

Townley Primary School

Crown Drove, Christchurch, Wisbech, PE14 9NA

Inspection dates 22–23 January 2014

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.

- Most teaching is good or better, with some that is outstanding.
- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Provision for the youngest children is good, and they enjoy coming to school.
- Older pupils make particularly good progress in science.
- Teachers know how well pupils are doing, and plan work that is at the right level for them.
- Parents are happy with the opportunities provided by the school, and would recommend it to others.
- Provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is well planned.
- Pupils show high levels of respect for teachers, and feel well cared for.
- Behaviour is good, and pupils work and play well together.
- The headteacher maintains a strong focus on making sure that the needs of all pupils are met, so that achievement has increased and teaching is improving.
- Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, under the excellent leadership of the Chair

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' progress in writing is not as good as it is in reading and mathematics.
- Presentation in books is not good enough
- Pupils do not always use accurate punctuation, grammar and spelling.
- Pupils do not know enough about other countries, and the people who live in them

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in 12 lessons. Three joint lesson observations were undertaken with the headteacher. In addition, the inspector made other visits to classes, looked at pupils' books, listened to pupils read and examined pupils' work on display.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, and a senior representative from the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the responses to a recent parent questionnaire undertaken by the school. He talked directly to parents during the inspection. In addition, the 14 responses received to a staff questionnaire were considered.
- The inspector 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, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding

Inspection team

Andrew Read, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. All classes are for mixed-age groups.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above average.
- An above-average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium (the additional government funding for certain groups, including pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children in local authority care).
- There are too few pupils in the Year 6 cohort to make a valid comparison with the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching, particularly by:
 - ensuring that teaching gives pupils confidence when using writing to express their ideas in different subjects
 - improving the accuracy of pupils' punctuation, grammar and spelling
 - making sure that younger pupils are able to read and understand the comments made by teachers in their books concerning how to improve their work
 - insisting on good presentation at all times
- Promote an understanding of other people, culture and places by:
- Making sure that every opportunity is taken to widen children's knowledge of other countries and the people who live in them.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The school has maintained good standards since the previous inspection. In the last few years small numbers of pupils, with a wide range of ability, have caused year-on-year averages to vary. However, given their different starting points, pupils have made good progress in all subjects.
- The majority of pupils join Reception with below typical expected levels of development. However, good levels of provision mean that they make good progress, and the majority reach a good level of development.
- Each year a sizeable group of pupils in Reception are identified as having special educational needs. A few of these pupils complete their Reception year with below expected levels of development, particularly in early writing and number work. However, overall their progress is good, given their lower starting points.
- Progress across all year groups is strongest in reading and mathematics. Recent whole-school changes to the teaching of reading have led to better rates of progress, with particular improvements seen in pupils' enthusiasm to read by themselves.
- Mathematics continues to be a strength of the school, and progress in all year groups is good. Pupils can use their knowledge to solve real-life problems in a variety of different ways.
- Progress in writing, while generally good, is not quite as fast as that made in reading and mathematics. This is because pupils lack confidence when using writing to express their ideas, particularly in other subjects. Also, teachers do not always insist that pupils are accurate in their use of grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- Pupils make good progress in science, and standards are therefore high. Pupils can use advanced scientific vocabulary, and develop good levels of understanding through practical investigation.
- Although comprising a significant proportion of pupils, the actual number of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is small, meaning that any comment on their attainment risks identifying individuals. Overall however, given their starting points, such pupils make good progress.
- Because provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is well tailored to meet specific needs, these learners make good progress in all subjects. The school has a detailed knowledge of their needs, and uses physical activity, art and music to develop their understanding in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school is using the new primary school sports funding to strengthen its already good level of sports provision. Pupils are benefiting from a wider range of choices and the use of improved equipment, regardless of their ability.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching in the majority of subjects is good, with some that is outstanding. This is because it is

set at the right level for individuals. The teaching of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is particularly good in this respect.

- From a young age, the school encourages a collaborative approach to learning, fostering good social skills. For example, the school has three classes, with pupils learning in groups appropriate to their need and ability, the make-up of which varies from subject to subject.
- In Reception good use is made of outdoor areas, and children clearly enjoy their learning because teaching is both imaginative and meaningful. The youngest children work well together as a team, as well as under the direction of an adult.
- The teaching of mathematics is well planned. Pupils understand the relevance of the skills they are being taught, because teachers take every opportunity to use real-life examples. For example, Year 2 pupils were seen calculating the cost of items bought in an imaginary shop.
- The teaching of reading has benefited from a recent review designed to accelerate progress and an enjoyment of books. For example, parents regularly attend whole-school events where pupils read to them and each other, and awards for good reading are presented weekly in assembly.
- The teaching of science is a strength. Prior to embarking on a scientific topic, pupils develop good background knowledge through reading and discussion. This gives pupils the foundation to explore ideas through their own experiments. For example, pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 were seen researching micro-organisms using the internet, in preparation for the design of a practical experiment to examine how things decay.
- The teaching of writing varies. Pupils of all ages develop a good understanding of how to construct meaningful sentences using different types of words and writing styles. However, when asked to produce a finished quality piece of writing, the end product too often contains errors or is untidy. Pupils say that they find writing hard, and lack confidence when asked to express their thoughts and ideas more formally on paper in a finished format.
- Teaching assistants are very well used to support group learning, and teachers plan work that takes advantage of the strength of such support.
- Books are frequently and accurately marked, and contain detailed advice for pupils on how to improve their work. On occasions younger pupils need help understanding the written comments provided, and as a result have to wait for further teacher input before they can use the comments to improve their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They enjoy coming to school because pupils have a good relationship with each other and their teachers. For example, pupils say that teachers care about them as individuals, and are easy to talk to.
- Pupils who find it difficult to behave well make rapid improvement in the school. This is a particular strength of the school, and shows how well pupils with special educational needs are provided for.
- Because pupils learn in groups from a young age, attitudes to learning are good, particularly in younger age groups. Pupils say that they feel their views are listened to, and a school council

regularly meets to discuss whole-school issues.

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel safe in school, and know how to stay safe outside of school. For example, they have a good awareness of 'stranger-danger', and the potential dangers posed by local roads and water courses. From Year 3 onwards they are well informed as to how to stay safe on the internet and when using computing devices.
- Parental interviews and the school's own surveys suggest that the vast majority of parents also feel that behaviour is good and well managed. As a result their children feel safe in school. Parents feel that teachers are very approachable, and respond quickly to any concerns.
- Some low-level disruption can occur in older-aged classes during lessons, and during playtimes. However, teachers use consistent approaches to manage such behaviour, and pupils feel that they are treated fairly. As a result such misbehaviour is increasingly unusual, and always quickly dealt with.
- Attendance has recently improved from being below national average. This is because the headteacher has addressed specific attendance issues affecting a small number of families, for example reducing the number of unauthorised holidays taken during term time.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher works hard to make sure that the needs of all pupils are met. Almost all parents and staff feel that the school is well managed and led. Documents that record the school's own strengths and weaknesses are comprehensive and accurate.
- Processes to provide support to teachers and to take decisive actions when improvements are needed have led to consistently good levels of progress in the school, given pupils' starting points.
- Subject leadership is strong, and carried out by all staff. Recent leadership of literacy has placed more emphasis on the promotion of reading, and improving the quality of writing in all subject areas has been identified as a development area for the school.
- The school manages training effectively, targeting support on specific areas of need. For example, suitable attention is being given to the demands of the new National Curriculum.
- A wide range of activities are on offer including music, sport, arts, and outdoor education. While spiritual, moral and social aspects to learning are well covered in all year groups, pupils do not spend enough time considering other places around the world and the people who live in them. For example, one group of pupils were unsure where the United Kingdom is on a world map, while others were unable to agree whether it is a part of Europe, or name some countries in Africa.
- Assessment processes are robust. Managers meet regularly to review the progress of individuals, with class teachers responding quickly to any emerging issues. They check closely the performance of each pupil.
- Good support has been provided by the local authority, including a recent review of teaching and learning, and the checking of the accuracy of teacher assessments.

- The management of provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is strong. Regular meetings with specialist professionals and the close monitoring of individual needs ensures that pupils remain well supported.
- The identification of emerging learning difficulties in younger children is also good, and serves as an example of how well managed the Early Learning Foundation Stage is. Assessment in Reception is accurate and proportional to children's needs.
- Leaders have a strong focus on ensuring equal opportunities and avoiding discrimination within the school. Processes designed to safeguard pupils meet requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The Chair is experienced, and as a consequence has developed an excellent understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. This means that senior leaders receive a good level of challenge and support from governors, including with managing teachers' performance. Governors have a good understanding of how well pupils are doing, including those pupils who might be vulnerable to under-performance. They know for example, how much additional funding is provided by the pupil premium and the additional sports grant, how both are being spent, and whether such funding is leading to improved outcomes.

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	110630
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	431238

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	70
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Garlick
Headteacher	Robert Glozier
Date of previous school inspection	27 April 2009
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