

# St Luke's Church of England Controlled Primary School

Church Road, Tiptree, Colchester, CO5 0SU

**Inspection dates** 17–18 October 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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics so that the majority leave with standards above average.
- The school successfully achieves its twin aims of nurturing pupils to become independent and confident members of the community, and enabling them to achieve academically.
- The school promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well because it is the foundation of every aspect of school life.
- Pupils behave well and have good attitudes to learning.
- Pupils enjoy the way subjects are linked together and say it helps their understanding.
- Information about pupils' progress is used more effectively than at the previous inspection.
- Care for pupils permeates every aspect of school life so pupils feel happy and safe. One stated, 'This school will be my best childhood memory, ever.'
- Displays celebrate pupils' achievements and encourage further endeavour.
- Staff, governors and parents work closely together with pupils' interests at the heart of everything they do.
- School leaders and governors have brought about good improvements to teaching and pupils' achievement since the previous inspection.
- The current temporary school leaders effectively manage the school and work closely with governors and staff to make sure the school continues to offer a good education to its pupils.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Outstanding expertise is not shared enough.
- Marking of pupils' written work does not help them improve sufficiently.
- Not all teachers check pupils' understanding during lessons, nor change tasks accordingly.
- Skilled learning support assistants (LSAs) are not always used to maximum effect.
- Improvement plans do not make sufficiently clear what success will look like.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 18 lessons. Some were joint observations with the acting headteacher or acting special educational needs co-ordinator.
- The inspectors made other visits to classes, looked at pupils' workbooks and listened to pupils reading.
- The inspectors held discussions with pupils, the acting headteacher, other staff, governors, parents and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 73 responses to the online questionnaire Parent View, one telephone call and one written response. The inspectors also spoke to a small number of parents. The responses to 25 staff questionnaires were also considered.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including: the school's own information on pupils' progress; planning and monitoring documentation; the school's view of its own performance; records of how the school uses its funding, especially how the money from the pupil premium is spent; records relating to behaviour and attendance; and documents relating to safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Robert Greatrex, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Sara Wakefield	Additional Inspector
Janet Watson	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a slightly larger-than-average primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (the extra government funding for pupils looked after by the local authority, those known to be eligible for free school meals and some other groups) is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Pupils are taught in eleven classes. Reception children are taught in two classes. Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4, and Years 5 and 6 are each taught in three classes where one is of mixed age.
- The school operates before- and after-school provision and a holiday club.
- At the time of the inspection, the role of the headteacher was filled by a temporary appointment, and existing school staff covered the roles of deputy headteacher and special educational needs co-ordinator on a temporary basis.

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

- Raise the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by:
  - sharing existing outstanding practice
  - making sure that teachers' marking makes clear the 'next steps' pupils need to take, and that they check pupils read, understand and act on the marking of their work
  - ensuring all teachers regularly check pupils' understanding during lessons, and modify their teaching when necessary
  - clarifying how learning support assistants will be briefed, deployed and used to have the most impact on pupils' learning.
- Make sure targets in the school improvement plan are clear, measurable, realistic and challenging so that staff and governors are clear what precisely must be done, and how and when it will be achieved.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start school with a wide range of skills and experiences that vary from year-to-year. This ranges from below expected levels to expected levels for this age. In Reception, children make good progress in most areas of learning because the well-structured day gives them a good balance of adult-led activities and those they choose themselves.
- In Years 1 to 6, progress is good overall. By the end of Year 6, the vast majority of pupils reach at least the expected standard in English and mathematics and a large proportion of pupils exceed it. Results at the end of Year 2 are more variable. While progress is good for all groups of learners, the few children who enter Reception below expected levels do not advance enough to reach the level expected by this age. Pupils' targets, which were accurate in 2012 and 2013, show that both Year 2 and Year 6 should do well in 2014.
- Pupils want to learn; they enjoy the interesting tasks they are given and take satisfaction from meeting their teacher's challenge.
- Pupils' achievement in reading is strong. For the last two years, all pupils have left the school at the end of Year 6 with at least the expected level, and many have exceeded this. How to link letters to the sounds they make (phonics) is taught methodically. As a result, the proportion of Year 1 pupils reaching the required standard in the annual screening check is above average.
- While all pupils make good progress in both English and mathematics, the small proportion known to be eligible for the pupil premium make rapid progress in Years 3 to 6 and reach the levels of attainment expected for all pupils nationally. Even so, in 2012 they remained about the equivalent of one and a half terms behind their classmates in English, and about half a term behind in mathematics. This is because the small number of pupils in Years 1 and 2 make less progress than their peers because extra help is not as closely matched to their needs.
- Teachers analyse information about their own pupils' progress and use this effectively to plan the tasks they do and the levels they work at.
- The relatively small proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs also make good progress in reading and writing. Older pupils do so in mathematics, too, because of the specialist support they receive. The small number of younger pupils who struggle with mathematics do not receive the level and quality of extra help they need and so make slower progress.
- Able pupils receive suitably challenging tasks so they, too, make good progress. Pupils enjoy the challenge, for example, of the 'Level Six (Mathematics) Club.'
- Basic skills are good because, once taught, they are practised in other subjects. For example, pupils write an account of a visit or write notes to refer to later. Learning in other subjects is good because it is woven together well so once pupils master a skill they practise and hone it in other relevant activities.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Many teachers use questioning well; to clarify pupils' understanding, probe their knowledge and challenge them to think further. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, pupils relished the chance to answer difficult questions.

- Assessment of one lesson is used effectively in the next. Teachers revise tomorrow's plan based on the outcomes of today's lesson.
- When teaching is outstanding, it is often because the teacher constantly checks during the lesson to see the work is still at the right level and changes it if pupils find the work too easy or too hard. However, this is not the case generally so that opportunities to extend pupils' learning are missed and progress slows.
- Teachers tell pupils how they can be successful in the lesson so that they have a clear understanding of what they are trying to achieve.. In a good Year 6 English lesson, the teacher asked the pupils for their ideas of what success in this lesson would look like, further developing their ability to reflect.
- Other assessment techniques are used too. In a good Year 3 lesson, pupils articulated clearly how they had judged their learning so the teacher could gauge their understanding.
- While verbal feedback is of good quality, marking of pupils' work is often less useful to pupils, generally too broad to be helpful. Rarely do staff check pupils have understood and followed their comments.
- Pupils want to do as well as they can. They generally work hard with all adults, including volunteers, and enjoy collaboration with each other.
- LSAs are effective when enabled by teachers to use their expertise and experience fully, whether to give specific extra help to a group or support the whole class. However, this does not always happen and at times their valuable expertise is not used to maximum effect.

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

- Behaviour is good because all staff know, understand and apply a similar approach. As a result, pupils know what is expected of them, and what they may expect from others. A contributory factor to the smooth running of lessons is the good relationships between staff and pupils.
- Pupils want to learn and please staff, they try hard and do their best, particularly when lessons are interesting. When introductions are too long or repetitive, their attention wanders.
- Pupils enjoy playtimes and generally behave together well. They say playtime is very friendly and staff quickly resolve the few disagreements that occur.
- Care is a high priority of the school. The school caters very well for pupils' general well-being so that they are self-confident.
- Pupils feel safe in school and have a good understanding of, for example, using the internet safely.
- By changing pupils' 'talk partners' regularly and randomly, staff make sure everyone learns how to work with a wide range of other pupils. When learning in pairs or groups, pupils are very supportive and encouraging of one another. This is an important life skill.
- Pupils appreciate the many opportunities to play a meaningful role in their school. They are proud to show prospective parents around the school, and give their view of new staff.

- A clear spiritual dimension permeates school life. Pupils respect and enjoy assembly as a special time celebrating the school as a community. Through their thoughtful reflections they begin to understand some of the 'big' questions, such as how a huge oak tree can start with a small acorn.
- Attendance is broadly average and pupils are punctual to school. However, during the last year, the number of absences the school authorised was higher than schools generally.

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

- The school's vision is shared by all because school improvement is driven by joint staff and governor teams. Team work among all staff is effective, and staff responses to the questionnaire were all positive. They plan together, sharing ideas for the benefit of pupils. New teachers receive good induction. Subject leaders are highly motivated with a good knowledge of their subjects. They use this information effectively, particularly to plan how to link subjects and make them more meaningful.
- A clear structure is in place to manage and improve teaching, but some inconsistencies remain and staff rarely have opportunities to share outstanding teaching.
- While the good number of LSAs are well qualified and experienced they are not always used by leaders and teachers to best effect. The intervention plan they follow is not sufficiently clear to see that every pupil receives the best help possible, nor do LSAs see information about each pupil's differing needs. A few of these pupils receive several extra sessions without their impact being adequately checked.
- The school has a clear direction and the right priorities for development but how these will be achieved is not clearly set out. Improvement plans do not make sufficiently clear what success will look like. They are not challenging enough and cannot be easily measured to assess how effective they have been.
- The primary school sport funding is used effectively. Coaches develop pupils' skills and train staff so that they have the expertise to carry on the work without external support. Although still very recently implemented, pupils and staff say this approach is helpful to them.
- Pupils speak enthusiastically about the curriculum because they like the interesting way their learning is organised. Visits and visitors extend and enrich subjects, but the school does not teach a modern foreign language.
- Parents are very supportive of the school. All spoken to were positive, 'The best thing since sliced bread,' was a typical comment. Several moved their children to this school, citing the 'superb care and high standards'.
- Giving pupils equal chances is central to the life of the school, so that every pupil enjoys an identical range of opportunities. The school is a very harmonious community where each person, staff and pupils, has respect for everyone else. As a result, no one tolerates any form of discrimination.
- The school works closely with other local schools. Staff share training and expertise, and pupils a range of activities including sports. More-able mathematicians have benefited from lessons at a local high school to extend their understanding.

- Well-organised good quality provision extends the traditional school day, both before and after school, and offers some holiday care.
  
- Because the school is successful, it receives little direct support from the local authority. When a need arises, however, the response is quick and effective, for example to improve Reception classes.
  
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are very committed to the school, fully understand its strengths and are determined to see it succeed and prosper. They know the school very well and use their knowledge to question and support the school. Information about pupils' progress and the quality of teaching is used effectively. They know what the school is doing to tackle underperformance. Procedures are in place to link pay to performance. Safeguarding is seen as paramount and all national requirements met.

## 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>	115082
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	429539

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>	307
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Julian Wyncoll
<b>Headteacher (Acting Headteacher)</b>	Peter Anderson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	28–29 January 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01621 815456
<b>Email address</b>	admin@stlukeschurch-cp.essex.sch.uk

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