

Boxted St Peter's Church of England School

Carter's Hill, Boxted, Colchester, CO4 5YN

Inspection dates 13–14 February 2014

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		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils achieve well and make at least good progress throughout the school.
- The quality of teaching is good and some is outstanding. The teaching of English across the school is a particular strength.
- The headteacher, together with the support of the senior leadership team, provides the school with strong and focused leadership. As a result, teaching and pupils' achievement has improved.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Pupils are very keen to learn. They enjoy school and feel extremely safe in this calm and happy environment.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted extremely well.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium make good, and sometimes outstanding, progress. Those with specific learning needs receive high quality support.
- Different subjects, events and clubs give pupils many opportunities to learn new skills.
- Governors are well informed and actively involved in checking the school's work.
- Leaders and managers at all levels have a clear view of how well the school is doing and where it can improve.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although good, pupils' achievement in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 is not as strong as it is in reading and writing.
- Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to apply their mathematical knowledge and skills to investigate and solve mathematical problems in other subjects.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed nine lessons, some of which were observed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- The inspector observed pupils in lessons, at play, at lunch, in the celebration assembly and as they moved around school.
- Discussions were held with staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and other governors, and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector held meetings with groups of pupils, observed the school council meeting, listened to pupils read and checked reading progress records.
- A wide range of documentation was reviewed, including records of the quality of teaching and of pupils' attainment and progress, the school's view of its performance and the school development plan. In addition, records of the governing body meetings, safeguarding documentation and reports from the school improvement adviser were reviewed.
- During the inspection the inspector took account of the 38 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and 12 responses to the staff questionnaire. The inspector also spoke to parents at the beginning of the school day.

Inspection team

Susan Thomas-Pounce, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is much smaller than most primary schools.
- Only a small number of pupils are supported by the pupil premium. This is additional government funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The large majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion of those supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is just above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school has recently expanded to take up to approximately 30 pupils per year. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are taught in a mixed-age class.
- The headteacher joined the school in 2010 and the deputy headteacher joined the school in 2012. Most of the teaching staff have been appointed to the school in the last two years.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure that pupils' progress in mathematics matches the progress they make in reading and writing by giving pupils the opportunity to apply their mathematical knowledge and skills in investigating and solving problems in mathematics and in other subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The school's actions to raise standards and accelerate progress since the previous inspection have proved successful. This is because the quality of teaching has steadily improved.
- Attainment across all subjects at the end of Key Stage 1 is rising with pupils exceeding the standards expected of them in 2013. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 in English is average, although it is slightly lower in mathematics. For those pupils this represents good and improving progress because their attainment in both subjects at the end of Year 2 had been below average.
- The school's system for checking how well pupils are doing shows that they make good progress from their different starting points and achieve well throughout the school. This is confirmed by evidence from lesson observations and work in pupils' books.
- Although it varies from year to year, children generally join Reception with skills and knowledge which are below those expected for their age. They make good progress in all areas of learning because activities interest and challenge them. Children settle quickly and their individual needs are met well.
- Attainment in pupils' writing at the end of both key stages has improved strongly. This is the result of a very successful whole-school focus on improving the quality of writing. Teachers make sure that pupils' writing skills are secure and that they have opportunities to write in a variety of styles in different subjects.
- Pupils read confidently and can tackle unfamiliar words because they develop a good understanding of phonics (letters and the sounds they make). This is reflected in the fact that all pupils reached the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Pupils say they enjoy reading and the majority read widely.
- There is a strong focus on the teaching of numeracy skills. Although older pupils make good progress in mathematics, it is not as fast as it is in reading and writing. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills and knowledge when investigating and problem solving both in mathematics and in other subjects across the curriculum.
- The most-able pupils make good progress, but their progress in mathematics is not as fast as it is in reading and writing. This is because there are not enough opportunities for them to extend their learning and deepen their understanding.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well because their needs are identified early and effective support put in place.
- The small number of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding also make good, and for some exceptional, progress. Test results in 2013 show that their attainment was in line with that of their classmates and their peers nationally in mathematics. They did even better in English being nearly two terms ahead. Funding is used effectively to provide additional teaching and to pay for them to benefit from the wide range of school visits and visitors, including residential trips.

The quality of teaching is good

- Evidence from pupils' work books and the school's information about pupils' attainment and progress show that teaching over time is good. The inspector saw teaching that was good, with some examples of outstanding teaching. Teachers explain ideas clearly and confidently and make sure that pupils know what they need to do to achieve success in lessons.
- Since the previous inspection, teachers have improved lesson planning to make sure that the activities provided build effectively on what pupils already know. This means that pupils can use what they know and understand to make links with their current learning. The quality of marking has improved so that pupils are given clear guidance on what exactly they need to do to improve their work. The leadership team has been successful in improving pupils' writing skills.
- The high level of respect and very good relationships between pupils and their teachers, along with the demanding work pupils are asked to do, make sure that learning is enjoyable as well as productive. As a result, pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and are keen to do well.
- Children in Reception are encouraged to develop their skills across all areas of learning. Resources both inside and outside are used to extend children's understanding. Every opportunity is taken to develop children's speaking and listening skills. An outstanding example of this was a 'stay and play' session. Parents joined their children and together they discussed the different ways a traditional fairy story might end.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan effectively to meet the needs of all pupils. This was seen particularly in the mixed-age class, when Years 5 and 6 were working enthusiastically to improve their writing skills as they compiled a range of reports for a newspaper. Different pupils had different tasks depending on their needs and abilities. Pupils made rapid gains in their learning because resources were used well, expectations were high, instructions were clear and pupils were excited about their learning.
- Teaching assistants are used well to support the learning of all pupils. They are particularly effective in promoting the learning of disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and pupils supported by the pupil premium.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding, both in lessons and around the school and this has a very positive impact on the calm, happy and cohesive learning environment. They display exemplary attitudes and their enthusiasm for learning contributes strongly to their good, and often outstanding, progress. They take great pride in the neat and careful presentation of their work.
- Pupils listen attentively to their teachers. They work very effectively. Lessons proceed smoothly without any interruption to learning. Mutual respect and a strong, caring ethos are evident throughout the school.
- Children start to develop a love of learning in the Reception class where they learn to work together constructively, to share and take turns. These skills are built upon consistently across the school.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils say they feel safe in school, which is almost unanimously confirmed by parents and carers. Pupils are taught how to recognise and deal with potentially dangerous situations, such as discovering a fire.

- The school's very effective systems for managing behaviour mean all staff are consistent in their response to any issues. Few parents and carers who gave their views indicated any concerns about behaviour. They understand that bullying may take many forms. School records show that poor behaviour is extremely rare and that the excellent behaviour seen during the inspection is typical.
- Pupils readily take on responsibility in a variety of ways. For example, older pupils help to care for younger children at lunchtime and on school outings and there is an active school council. There are many rich and varied opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils raise money for a wide range of causes and have positive views on the importance of helping those less fortunate than themselves.
- Pupils are very proud of their school, the way it helps them to learn and the preparation it gives them for secondary school. They greatly enjoy coming to school and their attendance is high.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher gives strong and determined leadership. There is effective team work at all levels and all aspects of leadership, including governance, are relentlessly focused on improving achievement still further.
- The school knows itself well through rigorous checks on its work and leaders have an accurate view of the quality of teaching. Leaders have set the right priorities for improving the school. Subject leaders are well trained and make a significant contribution to improvements in their areas.
- The school knows its pupils very well as individuals. There are effective systems to check the progress that each pupil is making, and any underachievement is addressed by providing extra help or support if it is needed. This means that pupils achieve well and shows the school's commitment to equal opportunity.
- Information on pupils' progress is taken into account when judging how well teachers are doing, and is considered when making decisions about their pay.
- The well-planned curriculum is enriched by a good range of clubs, trips and visits including sport, drama, music and cultural activities.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a significant strength. Links with the local church and community, with other schools, both local and abroad, give pupils a wide range of experiences and a very good appreciation of other cultures.
- School leaders closely check the impact of pupil-premium funding to make sure tailored programmes of support are meeting individual pupil needs. This funding contributes effectively to improved progress for eligible pupils.
- The primary school sports' funding has been used to employ sports coaches and to buy equipment, and this is giving pupils the opportunity to experience a variety of new sports, supporting them in developing healthy lifestyles and improving their physical well-being.
- The local authority's support is now light touch for this successful school.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are well informed about the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. They know how well the school is doing and where it needs to improve. They are very supportive of the school, and make frequent visits in a variety of capacities as well as receiving regular reports and information from the headteacher. They are well trained and include a wide range of appropriate expertise including financial planning. Governors challenge the school and hold it to account and monitor the actions being taken by the headteacher to improve the quality of teaching still further. They are clear about the impact of spending decisions, such as the pupil premium and the sports funding. They set challenging targets as part of the headteacher's appraisal and make sure that pupil performance is considered when making decisions about the pay of teachers and teaching assistants. Governors ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet national requirements. All statutory duties are met.

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	115072
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	430744

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	144
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gary Cowley
Headteacher	Tania Devereux
Date of previous school inspection	10 May 2012
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Fax number	01206 271598
Email address	admin@boxted.essex.sch.uk

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