

# Noak Bridge Primary School

Coppice Lane, Basildon, SS15 4JS

**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' achievement is good. Pupils make good progress in all year groups.
- Effective leadership by the headteacher has led to improvements in the quality of teaching and higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- By the end of Year 6, standards in reading and mathematics are above average.
- Much of the teaching is good, with examples of outstanding teaching.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and, at times, exemplary. Pupils have a secure understanding of personal safety.
- Recently appointed senior members of staff are working closely with the headteacher to secure further improvement.
- Governors know the school well; they are supportive but at the same time ask questions and set challenging targets to ensure the school continues its upward path.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils, particularly the boys, do not make as rapid progress and reach the same standards in writing as they do in reading and mathematics.
- Teachers do not always remind pupils of their writing targets before they start their written tasks.
- The analysis of pupil assessment data is not sufficiently refined to enable checks and comparisons to be made on the standards reached and the progress made by different groups of pupils.
- Teaching assistants are not always deployed effectively to help pupils learn.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons, of which two were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made a number of shorter visits to lessons and attended an assembly. They heard some pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 read.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, staff, groups of pupils and a local authority representative.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a wide range of documentation, including the data the school has collected on pupils’ attainment and progress, procedures for keeping pupils safe and the school development plan.
- In making their judgements, inspectors took account of the 39 responses to the Parent View online questionnaire, the school’s parental surveys and 21 questionnaires returned by members of staff.

## Inspection team

David Wynford-Jones, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Susan Cox	Additional Inspector

# Full report

## Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. The remaining pupils come from a number of different minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below average. None are currently at the early stages of learning English.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is broadly average. The proportion identified for additional support through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium is broadly average. This is additional government funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, those who are looked after by the local authority and other eligible groups.
- In 2012, the school met the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The deputy headteacher, Key Stage 2 manager and the special educational needs coordinator were appointed in September 2013.
- The school shares the site with a privately run pre-school. This did not form part of this inspection.

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

- Raise standards and accelerate pupils' progress in writing by:
  - ensuring that all teachers consistently remind pupils of their writing targets when they undertake any written task
  - increasing the number of activities that capture boys' imagination and stimulate them to write well
  - making effective use of teaching assistants, particularly at the beginning and end of lessons.
- Refine the analysis of assessment information to help governors, senior leaders and staff to check and compare the standards reached and the progress made by different groups of pupils.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- School records indicate that the large majority of children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge marginally below those expected for their age. They make good progress and most reach the levels expected of a typical five-year old by the end of the year. The end of the Reception Year assessments shows a trend of improving standards.
- Children make good progress because they settle quickly and establish good relationships with their teachers and their classmates. They enjoy their learning activities and make good use of the outdoor area to consolidate and extend their learning.
- In Years 1 to 6, pupils make good progress. By the end of Year 6, standards in reading and mathematics are above average. In writing, they are broadly average. Over the last few years pupils' progress has accelerated because teaching has improved, expectations are higher and pupils have a more positive attitude to learning.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium now make good progress because the school has used this additional funding to provide additional support staff and further support for literacy and numeracy. In 2012, pupils in Year 6 eligible for the additional funding did not do as well as their classmates. They were about 16 months behind their peers in English and about eight months behind in mathematics. More recent data suggests that this gap is closing. In 2013, it was reduced to about six months behind their peers in English and mathematics.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make better progress than their peers nationally. They are given additional support to move their learning on and their individual progress is checked regularly.
- Pupils' skills in reading are developing well. Younger pupils have a secure understanding of phonics (the sounds that letters make) and use this knowledge effectively to help read unfamiliar words. Outcomes in the Year 1 phonics assessments show that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard was above the national average in 2012. The proportion reaching the expected standard in 2013 was higher than that in 2012.
- Pupils' reading skills in Year 2 and Year 6 are above those expected for their ages. In Year 6, pupils enjoy reading. They read confidently and with expression. They talk knowledgeably about their favourite authors and can clearly explain why they like certain books and dislike others. Pupils' skills in reading are developing well because they are heard read frequently in school and at home.
- The recent introduction of mixed-ability small mathematics groups across Years 3 to 6 seems to be going well. Pupils have responded positively to working with others and look forward to the daily mathematics sessions. They are engaged because the work is closely matched to their needs. Pupils have a secure understanding of number, use mathematical terminology confidently and are developing their skills well in undertaking investigations and solving problems.
- Pupils are making reasonable progress in developing their writing skills but it is less rapid than that in reading and mathematics. As a result, the standards they reach are not quite as high. Boys tend not make as much progress as the girls. This is partly because some activities do not engage them to the same extent and promote their desire to write. Some pupils do not always remember to check their writing targets before and while undertaking their work.

- In all classes, pupils write for a range of purposes and in different styles. They draft out their work and generally present it neatly. Pupils are encouraged to use punctuation correctly and include conjunctions, adjectives and adverbs to bring their writing to life.

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

- Most of the teaching is good, with some examples of outstanding teaching. As a result, pupils are making good progress, especially in literacy and numeracy. There is no inadequate teaching.
- Teachers regularly ask pupils how well they think they are doing and use this information appropriately to plan future lessons. The marking of pupils' work is consistent. There are some good examples of marking and pupils responding to these comments. This helps pupils to make rapid progress and reach their challenging targets.
- Teachers are successfully raising the expectations of all pupils, including the more able, to strive to reach higher standards. They skilfully bring the pupils' learning in different subjects together through carefully thought-out topics or themes. The recent 'arts days' were particularly successful in promoting the pupils' artistic skills. The resultant high-quality three-dimensional animal models are attractively displayed in the main entrance and corridor areas.
- Teachers strive to ensure that all pupils, including potentially vulnerable pupils, pupils who speak English as an additional language, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are fully included and have equal access to the same learning opportunities as other pupils.
- Most lessons are well planned with the work pitched at the right level for pupils across the full ability range. Teachers always explain the tasks clearly but do not consistently remind pupils of their targets before they start their work. As a result, some pupils do not make rapid progress, especially in developing their writing skills.
- Nearly all lessons proceed at a quick pace. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and encourage them to share their ideas with each other and with the adults. They use questioning strategies to skilfully build on pupils' earlier learning. Teaching assistants support group work effectively but are not always deployed to maximise pupils' learning at the start and end of lessons; for example, by supporting individual pupils, undertaking assessments and checking on which pupils contribute to the discussions.
- Pupils are encouraged to read on a regular basis and to take their books home to read with their parents. As a result, pupils are developing their reading skills well. Teachers are aware of the importance of developing the pupils' writing skills and capturing boys' interest in writing. Some changes have been made to the approach to the teaching of reading and writing in the younger year groups. This has yet to be extended and consolidated in other year groups.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Pupils' good and sometimes excellent behaviour, together with their positive attitudes to learning help them to make good progress.
- Pupils enjoy school. Their attendance has improved steadily and is now above average for primary schools.

- Lessons are very rarely interrupted by incidents of inappropriate behaviour. Pupils are polite and routinely demonstrate good manners as they move around the school. Most respond quickly to instructions.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves and others safe and have a good understanding of potential dangers; for example, when using the internet.
- Pupils know about different types of bullying such as name-calling, fighting, racial, religious or cyber-bullying. They say that all the pupils get on well together and there have been no bullying incidents. Pupils are confident that if an incident occurred, it would be dealt with quickly and fairly. There have been no exclusions or racist incidents in recent years.
- Pupils' ability to get on well together contributes much to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

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

- The headteacher provides effective leadership and is working well with governors, senior leaders and staff to bring about improvements. In the last two years, teaching has improved as a result, and standards throughout the school have risen steadily. The recent appointments of the deputy headteacher and key stage leaders are helping the school move forward.
- The headteacher sets high expectations. There is a positive attitude amongst staff. All staff are keen to see the pupils make accelerated progress. They have attended courses and whole-staff training sessions to improve their professional skills.
- Assessment information is collected on how well each pupil is doing, enabling leaders to keep a close check on their progress. The headteacher uses this information to ask teachers to explain if any pupil is not on track to achieve their individual targets and what the teacher intends to do about it. This information is used by the governing body when considering if individual members of staff should receive a salary increase.
- Although assessment information is analysed and often used well, it has not yet been refined sufficiently to enable senior staff, governors and teachers to check on and compare the standards reached and the progress made by different groups of pupils so that they spot any general differences in the way they learn.
- In all classes, there is a focus on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught and, where possible, brought together through a theme or topic approach. Pupils are responsive to this approach and speak enthusiastically about their topics. The wide range of activities at school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils are given many opportunities to enrich their education; for example, by undertaking various responsibilities, taking part in educational visits and making use of the well-planned facilities in the school grounds. These include the authors' chair, the theatre arena and a fitness trail.
- The local authority has provided reasonable support in helping to improve the quality of teaching and raising standards. As the school has progressed, it has rightly become less involved.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors undertake their roles well. They are effective in fulfilling their responsibilities, promoting equality of opportunity and ensuring that the school meets requirements for

safeguarding pupils. Good use is made of their individual skills and training when allocating tasks. Governors have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and use this knowledge well to set challenging yet realistic targets. They monitor the school's progress against the school's detailed development plan, which is based on an accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for development. Following the review of the school's appraisal policy, governors know where teaching is good. They have a good understanding of how targets are set for teachers to improve and the process for rewarding good teaching. The headteacher's termly reports keep governors up to date on how well the pupils are doing. The governing body makes sure that pupil premium funding is being spent sensibly and that the impact of the expenditure on pupils' progress is checked. There are suitable plans being considered for the spending of the primary sports funding, which include developing and fostering sporting links within the area. Processes have been established to monitor the expenditure.

## 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>	114894
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	425219

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	205
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Kathryn Perry
<b>Headteacher</b>	H Karim
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 January 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01268 282433
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