

# Ringstead Church of England Primary School

Church Street, Ringstead, Kettering, NN14 4DH

**Inspection dates** 17–18 October 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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.

- Pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make good progress because teaching is consistently good.
- Romany Gypsy and Traveller children benefit from the considerable expertise of teachers and many make exceptional progress.
- Children in the Reception class develop skills quickly because of good teaching and are well prepared for Key Stage 1.
- All staff teach phonics (linking letters and sounds) exceptionally well. Developing reading skills has a high profile and pupils read well as a result.
- Pupils are enthusiastic learners. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Pupils feel safe and well looked after by staff.
- Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and staff work as an effective team. They identify the right priorities for improvement by regularly checking on teaching and pupils' progress.
- Parents and carers are supportive and are involved regularly in school activities.
- Governors know how well the staff and pupils are performing through their regular visits to the school.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Planning in the Reception class does not link outdoor activities with the work they are doing in the classroom very well. This means children take longer to acquire new skills.
- Computers are not being used often enough to develop writing and numeracy skills and so progress for some pupils in these areas is not as rapid as it is in reading.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 10 lessons taught by four teachers. Three lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the pupil council, the Chair of the Governing Body and one other governor, the headteacher, deputy headteacher and the other senior leaders.
- A discussion took place with a representative from the local authority about the support and advice it gives to the school.
- There were 18 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) by the end of the inspection. The inspector took account of these and also sought the views of parents and carers as they arrived at school with their children.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including the school's own information on pupils' recent and current progress, planning for school improvement, and records of governing body meetings, checks on teaching and behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Joseph Peacock, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school, with most pupils living in and around the village.
- There are two sites for Romany Gypsy and Traveller families of Irish origin nearby.
- One in five pupils is from a minority ethnic background which is slightly below average. Almost all are of Romany Gypsy origins and fluent in English.
- There are mixed age groups in three classes. The Reception-age children are in a class of their own.
- The proportion of pupils supported by additional government funding through the pupil premium is below average. In this school, it mostly applies to pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported through 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.
- A new deputy headteacher started in September 2012.

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

- In the Reception class, ensure that planning links skills being promoted in indoor activities with those in outdoor activities, particularly when developing early writing and numeracy skills so that they do as well in these areas as others.
- Increase the use of computers in English and mathematics lessons to help accelerate pupils' progress.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start school with skills and understanding that are much lower than those typical for their age. Relationships and routines develop quickly because of the small numbers and caring, supportive staff. This has a significant impact on developing their social skills, and behaviour is invariably good.
- Children make good progress in learning phonics (the sounds that individual and groups of letters make). Some are able to apply their learning and spell simple three and four letter words correctly. The school's records show that children are making good progress in developing key skills in all areas of learning by the time they leave the Reception class. However, the low start means that most are still below the level expected and some are well below it in writing and calculation. Planning of outdoor activities does not always support their work indoors in literacy and numeracy.
- The good start children make to school is due to the support they receive from adults as they work in groups or independently. They also take part in a wide range of enjoyable and challenging activities that are planned for them. For example, they concentrated well to make pictures of 'leaf man' from natural materials and made good use of computer programmes to develop creative and number skills. The favourable ratio of staff to children ensures that all are prepared well for the next phase of their learning, especially in their personal, social and emotional development.
- School data show that almost all pupils make good progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 from their various starting points because teaching is consistently good. However, overall attainment varies because of the small numbers and sometimes high proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs in a particular year. There is no clear trend or pattern over time as a result. Currently there are only seven pupils in Year 6, for example, and their overall attainment was significantly below average when they were in Year 2. Almost all are on track to achieve at least expected levels in English and mathematics, and some are expected to exceed them by the end of Year 6.
- Attainment in reading is much higher than in writing and mathematics and progress is faster because reading has a high profile in school. Almost all pupils make much better than expected progress as a result. Parents and carers are fully involved in reading sessions such as 'biscuit and book' for younger pupils and 'markies and munchies' for older pupils, where there is more focus on grammar, punctuation and spelling. In addition, the excellent school library provides pupils with a huge selection of books for all ages to read and enjoy.
- Pupils are making good progress in writing and mathematics. Most tasks in mathematics are challenging for different ability levels. Pupils in Year 6, for example, were able to calculate the area of complex shapes and put fractions with different denominators in order of size. Phonic skills are taught effectively throughout, with pupils grouped according to their ability. This helps develop writing skills. In Year 5 and 6, for example, pupils identified the features of persuasive writing and wrote why they thought zoos should not be allowed.
- Pupils do not have many opportunities to use computers to support their tasks or extend their learning in English or mathematics lessons. Consequently, progress for some in writing and mathematics is not as rapid as it is in reading. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 thoroughly enjoyed unpacking the new laptops and using them to convert fractions into decimals. Their concentration was intense as they worked independently and helped one another master the

technical challenge and complete the task. All made exceptional progress.

- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs usually make rapid progress in mathematics and English. They benefit from the expertise of some highly skilled teaching assistants who work closely with individuals or small groups in lessons.
- Pupils from Romany Gypsy and Traveller backgrounds are fully integrated in lessons and sometimes receive one-to-one support. Staff expertise, built up over time, means that many of these pupils make outstanding progress from their starting points. Parents and carers described it as 'amazing progress'. All achieve better than expected compared to national comparative data.
- The school uses the additional pupil premium funding well to provide individual help for pupils known to be eligible, and school records show that this helps to improve their attainment in English and mathematics. Virtually all make the same good progress as their classmates.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching has improved significantly since the previous inspection and is consistently good and occasionally outstanding. The strong emphasis on teaching reading has raised attainment in reading for most pupils.
- In the Reception class, children are supported closely by adults who successfully encourage speaking and listening through conversation and questioning. Children make particularly good progress in phonics, and this prepares them well for reading and writing when they move into Year 1. Newly learned skills are not always effectively reinforced in indoor and outdoor tasks in teachers planning and so it can take some longer to grasp them than others.
- Teachers accurately assess pupils' rates of progress in reading, writing and mathematics, so any pupils who are falling behind are quickly identified and supported, often individually.
- Staff manage behaviour consistently well, and normally deal with any rare incidents of inappropriate behaviour immediately and effectively.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because their individual learning needs are recognised and planning ensures that they have tasks relevant to their ability level. Well-trained and attentive teaching assistants support these pupils' learning effectively in lessons.
- Reading and writing are taught well to most pupils, so they build effectively on their phonic knowledge to read accurately, spell simple words correctly and punctuate sentences well. In mathematics, teachers plan challenging, problem-solving tasks to engage and interest most pupils. However, computers are not being used effectively in lessons to accelerate learning and progress as most are in the computer suite. This was not used during the inspection. A batch of new laptops has just arrived and when used in a mathematics session, the impact on reinforcing pupils understanding of fractions was remarkable.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

- Pupils concentrate well in lessons and listen carefully to their teachers. Most demonstrate positive attitudes to learning in lessons and this leads to a quiet industrious atmosphere in

lessons. 'Lessons are fun', is a commonly held view amongst pupils. They particularly remember the drama sessions about Richard the Third and the children in the Tower of London.

- Behaviour is good in lessons and around school. School records show that there have been no exclusions since the previous inspection. This reflects how well pupils behave.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and that 'staff take special care of every one of us'. This correctly reflects the impressive level of care and support that pupils receive.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying. They are justifiably proud of the message they were able to convey in the comic strip they created called 'Bob got bullied'. Older pupils were clear about internet safety and were able to explain cyber bullying to younger pupils. School records show that incidents of bullying or racist behaviour are rare.
- Attendance is broadly average. It is above average for most pupils but the lifestyle of Romany Gypsy and Traveller families means that it is below average for these pupils. Overall, the attendance for this minority ethnic group is higher than national comparative data. There is very little persistent absence.
- Parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire had positive views about the school. They agreed with almost every question and most said that they would recommend the school to others. Those spoken with during the inspection were equally positive about the school. 'Up at six and raring to go to school' and 'they like coming to this school because staff are so friendly' were typical views.

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

- 'The headteacher is the glue that holds everything together' was a typical view of parents and carers who appreciate the friendliness of this small school and all that it is doing to give their children a good education. The partnership between the headteacher and deputy headteacher is highly effective as both complement one another's different skills exceptionally well. All staff work effectively as a team and share the same strong determination to tackle areas identified for improvement.
- The considerable expertise of the deputy headteacher in collecting and analysing performance data makes it easy for staff to identify and support any individuals or group who are not doing as well as expected.
- The leadership of the teaching in the Reception year, and for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, is good. The school makes good use of outside specialists to support those who have special educational needs.
- There are well-established procedures for the headteacher and the governing body to make sure that teachers' pay rises are closely linked to their performance. National standards are used effectively to judge the quality of teaching, so accurate judgements are made on how well teachers are doing their jobs.
- The headteacher and leadership team check teaching in termly lesson observations. These checks have succeeded in ensuring that teaching in all lessons is at least good and occasionally outstanding. Making more use of computers has already been identified by the school as an area for improvement.

- The curriculum is well planned and meets the learning needs and abilities of pupils. Learning opportunities beyond the normal timetable, such as the crochet club and residential visits, add to pupils' enjoyment of school. Topics about ancient civilizations and the study of Hinduism, Judaism and the Muslim faith give pupils a good understanding of different cultures. A value such as courage is well promoted each month and pupils appreciate that they have not failed until they give up trying. All this contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The additional funding allocated to increase sporting opportunities has already been used to enhance the quality and breadth of physical education and sports provision. It has significantly increased participation by enabling a professional coach to teach pupils skills such as teamwork in a diverse range of sports.
- The welfare and safety of pupils has a high profile. All parents and carers hold positive views about the school. They rightly endorse that staff treat every pupil equally, their children are safe and looked after well, and that discrimination is not tolerated in any form. Pupils are well prepared for life in Britain and a global society.
- The local authority has supported the school effectively over time, helping to make teaching consistently good. This has resulted in most pupils being well prepared for the next stage in their education. Governors have also benefited from the relevant range of training programmes provided for them and these have helped them to develop their skills and expertise. Further bespoke training is planned specifically for this governing body.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Regular visits by governors give them a good understanding of the quality of teaching and how well pupils are achieving. They compare how well pupils are doing in comparison with others nationally. Governors have the knowledge and confidence to analyse data and hold the school to account for the performance of different groups of pupils, increasing their effectiveness. The governing body is beginning to focus much more on helping the school to check how well it is tackling its identified priorities for improvement, and to evaluate the impact of its own work. The performance of the headteacher and other teachers is reviewed each year to determine pay increases. Governors' personal expertise is used to good effect to support their work. All current national requirements relating to employment and safeguarding are met. Governors carefully check the impact of the pupil premium and the funds allocated to provide additional sporting opportunities on the achievement and behaviour of pupils.

## 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>	121989
<b>Local authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	425017

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 controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	92
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Adrian Briggishaw
<b>Headteacher</b>	Annette Ray
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22–23 September 2011
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