

Martock Church of England Primary School

Elmleigh Road, Martock, TA12 6EF

Inspection dates 4–5 December 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.

- Achievement is good, reflecting the good, and often outstanding, teaching pupils receive. The school has rapidly improved since the previous inspection.
- Pupils of all abilities make good progress, and often some make exceptional gains, from their individual starting points, in reading, writing and mathematics. This is especially the case for those pupils eligible for additional funding through the pupil premium, who are making accelerated progress.
- Teaching assistants work closely with teachers in the classroom. They skilfully support pupils who need extra help, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, so that they achieve at least as well as their peers.
- The headteacher gives the school inspirational leadership. She has a clear vision for the future of this school and, along with her committed team, has established a community where everyone is valued for their contribution. They share common values and all are keen to make the school even better for the sake of the pupils.
- Pupils feel safe in school. Their behaviour is good around the school and in lessons, where they demonstrate positive attitudes towards their learning. They are respectful and are proud of their school, taking a full part in all activities whenever possible.
- Governors support and challenge leaders well. They have supported the headteacher in her quest to improve the quality of teaching, which has been key to securing and sustaining the rapid improvement in pupils' achievement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In some mathematics classes there are not enough opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge of calculation to problem solving tasks and consolidate what they have learnt.
- Teachers do not always give pupils enough challenging work to do when they are asked to work on their own
- When teachers mark work, the guidance they give is not always clear enough to help pupils improve their work.
- The outside space in the Reception Class is not stimulating enough to fully enhance children's development.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 16 lessons and observed eight teachers. The headteacher joined inspectors for a number of observations. In addition, inspectors made a number of short visits to small-group sessions to look at the teaching of phonics (linking letters and sounds) and to observe the work of teaching assistants.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, staff, pupils, parents, governors, a Local Leader of Education and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a range of documents, including the school improvement plans, priorities for development, achievement data and documents relating to safeguarding children.
- Inspectors took account of the 54 responses to the Parent View online questionnaire, the 29 responses to the staff questionnaire, and two letters received from parents during the inspection. An inspector also spoke to some parents at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

John Cavill, Lead Inspector

Additional Inspector

Liz Townend

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Martock is an average-sized primary school.
- The current headteacher took up her post in September 2011.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a Reception class.
- Year 1 and most of Year 2 pupils are taught as single year groups. However, all other years are taught in mixed year group classes. Each class contain pupils from two consecutive years.
- Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for groups of pupils, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school manages a breakfast club for the pupils, which was part of this inspection.
- A privately run nursery is based on the school site but is inspected separately.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to outstanding overall by ensuring that teachers:
 - provide pupils with more challenging tasks when they are asked to work on their own
 - provide opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge and understanding of calculation to problem solving tasks so they can consolidate what they have learnt
 - improve marking so that all pupils are able to use teachers' comments to improve their work.
- Improve the outside space in the Early Years Foundation Stage to provide a more stimulating learning environment.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Achievement has improved rapidly since the previous inspection. All groups of pupils make at least good progress, with many individuals recording exceptional gains in their learning, from their individual starting points, because of the consistently good teaching they experience. Children are known individually and their needs are addressed immediately and effectively. As a result, they achieve well and the proportion of pupils who make and exceed their expected progress compares favourably with national averages.
- Achievement in English is relatively stronger than in mathematics following a whole-school focus on developing pupils' skills of reading and writing. Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has continued to improve in recent years and is currently average. This is due to the school successfully challenging some weak teaching that led to previous underachievement. Attainment is continuing to rise, with the gap between English and mathematics closing quickly.
- Children start in the Reception Year with skills and abilities that are typically similar to what would normally be expected for their age, but the ability range between cohorts is variable. They make good progress in Reception because teaching is good and learning activities meet their needs well. However, the outside space does not stimulate children's interests enough and is limiting their opportunities to develop even further, particularly creatively and physically.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress throughout the school from their starting points. This is an inclusive school, where additional support is expertly targeted to meet individual needs and provided by skilful teaching assistants to complement the work done in lessons. This promotes equality of opportunity.
- The progress of pupils who benefit from the pupil premium funding is at least good in English and mathematics and better than that of all other pupils, when viewed from their individual starting points. The school has been successful in closing the gap in attainment for these pupils against their peers. In 2012, there was no gap in either English or mathematics and the current Year 6 cohort are attaining above other pupils. However, due to a much lower ability profile of pupils in the 2013 Year 6 cohort, who made accelerated progress, the gap was approximately one year in reading and writing and 18 months in mathematics.
- All pupils, including those who are more able, make good progress because teachers usually provide tasks that are well matched to individual needs and abilities. However, in some mathematics lessons, there are too few opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge of calculation to problem solving tasks and secure what they have learnt.
- A programme to support the teaching of phonics has improved pupils' progress in reading and writing. Pupils in the Year 2 guided reading session were eager to develop their understanding of how to use contents pages to find information in factual books.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching throughout the school is consistently good, with some examples of outstanding practice. It has improved substantially since the previous inspection and is the main reason for pupils' good achievement. Leaders have successfully eradicated weaker teaching that existed prior to the previous inspection, which was a limiting factor on pupils' achievement in the past.
- Teachers have high expectations and strong subject knowledge which they use well to plan stimulating lessons across a range of subjects. This supports all pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs or are eligible for additional funding through the pupil premium, in making at least good rates of progress.
- School leaders expect teachers to teach well, checking their performance regularly. Together, leaders and teachers share a common belief that all pupils deserve a good education and are seeking to continually improve. Pupils have positive attitudes and work together well, keen to succeed.

- In the best lessons, pupils are given interesting and challenging work. For example, in a Year 5/6 English lesson, pupils were developing their writing skills to describe what it would be like to have food rationed for their topic on World War 2. Pupils were challenged to discuss their feelings with each other in order to test and evaluate their work. Similarly, in a Year 4/5 mathematics lesson, pupils were choosing the worksheet that would challenge them to make best progress, with the teacher checking and intervening when necessary.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and provide comments to both praise pupils for good work and indicate the steps they need to take in order to improve. However, teachers' comments are not always clear enough for pupils to be able to use them to improve their work.
- Almost all parents who responded to the online questionnaire, or spoke to the inspector, thought that their child was taught well and made good progress at the school. Pupils enjoy their lessons and this is reflected in their positive attitudes towards learning.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. This ensures that the children have a good start to school. In a Reception class lesson, two boys were discussing how a train would travel along a track they had made out of plastic building blocks, understanding why it would be necessary for two sets of wheels to keep it on the track.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils enjoy school, have good attitudes to learning and quickly settle to their tasks with enthusiasm. They are respectful and the relationships between pupils and adults are strong.
- Pupils are proud of their school and they gladly undertake responsibility roles to support the work of the school. Organising fund raising events such as 'The Great Martock Bake-off' in October demonstrates the way that the school council involves the whole school community.
- Teachers have high expectations for good behaviour, which are understood by children, who demonstrate this in the way that they work and play together. Around the school, behaviour is good and the ethos is calm and purposeful. Behaviour in the breakfast club is good.
- In lessons, teachers' expectations for acceptable behaviour are well understood by pupils and instances of low-level inappropriate behaviour, such as coming off task or chatting to each other, are uncommon. However, on the rare occurrence when this happens, teachers quickly intervene and refocus the pupil back onto their work.
- All pupils, including those in Reception, are positive about how the school keeps them safe and say that behaviour is good. Almost all parents share these views.
- Pupils understand all about the different forms of bullying, including physical, emotional and cyber bullying, saying that there is very little of it at the school. School records show that poor behaviour instances are limited to a small number of pupils who find managing their own behaviour difficult. However, these pupils are very well supported and incidents of poor behaviour are quickly and successfully resolved. The pupils are quick to say that their learning is almost never disrupted and that teachers will quickly resolve any problems that they may have.
- Attendance is average and improving, reflecting the work the school is doing to encourage good attendance at school.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and a relentless determination for it to continue to improve. Supported by an effective team of leaders and governors, the school has rapidly improved, especially in the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. All leaders, and governors, are ambitious in their vision to continually challenge and improve the school. This has been fundamental to securing and sustaining the good outcomes for pupils.
- Parents and school staff are highly positive about the way that the headteacher and her team lead the school. They were quick to recognise changes at the school since the headteacher

arrived. 'What a great improvement in the whole school, from the headteacher down' and 'it's getting better and better all the time' sum up the views of parents.

- The leadership of teaching is good and management of teachers' performance has been used effectively to tackle previous weaknesses. Staff morale is high and staff work together well, committed to playing their part in improving the school. Leaders make sure that the levels of pay awarded to individual teachers reflect how well their pupils learn and any leadership responsibilities that they have.
- Leaders and managers regularly collect data on pupils' progress and attainment. Pupil progress meetings are held regularly and the information is analysed. Subject leaders support this process well to ensure that improvements are secured across the school to have maximum impact on pupils' achievement and that appropriate actions are taken to ensure that pupils who are starting to fall behind are helped to catch up quickly.
- Leaders have planned well to make good use of the primary school sports funding with activities to develop sport, such as 'dodge-ball' and gymnastics that take place before school.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate and improvement plans are clearly focused on continuing to raise pupils' achievement. Training is linked to whole-school improvement issues to make sure that any professional development has the maximum impact on raising standards.
- The curriculum is wide and well matched to pupils' needs and aspirations. Regular visits for pupils to go on, many within the local community such as to the local church, help support and enthuse their topic work. Along with regular assemblies and residential visits, pupils have opportunities to reflect on life with topics such as the work being undertaken in Years 5 and 6 about life in World War 2. This ensures that pupils are able to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. The passion with which these pupils spoke about the experience of visiting the local butcher to see rabbits being skinned and then cooking and eating the food they made from them reflects a curriculum that provides pupils with moments of 'awe and wonder'.
- The local authority initially supported the headteacher as normal upon her arrival but is now providing 'light-touch' support to this good school, recognising the strong leadership.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors know the school well and are committed to continue to improve it further. They hold leaders to account for its effectiveness and understand how well pupils are achieving in relation to all pupils nationally, with regular and highly detailed monitoring of progress data. They understand the areas for development and work with the school to see through the school improvement plan. Governors make sure that they are up to date with current developments and undertake regular training as necessary. Governors have supported the headteacher to challenge teachers to improve by setting robust targets. They have provided effective support to the headteacher, helping to secure the good teaching necessary to redress previous pupils' underachievement. They know what the school is doing to reward good teaching and to tackle any underperformance. Governors monitor the use of funding effectively. They have a clear understanding of how the pupil premium is allocated and its impact on improving levels of pupil attainment. Governors make sure statutory requirements relating to safeguarding are carried out rigorously.

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	123856
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	426766

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	230
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Marian Singleton
Headteacher	Liz Wilson-Chalon
Date of previous school inspection	18–19 January 2012
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