

Bentfield Primary School

Rainsford Road, Stansted Mountfitchet, Stansted, CM24 8DX

Inspection dates 23–24 January 2014

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|----------|
| 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

- Strong leadership from the headteacher, deputy head teacher and assistant headteacher and the governing body have brought about improvements to achievement and teaching.
- Children get off to a good start in the Nursery. As a result of some very strong teaching, they make good progress.
- All groups of pupils make good progress in reading and writing from their different starting points. This includes the many disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Everyone has the opportunity to take part in all aspects of school life.
- The curriculum gives pupils a varied range of experiences that contribute strongly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are excellent, with the result that pupils behave well at all times and in a variety of circumstances.
- Pupils enjoy school and have good attitudes to learning. They understand how to keep themselves safe.
- The governing body is well organised and highly effective in carrying out its role.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- More-able pupils are not given demanding enough work to make sure that they reach the higher levels of attainment.
- Subject leaders have not had sufficient training to enable them to monitor their subject area thoroughly and pass on information to staff.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 14 lessons or parts of lessons, including time spent in brief observations of every classroom with the assistant headteacher.
- The inspectors heard pupils read and looked closely at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspection team looked at a wide range of school documents, including development plans, policies, self-evaluation reports, monitoring files, safeguarding and curriculum materials.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils from both key stages. Discussions were held with senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers and other staff, the Chair and Chair of Finance from the Governing Body, a representative from the local authority and an external consultant.
- The inspectors took account of the 39 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and spoke with several parents outside the school.
- The inspectors considered the 38 staff questionnaires that were completed.

Inspection team

Gillian Bosschaert, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sa'ad Khaldi

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school and nursery.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds, with a few children from minority ethnic backgrounds, some of whom speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported by school action is below average. The number of such pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is much higher than the national average. This is because the school offers enhanced provision of two places in each year group to pupils with particularly high levels of need. Many of the pupils on roll have much more severe needs than those usually found in mainstream education.
- The school has a breakfast club and after-school club.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The headteacher was the acting headteacher from January 2013, and took up the substantive post in January 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by making sure that more-able pupils are given hard enough work to do so that they reach the higher levels of attainment.
- Train subject leaders so that they are able to take a full part in evaluating and continuing to improve the work of the school in raising standards.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children have a good introduction to learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage from starting points lower than those typical for their age. The strong focus on developing speaking and listening skills and their personal and social development ensures that they are well prepared for future learning.
- Pupils join Key Stage 1 with skills and abilities that are broadly average. They make steady progress and now start Key Stage 2 broadly in line with pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 had much lower standards when they started Year 3. The school's tracking of pupils' attainment and the scrutiny of pupils' books confirm that progress and attainment are improving.
- Pupils now make good progress across Key Stage 2. However, the picture is distorted by the large percentage of pupils with extremely high levels of disability or special educational need. Although these pupils often do extremely well in the light of their difficulties, for many, their academic attainment is inevitably much lower than that of their classmates.
- The pupils who left Year 6 last year, for example, had made good progress by the time they left. Their progress accelerated in their later years in school because of improved teaching. Pupils who did not have any particular needs attained similarly to such pupils nationally. However, the initially low attainment, and high levels of disability and special educational needs of their classmates meant that the attainment of the whole group was below floor standards.
- Scrutiny of pupils' books and the school's own monitoring of individual pupils' progress show that pupils are making more rapid progress throughout Key Stage 2, especially in Years 3 and 4. Pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- All the more-able pupils make at least the progress they should. School data show more are reaching the higher levels of achievement in Key Stage 1 and a growing number in Key Stage 2, but these numbers are still too small because work is not always challenging them sufficiently.
- Pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium make the same good progress as their classmates. The small number of eligible pupils in Year 6 last year means that it is not possible to comment on their attainment in comparison with the others without risk of identifying individual pupils.
- Pupils for whom English is an additional language make similar progress to their classmates.
- The progress and achievement of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are good and sometimes outstanding. This is because work is well matched to individual pupils' specific learning needs and abilities.
- Pupils read with interest and show an enthusiasm for books. Reading is promoted well, with the result that reading standards are getting higher. Year 6 pupils who read to inspectors read accurately, fluently and with enthusiasm. They visit the local library and read at home to siblings as well as parents and carers.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently good in all classes. There are examples of some outstanding teaching.
- From the time they start school, pupils are helped to quickly settle into orderly routines. Teachers know their pupils well. In the main, they use information about what pupils already know and can do to make sure that work is neither too easy nor too hard. Sometimes, however, tasks for the more able lack enough challenge.
- The pupils in each age group who have enhanced provision because of their special educational needs are taught well by commendably organised teams of very dedicated teachers and teaching assistants. They show great patience and initiative in finding just the right level of work for each pupil's individual need, with the result that these pupils have an equal opportunity to access the curriculum and make at least good progress in the light of their needs.
- Teachers use questions skilfully to enable pupils to think and work things out for themselves. For example, in one mathematics lesson seen, pupils were given the challenge of ordering enough coaches to go on an educational trip by finding a way to divide the number of pupils by the number of seats available on each coach. Pupils learned quickly when they used their 'maths boxes' to turn this abstract question into a practical solution by using strings of beads, number lines or counters.
- Adults are well deployed in classrooms and show great insight when working with all pupils. They are aware of when to step in with a question and when to stand back and leave pupils to fathom out their own way of tackling a problem. They are well informed and adept at ensuring that pupils make good progress.
- Marking is clear and used consistently well to help pupils move on in their learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils is good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils enjoy their learning. They are clear about what is right and wrong; even the youngest pupils know what is expected of them. Behaviour in and around the school is good, particularly in the dining hall, where pupils help each other without fuss.
- Pupils are respectful of each other. There is a harmonious atmosphere across the school and relationships between adults and pupils throughout are good. Pupils get on well together and collaborate successfully in pairs and groups, regardless of ability, showing the strength of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural education provided.
- Even the youngest pupils understand the rewards and sanctions operating in classes. Sponges are collected with the very young for good behaviour and 'Golden Time' is the reward that is greatly appreciated. Other incentives include raffle tickets and a range of certificates.
- Pupils' attitudes to their work are good. In some lessons in Key Stage 1, pupils are able to work alone and persevere with problems until they are sure of the correct answer.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are compliant with regulations, and all aspects of health and safety are implemented well. Risk assessments are in place for educational trips, including the pupils' visits to Forest School.
- Pupils understand how to keep safe, including when using the internet. Time has been spent

discussing bullying and cyber-bullying, and pupils know what to do should it occur. They are confident that an adult would intervene if there were a problem. School records show that bullying is extremely rare.

- Attendance is now average. First-day calling to pupils' homes and a series of rewards for good attendance have improved attendance. The school works hard with pupils who have been school refusers in other schools and is successfully gaining their confidence to become integrated into school life so that they attend well.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and senior leaders are a strong team who have created a positive climate for learning which includes everyone. The efforts of pupils, staff, parents and carers are valued. This has secured improvements in pupils' achievement and maintained good teaching.
- The headteacher has introduced robust systems to monitor the quality of teaching. These comprehensively incorporate looking in pupils' books, looking at classroom walls, checking teachers' planning and considering pupils' attitudes to learning as well as their attainment and progress. Systems to manage the performance of teachers are also rigorous and training is closely linked to school improvement planning.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate, showing a realistic view of the school and its priorities for improvement. Senior leaders are fully aware that subject leaders need to develop their contribution to the raising of standards in their areas of responsibility. The emphasis was previously on reading and this has improved; it is currently on mathematics and school tracking shows this too is improving rapidly. The self-evaluation has yet to be updated in the light of the headteacher's appointment to the substantive position of headteacher.
- The pupil premium grant is spent on providing some individual teaching and some teaching in small groups, especially in mathematics. A part-time specialist mathematics teacher works with pupils and adults to ensure that pupils make better progress in mathematics. Evidence of better progress was seen in classes.
- The curriculum is interesting and covers a wide range of topics. It strongly promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Displays show a good variety of well-presented work. Artwork following the style of William Morris and patterns in the style of Escher make colourful contributions to the learning environment.
- The curriculum is enhanced by a good variety of after-school activities and clubs. Opportunities to play chess, netball or join the maths club are available to all pupils. Pupils learn to respect a range of faiths and celebrate major events in different cultures. The school is very committed to equal opportunity. Discrimination would not be tolerated but does not happen due to the early integration of pupils from the Nursery onward.
- A specialist teacher is employed for instrumental music and singing to enhance the curriculum further. The additional funding provided by the government to help pupils become more active and improve their fitness is used appropriately to employ a sports coach in collaboration with a group of local schools to make a Sports Partnership. The coach not only teaches the pupils but also helps to develop teachers' skills. It is too early to measure the impact of this.
- Links with a wide range of outside agencies, including music and art therapists, as well as a range of medical agencies, are excellent. Parents are very positive about the school. Parents are

encouraged to share experiences with pupils such as their visits to the Himalayas and India, adding to curriculum enrichment.

- The local authority representative is newly appointed. She has visited the school and has a good perception of the needs of the school. The school has an external consultant. The external consultant was, in the past, the local authority representative. She has supported the school and the governing body well in driving school improvement.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body has a good awareness of standards and the quality of teaching. Governors hold leaders to account for the performance of the school. Tracking of groups of pupils is thorough and fully understood by members of the governing body, as well as the governor assigned to this area of school development. Governors challenge the school regularly.
- Governors bring a variety of strengths to the governing body from their occupations and seek further training from the external consultant to ensure that they are robust in their governance. They are fully aware of how teachers' performance is managed and how this links to pay progression. Finances are secure. Governors understand how the pupil premium money is spent, and the impact it has. They have also overseen decisions on how best to use the primary sports funding provided by the government.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| 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

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| Unique reference number | 114978 |
| Local authority | Essex |
| Inspection number | 440410 |

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 249 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Alison Mansfield |
| Headteacher | David Rogers |
| Date of previous school inspection | 20 November 2012 |
| Telephone number | 01279 813626 |
| Fax number | 01279 816696 |
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