

Finmere Church of England Primary School

Mere Road, Finmere, Buckinghamshire, MK18 4AR

Inspection dates 15–16 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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.

- The headteacher, through rigorous checking of the school’s work, has improved the quality of teaching so that it is now consistently good.
- Teachers know pupils well and plan lessons effectively to meet the abilities of different aged pupils who are taught in the same classes.
- Teachers robustly track pupils’ progress so that they can give extra support to any who may be falling behind to help them catch up quickly.
- As a result, pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Most pupils leave the school in Year 6 with overall attainment that is above that expected for their age.
- The governing body effectively holds the headteacher to account for the quality of teaching and pupil achievement.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school because bullying is very rare.
- Consequently, pupils enjoy school and behave well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not consistently outstanding because teachers do not always make sure that pupils respond as well as they can to comments in marking.
- Teachers miss opportunities to allow pupils to research and think for themselves.
- The progress of more-able pupils in mathematics is not as rapid as in reading and writing.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed six lessons and parts of lessons taught by three teachers, of which one lesson was observed with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and a group of pupils.
- The inspector heard pupils from Years 1 and 2 read and examined the range and quality of pupils work in conjunction with the headteacher.
- The inspector looked at a variety of documents including the school's own judgements about the quality of teaching and how well pupils were achieving, school safeguarding procedures and assessments tracking pupils' progress.
- The inspector analysed the responses from 22 parents and carers who completed the Parent View survey on the Ofsted website.

Inspection team

James Henry, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Finmere is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all the pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is above average and the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium, which is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or in local authority care, is well below average.
- Pupils are taught in two mixed-age classes. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in the same class as pupils in Years 1 and 2. Pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 are taught in the other mixed-age class.
- There are too few pupils taking national tests in Year 6 to comment on the government floor standards.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently outstanding by making sure that teachers:
 - expect pupils to respond in depth to comments and suggestions in marking
 - provide more opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning through planning activities that develop their ability to research and analyse different topics and issues.
- Increase the rate at which pupils learn in mathematics, particularly the more able, by making sure that they:
 - use and apply their mathematical skills and knowledge in practical situations
 - fully understand and use mathematical vocabulary so they can accurately express their mathematical thinking
 - practise and extend their mathematical skills in other subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Achievement is good because school assessments, lesson observations and pupils' work show pupils make good progress across the school in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make good progress because teachers plan activities that regularly meet their different needs.
- While the number of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is very small, they are supported well and make the same good progress in reading, writing and mathematics as their peers.
- From different starting points, individual children make good progress in their learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage and are prepared well for Year 1.
- Pupils make good progress across Key Stage 1, particularly in reading, with most individual pupils reaching attainment in reading, writing and mathematics that is above that expected for their age by the end of Year 2.
- Pupils continue to make good progress across Key Stage 2. However, the progress of more-able pupils is not as rapid in mathematics as it is in reading and writing. This is because teachers do not always make sure pupils fully understand the mathematical language they use so they can accurately express their thinking and teachers do not always give pupils enough chance to use their mathematical skills in practical situations. As a result, more-able pupils do not always achieve the higher levels of attainment in mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2.
- Due to the very small numbers in each year group, data measuring attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 show standards fluctuating when compared with all schools nationally. However, most individual pupils leave in Year 6 with attainment overall above that expected for their age.
- There were no pupils eligible for the pupil premium at the end of Year 6 in 2012 or 2013 so it is not possible to comment on their progress or attainment in English and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2 compared with other pupils in the school.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers know pupils well and use their good subject knowledge to plan lessons that match the abilities and needs of most different groups of pupils in mixed-age classes. This is also the case for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Consequently, relationships in lessons are good with different aged pupils learning together effectively.
- Most parents and carers who completed the Parent View survey on the Ofsted website felt that their child is taught well and makes good progress at school.
- Teaching assistants are used well to support disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, with teachers planning activities that make sure the needs of this group of pupils are met. Consequently, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress and have an equal opportunity to be fully involved in lessons.
- Pupils' understanding is regularly assessed in lessons through good teacher questioning, with activities being adapted, if necessary, to make sure pupils' learning continues at a good pace.
- Teachers accurately track pupils' learning through regularly assessing their progress. This enables teachers to provide extra support for pupils who may be falling behind so they can quickly catch up with their peers.
- Teachers regularly provide pupils with challenging activities that stretch their abilities. For example, Key Stage 2 pupils were developing effectively their poetry writing ability through acting out the feelings of astronauts as they travelled to the moon and back. However, teachers miss opportunities for pupils, especially the more able, to learn by themselves through researching and analysing different topics and issues.
- Teachers mark work thoroughly, with comments to help pupils improve. While pupils respond to comments on their work, there are occasions when teachers do not see that pupils take full

advantage of the guidance given in order to extend their understanding further.

- Teaching is not outstanding, partly because teachers do not always make sure more-able pupils make the same consistently rapid progress in mathematics as in reading and writing.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are polite and respectful to each other and to staff and visitors in school.
- Pupils say they feel safe because bullying in any form is very rare. Consequently, they enjoy school and have the confidence in staff to deal with any problems that may arise.
- Most parents and carers who responded to the Parent View survey felt that their child was safe at school, that any bullying was dealt with effectively, and that the school makes sure pupils are well behaved. Discrimination is not tolerated.
- Staff know pupils individually and there are good relationships throughout the school. Consequently, behaviour is typically good with little disruption to lessons.
- Pupils mix well with older pupils, helping and supporting the younger ones. Different age groups cooperate and work well together in mixed-age classes.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning in lessons. However, there are a few occasions when pupils become restless when activities do not fully engage them. As a result, staff have to re-focus pupils on what they are learning. This is the main reason why behaviour is not outstanding.
- The school helps pupils understand how to stay safe through different activities. For example, lessons are given on how to stay safe on the internet and how to stay safe personally in different situations.
- Pupils are punctual for school and attendance is broadly in line with the national average.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides strong and stable leadership to the school. She checks effectively the quality of teaching and provides helpful feedback to teachers on how to improve pupils' learning in lessons. Consequently, teaching is good with pupils making good progress.
- Despite the school being much smaller than the average-sized primary school, leadership roles have been delegated to other members of staff who observe lessons in order to share good practice and improve the quality of teaching.
- The headteacher, supported by other staff, knows the school well and produces accurate action plans to address weaknesses. For example, the school has focused strongly on improving pupils' writing and this has raised individual pupils' attainment in writing at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2.
- The headteacher checks pupil progress thoroughly using a detailed tracking system and this is used to set challenging individual targets for pupils to make sure they make good progress.
- The pupil tracking system is used by the headteacher to manage the performance of teachers effectively and hold them to account for the progress of pupils in their classes.
- The school works closely with other local schools in order to share professional training and good practice in teaching. This enables staff to have a much broader view of how to improve the work of the school and improve pupils' learning.
- The primary school sport funding is being used to provide professional training for staff in physical education and through working with other schools to provide opportunities for pupils to take part in competitive sport. This is having a positive effect on pupils' health and well-being, with pupils enjoying learning new skills and competing against others.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. For example, a variety of visitors from a range of backgrounds talk to pupils about different faiths and cultures, such as Sikhism and Hinduism. The school has strong links with a school in

Sweden, with pupils and staff regularly visiting each other.

- The headteacher and staff are in the process of producing a five-year curriculum plan based on different topics. While this is under development, plans to see that pupils, especially the more able, have consistent opportunities to practise and extend their mathematical skills in other subjects are not fully secure.
- The school has strong links with the local church and community through activities such as hosting a harvest lunch for residents and recruiting local volunteers to hear pupils read. These are examples of the school fostering good relationships within the community.
- The local authority provides a light touch for the school and appropriate support when asked.
- There are suitable safeguarding policies that meet requirements, with staff appropriately trained in child protection procedures. All staff are checked before being allowed to work in school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body knows about the quality of teaching through governors visiting classrooms with the headteacher. Governors provide a good balance of support and challenge for the headteacher and have a good understanding of data to hold the headteacher to account for pupils' achievement. There are effective systems for managing the performance of staff, including the headteacher, to make sure any salary increases are clearly linked to performance, especially in raising pupils' achievement. Governors know how the pupil premium is being spent and are fully aware of the difference this is making to the very small number of pupils in receipt of this extra funding. Governors undertake a variety of training such as the performance management of staff and safer recruitment to help them fulfil their roles successfully.

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	123104
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	426497

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	39
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Buckle
Headteacher	Veneeta Rayner
Date of previous school inspection	19 October 2011
Telephone number	01280 848459
Fax number	
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