent View feel that the school is well led and managed. They would all recommend the school to another parent.
- The local authority has taken a 'light touch' approach due to the maintenance of good attainment and good progress. It checks how well the school is doing through regular reviews of information about pupils' progress.
- Funding is used carefully, such as the new funding for primary school sport. This is directed at training for staff and the use of sports coaches to work directly with pupils. This is having a positive impact on pupils' physical education because the quality of teaching is good. Teachers work alongside trained coaches to help them improve their skills.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination well. For example, Year 6 pupils were taught about words that can cause offence, such as homophobic language.
- Opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. For example, they learn about how harvest is celebrated in different parts of the world. There is a very active gardening club and there are gardening lessons for some year groups. These help pupils see how food grows and where it comes from.
- Subjects are sometimes taught through themes and topics, such as 'Tudors', 'Minibeasts' and 'Seasons'. Writing is taught across the curriculum and links to real-life situations. For example, in

a lesson in Key Stage 1 pupils wrote a set of instructions linked to a bird feeder they had made.

- Safeguarding requirements are met such as checks on adults working with pupils and risk assessments for activities in school and for school visits. These are also reviewed and improved where needed.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body works closely with the headteacher and other staff. It knows the school well and is ambitious for it to improve further. There are links with subject leaders, and individual members of the governing body each check an area of the school improvement plan. Committees regularly review how the school is doing in these areas. Members of the governing body challenge the headteacher through the use of their committee structure and make sure that finances are directed into school improvement plans. They also seek answers where pupil progress in a particular key stage or subject is slower than elsewhere. Performance targets for the headteacher are linked to pupils' achievement, improvement plans and pay progression. Members of the governing body have worked closely with the headteacher and know the strengths and weaknesses in the quality of teaching. This includes working with the headteacher to tackle weaker teaching and judging whether teachers should progress through pay scales.

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	114970
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	425364

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	104
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paris Mikkides
Headteacher	Ian Pollard
Date of previous school inspection	23 October 2008
Telephone number	01799 586280
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