

Collingwood Primary School

Collingwood Road, South Woodham Ferrers, Chelmsford, CM3 5YJ

Inspection dates

6–7 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- After a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, pupils, particularly the most able, do not progress as well as they should across the rest of the school.
- Early reading skills are taught well but are not built on sufficiently in Key Stage 1 or subsequently. Although Year 6 results in reading match national averages they do not represent good progress from the pupils' high starting points.
- Teaching is not consistently good across the school. Some teachers do not have high enough expectations, particularly of the more-able pupils.
- Despite improvements this year, leaders and managers have not yet been fully effective in ensuring teaching and achievement are consistently good.

The school has the following strengths

- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 has been improving for the last two years and pupils are now beginning to make up the ground they had lost in the past.
- Systems for checking pupils' progress and the quality of teaching have been improved since the last inspection.
- Teachers give pupils clear guidance about what they need to do to improve their work.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are both good. They respond readily to their teachers, feel safe in school and are keen to do well.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching in all classes, visited 16 lessons and part lessons as well as attend a school assembly.
- Discussions were held with pupils, parents, the headteacher and other staff, as well as representatives of the governing body and the local authority.
- Inspectors heard a number of pupils read.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documents, including the school’s development plan, records of the governing body meetings, safeguarding arrangements and work in pupils’ books.
- An inspector spoke to individual parents and carers in the family assembly. The responses of the 65 parents who contributed to the online Parent View survey were also analysed.

Inspection team

Karen Heath, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Bimla Thakur

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Except in Reception, pupils are taught in mixed-age classes.
- Most pupils are White British. A small minority come from a variety of ethnic backgrounds and an average number of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support from the pupil premium is much lower than that seen in other schools nationally. This is additional funding to support particular groups of pupils, including those known to be eligible for free school meals and those in local authority care.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are all above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations set for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Year 6.
- Since the last inspection, there have been changes to the school's governing body and senior leadership team and there has been a long-term teacher absence.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better and accelerates pupils' progress by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of more-able pupils, particularly in Key Stage 1 and in reading
 - planning activities more carefully so that lesson time is used effectively
 - ensuring that teachers check how well pupils understand what they are learning, respond quickly enough when pupils are struggling and ensure pupils move forward in their learning.
- Ensure that pupils reach higher standards in reading by:
 - developing pupils' comprehension skills so that they can read, understand and discuss a text in depth
 - checking that when pupils are practising their reading skills by themselves they understand what they are to do and stay on task
 - ensuring that teaching assistants, particularly in Key Stage 1, work closely with teachers to improve their understanding of how best to teach phonics so that they can support pupils' reading more effectively.
- Improve leadership by ensuring that leaders and the governing body:
 - regularly check that the school development plan properly reflects information about how well pupils are doing and amending it, as necessary, to take into account any emerging priorities
 - ensure that actions taken by new leaders, particularly those in charge of subjects and key stages, are leading to swift improvements in teaching and achievement in their areas of responsibility.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and achieve standards that are at least in line with age-related expectations. However, this good progress is not maintained in Key Stage 1. Teachers do not always expect enough from more-able pupils and, consequently, they do not achieve as well as they should, particularly in reading.
- Results for the screening check in phonics (letters and sounds) at the end of Year 1 were not as good in 2013 as the year before. Key Stage 1 results in 2013 were no better than average in reading, writing and mathematics and below what pupils should have achieved, given their previous good progress.
- By the time pupils reach the end of Key Stage 2, their overall attainment is a little above average and improved in mathematics in 2013. However, achievement in reading is not as good as it is in the other subjects. Current school progress data and the results from inspectors' own observations confirm that previous weaknesses in teaching that led to a decline have been addressed. Pupils are now catching up, but some remain behind the point they should have attained in reading.
- National data for 2013 shows that, last year, all groups of pupils made expected progress in mathematics and writing. Too few pupils, however, made either expected or above expected progress in reading.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs progress at least as expected and several do better. These pupils benefit from detailed educational plans which map out the provision to support their learning. This is effective in ensuring that all adults understand what help these pupils need and the targets they are expected to achieve.
- The number of pupils leaving Year 6 last year who were eligible for the pupil premium was too small to support a valid judgement of the attainment of this group and it is not possible to comment on their attainment without risk of identifying individual pupils. The school's own pupil progress tracking system shows that other pupils lower down the school who are eligible for the pupil premium generally attain similar standards as their classmates in mathematics and writing but do less well in reading. Like their classmates, their progress requires improvement.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Although much of the teaching seen during the inspection was good, aspects of teaching continue to require improvement.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils, particularly the most able, can achieve are not always high enough and teaching has been too variable over time to secure good progress for all pupils. While the most significant weaknesses have now been addressed, where teaching has been weak in the past, it has led to uneven rates of progress in both English and mathematics. Consequently, some pupils continue to lag behind the points they should be at.
- Some lessons are still not as well planned as they need to be. For example, inspectors observed pupils who were not always meaningfully occupied or who did not understand what they should be doing when reading by themselves. As a result, they lost interest or got stuck and did not complete enough work.

- Teachers do not always check how well pupils understand what they are learning or respond quickly enough when pupils are struggling. This means that pupils spend time practising things incorrectly or failing to learn something new.
- The teaching of reading skills, including phonics, is not consistently good throughout the school and is too dependent on individual adults' levels of expertise. Older pupils are not expected to apply their comprehension skills, discuss a text or put forward their ideas without the direct support of an adult.
- Teaching assistants mostly provide good support but, on occasion, spend too much time keeping pupils on task rather than extending pupils' learning by developing their understanding; for example, through questioning them or by setting pupils new goals to achieve. Some teaching assistants lack the subject knowledge to support pupils' understanding of phonics effectively.
- In the best teaching, teachers ensure that pupils are willing to challenge themselves as well as each other. In a mathematics lesson on probability, for example, pupils were having a fierce debate about the chances of catching a red fish from the fish tank and they confidently used the correct mathematical language to justify their views. In another 'Buzzing Maths' lesson, pupils showed resilience in solving a problem which required them to use their basic computation skills accurately and to persevere to find a solution.
- Classrooms are well resourced, with attractive displays and 'working walls' which give pupils prompts to help them with their work. The most effective teachers ensure that pupils use this resource well. The Early Years Foundation stage is well equipped, both in the classroom and outside. Good teaching, based on accurate assessments of what Reception children need to learn, ensures that these children make a good start to their schooling.
- The most effective teachers consistently ensure that any pupils whose progress is slowing receives additional support. Their expectations of these pupils are high. They know their subjects well and use their subject knowledge to motivate those who find learning difficult and encourage them to improve. In one particularly effective lesson, the teacher used pupils' own work to demonstrate good examples of English grammar and the use of exciting vocabulary to write a myth. This helped pupils to see what others have achieved and enabled them to correct their own misconceptions.
- Teachers' marking is clear and helpful. It gives pupils the guidance they need to improve their work. Pupils are keen to succeed and eagerly read what the teacher has written, regularly amending their work and sometimes writing a comment back to the teacher.
- Support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good. Specialist provision brokered by the school ensures that, whatever challenges a pupil faces, they are given every opportunity to take a full part in lessons. A detailed education plan devised by the school sets out appropriate provision to meet the educational needs of each of these pupils, and resources are provided to ensure that they are well supported in their learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils generally have good attitudes, both to their learning and to each other. They are well mannered and show a genuine kindness towards their peers who find learning difficult. They talk positively about being in mixed-age classes, saying that they

help them to make more friends and that they can help each other.

- Pupils wear their uniforms with pride, are polite and courteous at all times and show respect to each other and adults.
- Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in their good attendance. They show a keenness to learn and talk about the range of subjects they like, such as French and music and using the computers and the interactive whiteboard. They are keen to win points so they can practise their 'Mathletics' on the tablet computers.
- Pupils take a pride in their responsibilities, such as being a school councillor, friendship mediator or play leader. The school is very effective in promoting positive relationships and tackling discrimination.
- The school's work keeps pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe in school and this view is supported by nearly all the parents who responded to Parent View. Pupils say that bullying is rare. They have a good understanding of different types of bullying, staying safe on the internet and racial discrimination. As one of the inspectors was informed by a six year old, 'Just because you have brown skin, doesn't mean you weren't born in England.'
- Pupils are fully aware of the school's behaviour policy. They are confident that the policy is implemented consistently within school by all staff.
- Behaviour and attitudes are not outstanding because, in some of the lessons where teaching requires improvement, pupils' concentration sometimes wanes and they lose focus.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Despite the recent rise in pupils' attainment in both key stages and the improvements in teaching, senior leaders have not been successful in ensuring that pupils make consistently good progress. This is particularly the case in reading.
- Until recently, leaders, including governors, have not checked systematically enough that priorities identified in the school's development plan are being successfully pursued. Action taken by recently appointed subject leaders has not yet had sufficient time to show its impact on teaching or achievement.
- The school has provided training for staff to improve the quality of teaching, particularly for reading. It has also introduced initiatives to improve the involvement of parents in their child's learning. There are some positive signs of improvement but it is still too early for leaders to be confident that these will be sustained over time.
- The membership of the senior leadership team and the governing body have both recently changed and this has brought improvements. Governors and senior leaders work increasingly well together to monitor and evaluate the school's effectiveness. Leaders are clear about their roles and responsibilities in developing the school further. The leadership of the Early Years Foundation stage is good. There is high morale amongst staff and a clear commitment by everybody to make this a good school.
- The headteacher and senior staff have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses, including on the quality of teaching. Since the last inspection, attainment overall has improved and writing at Key Stage 2. Improvements in reading, however, are not as marked

as they are in other subjects.

- The school's self-evaluation and detailed development plan highlights the correct priorities for the school and how these will be actioned and who will be responsible for their success. There are effective systems in place for the regular monitoring of lessons, pupils' work and holding teachers to account.
- Tracking data is used effectively by senior leaders to ensure that all staff and governors are well informed about pupils' progress and the targets that need to be achieved. This information is being used to provide support to raise the achievement of those who might otherwise fall behind. This is leading to improved rates of progress across the school.
- The curriculum reflects the school's emphasis on improving achievement in English and mathematics. The school has been creative in deciding how these subjects are to be taught. Pupils talk enthusiastically about how they like it when subjects are 'linked'; for example, drawing a mythical creature in an art lesson and writing a description of it in a writing lesson. Pupils say this helps them learn in an interesting way.
- The pupil premium has been used to employ teaching assistants to support pupils in the younger classes. The older pupils are taught in smaller sets for mathematics and writing, with the benefit of additional teachers to provide more focused attention. The school's data, which tracks pupils' progress, shows this has been successful in narrowing gaps in attainment between eligible pupils and their peers, at least in writing and mathematics.
- The school has worked closely with parents and provides three pupil progress reports a year and some useful learning resources on the website. Communication through the pupils' 'yellow book' reading diaries are evidence of the good dialogue that exists between school and home, and of the effective partnership with parents to raise standards in reading. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to Parent View said their child was happy at school.
- Arrangements to safeguard children meet all the statutory requirements and the school has been active in challenging other agencies when they have not fulfilled their obligations to support children.
- The school has used the new funding for primary sport to employ a sports coach and to provide pupils with a range of additional sporting activities. This has been particularly beneficial for some of the youngest pupils in school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are now very well informed about how the pupils in school are doing. They use the school's data to good effect, analysing where the strengths and weaknesses are, and they hold leaders to account for the school's performance. They bring a wide range of relevant skills and experience to the school and to their support of and challenge to school leaders. Governors actively monitor the school's work, with regular focused visits and 'spot checks' based on the school development plan. They track the school's performance each term and over time. They rigorously oversee the headteacher's own performance management, and that of other teachers. Governors ensure that only the best teachers are rewarded and that staff are provided with professional development to improve the quality of teaching. They know how well the pupil premium funding has been used to help eligible pupils to catch up with their peers.

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	115305
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	430741

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	243
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Ewers
Headteacher	Amanda Buckland-Garnett
Date of previous school inspection	5 July 2012
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