

Grange Primary School

Elder Avenue, Wickford, SS12 0LR

Inspection dates 27–28 February 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.

- Pupils make a very good start in the Reception class, learning to talk well about the new things they learn. They make outstanding progress and, in some aspects of learning, do better than most children of their age.
- As pupils move through the school, they make good progress in most aspects of reading, writing and mathematics. In particular, they have a good knowledge of number facts to help them do calculations in their heads.
- Pupils who receive the pupil premium make at least as much progress as others.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well supported and also do well.
- Most teaching is good and some is outstanding.
- An exceptional feature of the school is the very caring and positive atmosphere in which pupils work and learn. When they find difficulties, they receive clear and sympathetic help. This, and the interesting work they do, makes pupils keen to tackle new tasks.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning and behave very well in lessons and around the school.
- The school is well led. As a result, this is a happy and hardworking place, where children are safe and secure.
- Managers have ensured that good teaching and achievement have been maintained since the last inspection. Teachers are well supported to improve their skills and leaders receive good training. Governors are very committed and keep a careful eye on important areas of the school's work.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The work children are taught is not mapped out in enough detail. This means that there are gaps in learning, particularly in mathematics.
- The teaching of spelling, handwriting and the way pupils present their work is not as effective as it should be.
- Some more-able pupils could do better.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 lessons or parts of lessons.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, the deputy head, four other staff with leadership roles, the Chair of the Governing Body and the vice-chair, several parents and an officer from the local authority.
- Discussions were held with pupils, during lessons and on the playground, about school life. A number of pupils discussed their reading with inspectors.
- The views of 90 parents who responded to the online Parent View survey were taken into account, as were the views of a large number of staff, who filled in a survey form.
- A large number of documents were examined, including: information on pupils' achievement and behaviour; documents showing how the school keeps pupils safe; records of meetings of governors; the school's self-evaluation; and its improvement plan.

Inspection team

David Rosenthal, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Lynda Beale	Additional Inspector
Helen Morrison	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is of above-average size for its type.
- The great majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, supported through school action (extra help provided by the school) is broadly average. The proportion supported by school action plus (extra help also involving outside agencies) or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional government funding for groups such as pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or in local authority care) is well below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching by:
 - ensuring pupils spell more accurately, including the key words in each topic they tackle
 - introducing a systematic approach to the teaching of handwriting so pupils use a well-formed joined style
 - raising expectations of the way pupils set out their work in all classes.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - planning in detail what is to be covered in each subject in each year group and how more-able pupils will be challenged
 - providing this information to parents on the school's website.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' attainment at ages 7 and 11 has been close to the national average in reading, writing and mathematics in recent years. The percentage of pupils making expected and greater-than-expected progress from their starting points has also been close to the national average.
- In 2013, the amount of progress made by Year 6 pupils from Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics fell significantly below the average. This was because a number of more-able pupils did not achieve as well in tests as they might have done. The issue has been successfully tackled by providing more challenging work when pupils are taught in ability sets, particularly for mathematics.
- Pupils currently in the school, including the more able, are now making good progress overall from their different starting points, with many making greater-than-expected progress. However, the more-able still do not always make the progress they should during whole-class teaching, where they are sometimes not challenged enough.
- Pupils in the Reception classes make a particularly good start to their education. Pupils learn a great deal of new vocabulary which enriches their understanding. Many go beyond what is expected for their age when learning about number work. From relatively low starting points, Reception class pupils make outstanding progress.
- Across the school, the small numbers of pupils who receive pupil premium funding generally make good progress, often doing better than others. Of this group, the most able are given good access to more challenging teaching and so make good gains. There are too few such pupils in each age-group for meaningful comparisons to be made between their standards and those of their classmates.
- The support given to disabled pupils and those with special educational needs helps them grow in confidence and many, therefore, make good progress.
- There is a strong focus on equality of opportunity in which good relationships between all are promoted; discrimination of any kind is discouraged. The approach is very successful.
- Progress in phonics (learning how letters in words represent different sounds) had been below average at the start of Key Stage 1, but is now more rapid following changes to teaching.
- Because the school's curriculum is not planned in sufficient detail for each subject and year group, there are gaps in pupils' learning, particularly in mathematics.
- Pupils' spelling is not sufficiently accurate. Their handwriting is often poorly formed and letters are seldom joined. This means they write too slowly and work is sometimes difficult to read. Pupils' setting out of work also requires improvement in a number of classes.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently effective in developing pupils' understanding. Teachers' questioning and checks on progress mean any misunderstandings are dealt with quickly. Pupils' communication skills are developed well in many classes because they are encouraged to provide opinions, to

explain their understanding and to identify any areas of confusion.

- Teaching in the Reception classes is outstanding. The focus on developing children's vocabulary and understanding of the topics studied through discussion leads to very good learning. Well planned activities lead to good levels of concentration and enthusiasm. The systematic teaching of skills, such as counting and writing numbers, leads to outstanding progress for all, including the most able.
- The positive atmosphere, which is a consistent feature in lessons throughout the school, means that pupils respond well to their teaching and gladly carry out the work they are given. Homework is set regularly. This makes a useful impact on pupils' achievement, for instance in reading.
- Pupils who find work difficult, and those with disabilities or who have special educational needs, receive effective help from both teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils' confidence is promoted through careful explanation, discussion and encouragement. As one child said, 'Teachers are nice, calm and supportive.'
- The teaching of the more-able pupils varies. Where special provision is made, for instance for pupils capable of achieving the highest levels in English and mathematics, teaching is good. However, in some class work, too few additional challenges are provided. More-able pupils do not always make the progress they should when tasks are too easy for them.
- There are some weaknesses in the teaching, particularly in mathematics. This is because the way in which work is to be covered and sequenced for each year group has not been mapped out in sufficient detail to guide teachers' work.
- Expectations are generally not high enough in terms of pupils' presentation of work and the way they form and join letters. As a result, some work is untidy and most pupils do not write as quickly and legibly as they might.
- The teaching of phonics (how the letters in words represent different sounds) has been weak in the past. Although good improvements have been made, this work is not yet making an impact on pupils' spelling in the older classes. Teachers do not have high enough expectations that pupils will master the spelling of key vocabulary for each topic.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. This is because of the high expectations of staff, including the headteacher.
- In the Reception classes, children show particularly good levels of concentration when they work together as a class or group, or when they choose their own play activities. This is because they are taught the language they need to play and share ideas.
- In the other classes, pupils are often eager to tackle the work they are set. They pay attention well when the teacher or other pupils are speaking and collaborate effectively when working in groups or pairs.
- Behaviour around the school is particularly good and is managed well. Pupils show good levels of self-control and consideration for others.

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that there is very little unkindness at the school. Bullying is rare and, if it does happen, it is dealt with rapidly by staff. Pupils are safe as they move round the building and grounds, which are secure, tidy and well organised.
- Pupils understand well the different forms of bullying and the potential dangers of using the internet. They know how to keep themselves safe, for instance from cyber-bullying.

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders at all levels have established a consistently hardworking school community and show ambition to make further improvements to pupils' achievement.
- Teachers and other staff know the pupils well and take good and careful steps to ensure their safety and wellbeing. Safeguarding procedures meet requirements.
- The school's self-evaluation is broadly accurate. Where weaknesses in pupils' achievement are seen, improvements are made quickly. In particular, successful actions have been taken to improve the teaching of phonics, and pupils' overall rates of progress.
- Annual reviews of teachers' performance are carried out thoroughly. This means training and improvement work is focused well on their needs and any pay awards are based on good evidence. Staff with leadership responsibility have been given good training. As a result, they have an accurate view of strengths and weaknesses in the areas for which they are responsible, and are effective in supporting other staff to improve their work.
- The provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is well managed. Pupils' learning needs are understood and good provision is made to support their progress.
- Good use has been made of the recently-received primary sport funding to enrich the sporting opportunities available and to improve achievement. The pupil premium funding is also well used to ensure pupils have full access to the curriculum and, where needed, to provide focused help, including for the more-able.
- The school's interesting curriculum and the expectations and example given by staff provide a good basis for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Productive partnerships with other schools in the local area and with schools in China and Ghana also offer much interest and enrichment.
- Overall, the school's curriculum is not mapped out in sufficient detail to ensure full coverage of the national curriculum. There is too little guidance for teachers on what should be covered, resulting in gaps in pupils' knowledge.
- Parents are very satisfied with the school's work and are successfully encouraged to support their children's progress. Information on the school's website provides most required information. However, there is too little detail on what will be taught in each subject to each year group, and how the work will be approached. This aspect does not meet government requirements.
- The local authority provides a small amount of support to the school, currently in relation to

analysing data. This is appropriate and is appreciated by the school.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governors know the school well and provide a great deal of practical help. They play a key part in setting the direction for improvement by contributing a clear plan. Governors' knowledge of the school's performance is helped by a simple report they have requested, which is provided each term. These data enable them to keep a careful eye on important measures of performance. They monitor the school's spending regularly and challenge leaders appropriately by sometimes asking probing questions about their work. Governors consider the performance of staff in an appropriate way and make well-informed decisions on any recommendations for pay increases.

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	131579
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	431561

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	311
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Albert Ede
Headteacher	Lyn Corderoy
Date of previous school inspection	17 March 2009
Telephone number	01268 734420
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Email address	admin@grange.essex.sch.uk

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