

Ivy Chimneys Primary School

Ivy Chimneys Road, Epping, CM16 4EP

Inspection dates 7–8 November 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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have high expectations and are working together effectively to improve teaching and to ensure all pupils achieve well.
- Pupils make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 2.
- Standards in Year 6 in mathematics, reading and writing are above average.
- Standards in reading and writing have risen since the last inspection.
- Much of the teaching is good with some examples of outstanding practice.
- Pupils behave well and have a good understanding of the importance of personal safety.
- Pupils' attendance is above average.
- The governing body checks on the work of the school and sets challenging but appropriate targets for the headteacher.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough pupils make rapid progress in Key Stage 1 because teaching is not consistently good.
- More able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently.
- Standards in mathematics have not risen as quickly as those in reading and writing.
- Leaders have yet to make full use of assessment data to ensure that all pupils make good progress.
- The governing body does not have sufficiently robust procedures for checking the impact of additional funding.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 22 lessons, of which five were joint observations with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made a number of shorter visits to lessons and attended two assemblies. 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 98 responses to the Parent View online questionnaire and 22 questionnaires returned by members of staff.

Inspection team

David Wynford-Jones, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Sara Wakefield	Additional Inspector
Mina Drever	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is similar in size to 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 marginally below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium is below 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 2013, the school met the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2013. The deputy headteacher joined the school in September 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure pupils make faster progress in Key Stage 1 and reach higher standards by the end of Key Stage 2 by:
 - making certain that teaching in Key Stage 1 is consistently good
 - providing greater challenge for the more able pupils across the school
 - linking problem-solving tasks in mathematics to real life situations
 - giving pupils more opportunities to evaluate their own and their classmates work.
- Improve leadership by:
 - refining the skills of all leaders in analysing data so that they can more accurately check whether all pupils are making good progress in their areas of responsibility
 - ensuring that the governing body introduces more robust systems for checking the impact of additional funding, such as pupil premium and sports funding, on pupils' attainment and progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children enter the Reception classes with skills and knowledge similar to those typically found at their age. A calm environment and good relationships help the children to settle quickly.
- Activities are well planned to help children make rapid progress. By the end of the year the large majority reach the expected levels for a typical five year old child in all areas of learning. However, few children reach levels above those expected.
- In Key Stage 1, most pupils make reasonable but not accelerated progress. This is because teaching is not consistently good. Outcomes at the end of Year 2 are typically average in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards in mathematics are lower than those in reading and writing. The school's current data suggests that standards by the end of this year are likely to be higher, especially in reading and writing.
- The school has a good track record of ensuring pupils make accelerated progress in Key Stage 2. Records show that in 2012, standards at the end of Year 6 were above average in English and mathematics but dipped slightly in 2013. Current pupils are on track to reach above average standards. Data shows that since the last inspection there is an upward trend in reading and writing. Standards in mathematics have remained broadly similar.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium make good progress because the school has used this additional funding to provide additional support staff and further support for literacy and numeracy. Although eligible pupils in Year 6 were about a year behind their peers in mathematics in 2013, and eight months in writing and six months in reading, more recent data suggests that this gap is closing.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make better progress than their peers nationally. Their progress is checked regularly and additional support is provided to move learning on when necessary.
- Following recent changes to the way phonics (the sounds that letters make) are taught, pupils' skills in reading are developing well. Younger pupils have a reasonable understanding of phonics and use this knowledge to help read unfamiliar words. Outcomes in the Year 1 phonics assessments show that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in 2012 and 2013 were broadly similar to the national average.
- Pupils in the current Year 2 and Year 6 are reading with skills above those expected for their ages. Year 6 pupils enjoy reading. They read confidently and with expression. They can explain why they have chosen certain books and are able to suggest how the story might develop.
- Pupils throughout the school are encouraged to write in different styles, for example poems, letters, stories and accounts of events. Year 6 pupils are aware of the importance of the use of adjectives, adverbs, similes, metaphors and alliteration to bring their writing to life.
- In mathematics, pupils have a secure understanding of number and use mathematical terminology confidently. They are developing their skills well in undertaking investigations and solving problems but the investigations are not always linked closely enough to the pupils' experiences; consequently some fail to see the relevance of the tasks they are set in lessons.

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 in literacy and numeracy, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2.
- Most lessons are well-planned with the work pitched at the right level for pupils across the full ability range. Teachers explain the tasks clearly and offer helpful suggestions to enable pupils to complete the activity.
- 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 skilfully to build on pupils' earlier learning.
- The marking of pupils' work is undertaken regularly. There are some good examples of marking which offers pupils clear guidance on what they have to do next. However, there is little evidence of the pupils responding to these comments, of the pupils evaluating their own learning or commenting on their classmates work.
- In the occasional lesson, pupils' learning is not moved on fast enough. The expectations of what some pupils, particularly the more able, can achieve are not always high enough.
- Teaching assistants are usually deployed effectively. They offer good support to the pupils they work with and help them grow in confidence. They help ensure that all pupils, including those whose circumstances make them vulnerable, pupils who speak English as an additional language, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are fully included in all the activities offered and have equal access to the same learning opportunities as other pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' good behaviour and their positive attitudes to learning help them to make good progress.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves and others safe and have a good understanding of potential dangers; for example, when using the internet or when taking part in adventurous and sporting activities.
- Pupils are proud of their school and treat the building and equipment with respect. They are polite and routinely demonstrate good manners as they move around the school. Lessons are very rarely interrupted by incidents of inappropriate behaviour.
- Pupils say they get on well together and that they enjoy school. They know about different types of bullying such as name-calling, fighting, racial, religious or cyber-bullying. They say there have been no bullying incidents of any kind. 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' attendance has improved steadily and is now above average for primary schools.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has made a good start. Within a relatively short time he has developed a good working relationship with the deputy headteacher. Based on an accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses, together they have drawn up a clear plan for improvement.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher set high expectations, to which the staff have responded positively. All want to see the pupils make accelerated progress and have attended training sessions to improve their professional skills.
- All members of staff have been observed teaching and been given guidance on how to improve their practice. Targets for improvement have been set and, where appropriate additional, support provided. The targets are to be reviewed at the pupil progress meetings which are now scheduled at half-termly intervals.
- As part of the headteacher's vision for developing leadership skills within the school, the senior leadership team has been expanded and more is expected of subject co-ordinators. A good start has been made but as yet, leaders at all levels have still to refine their skills in checking and analysing assessment information so that they can help their colleagues ensure that all pupils make good progress.
- 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 enjoy taking part in the many opportunities provided for sport and the school develops their understanding of the need for healthy living very well. Pupils are given many opportunities to enrich their education; for example, by undertaking various responsibilities, taking part in educational visits and visitors to the school. The wide range of activities at school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- In accordance with the local authority policy, officers have monitored the school's performance. As the school has demonstrated good outcomes there has been minimal additional support.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and use this knowledge well to set challenging yet realistic targets. They undertake regular training and review the school's performance data with the help of an external consultant. 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. Governors know about pupil premium funding money and how it has been allocated but, as yet, have not checked on the impact of the expenditure on pupils' attainment and progress. The governing body has not discussed the additional sports funding or put systems into place to monitor its expenditure and impact. A detailed physical education action plan is to be presented at the next full governing body meeting. This includes promoting sporting links with other schools and training to teachers to teach sports. The governing body makes sure the school meets requirements for safeguarding pupils and equality of opportunity is promoted. Discriminatory practices are not tolerated.

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	115013
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	429610

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	286
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lisa Siggers
Headteacher	Jonathan Furness
Date of previous school inspection	25 February 2009
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