

# Cottingham Church of England School

Berryfield Road, Market Harborough, LE16 8XB

**Inspection dates** 26–27 February 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- The school has greatly improved over the last three years, under the strong leadership of the headteacher.
- Achievement in writing has risen rapidly since the last inspection and is now outstanding in Reception and Years 1 and 2.
- Pupils very swiftly learn the sounds that letters make.
- Progress is good in mathematics and it is good, overall, in all year groups.
- Teachers make lessons exciting and interesting, so pupils are keen to learn.
- Teachers are very good at identifying exactly what they want pupils of different abilities to learn in each lesson. As a result, they ask the right questions and prompt pupils well.
- Teachers use marking well to help pupils improve their work.
- Pupils look after each other and feel safe. They are polite and behave well, and are good at reflecting about things like other people's feelings.
- Leaders at all levels, including governors, are doing a good job. They know how well the school is doing and plan well to improve it.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The tasks teachers give pupils in lessons do not always lead to the rapid learning they want.
- When leaders identify things teachers should improve, these are not always followed up the next time the teacher is observed.
- In Key Stage 1, progress in mathematics is not as rapid as in English. The girls, in particular, have ground to make up.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in all five classes. She and the headteacher observed four lessons together. The inspector also watched some teaching of small groups, which included three class sessions on the teaching of sounds and letters, one in which pupils studied a book with a teacher, and some extra sessions to help pupils catch up or extend their knowledge.
- She watched an assembly, listened to pupils reading and also talked with pupils about their views on the school.
- She met with governors and spoke to a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher and other leaders and managers, and studied the responses to the staff questionnaire.
- She took parents' opinions into account through informal discussions and the 36 responses to Parent View, the online questionnaire.
- She studied a range of documentation, including information about the progress of pupils, and records of behaviour and the checks made on teaching.

## Inspection team

Deborah Zachary, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Cottingham is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British.
- In most year groups, there are a lot more boys than girls.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through pupil premium funding is below average. This extra money is given to schools by the government to help pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, those looked after by the local authority and those with a parent in the armed services.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is broadly average, as is the proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- An above-average proportion of pupils join or leave partway through their primary schooling.
- The school meets the governments' current floor standards. These are the minimum expectations set for attainment and progress.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve progress in mathematics in Key Stage 1, especially for girls, by making sure that they catch up on any work they have covered but not fully understood.
- Improve teaching by making sure that:
  - the activities teachers choose for pupils to do in lessons are effective in moving on pupils' learning to the point intended
  - when a leader or manager observes teaching, and suggests an area to improve, that area is always followed up the next time the teacher's work is observed.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children make good progress in Reception. Their standards are assessed carefully against what is typical for their age when they arrive, and their development is closely watched. They benefit from excellent teaching about the sounds that letters make (phonics) and make outstanding progress in this and in writing. They make good progress in other areas of learning.
- The very rapid progress in writing and in phonics continues in Key Stage 1. In 2013, a very high proportion of pupils were successful in the phonics check for Year 1 pupils. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use their knowledge to spell well, and are also good at choosing powerful words to use in their writing.
- Progress in mathematics is slower than in English in Key Stage 1. Girls in Year 2 last year made slower progress than boys, and they are also making slower progress this year. Their books show that they lack confidence in some areas, and sometimes they have not revisited the work they had problems with to make sure they can do it. In Year 2 last year there were many more boys than girls, and the situation is similar this year.
- Progress is good in Key Stage 2. In 2013, Year 6 pupils reached standards that were above average in reading, writing and mathematics, and they are on track to reach similar standards this year. These pupils have recently made better progress than when they were lower down the school.
- When pupils join the school partway through the year or in different year groups, the school acts quickly to assess what they know and can do, and identify whether they need extra support. As a result, they settle quickly and start to make the same progress as others in the school.
- Pupils of different abilities all make good progress. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are given work that is adapted to match their capabilities, and are often given individual help. This includes work on things like concentration and physical skills as well as academic work. The more-able pupils are challenged well and make rapid progress.
- The pupil premium funding is used to provide a wide range of extra help for those who are eligible. This includes emotional support and help to attend clubs and special activities, as well as individual teaching by an adult or work in small groups. The school tracks their progress closely, as it does for pupils who have special educational needs.
- As very few pupils in last year's Year 6 were supported by the pupil premium, it is not possible to comment on their attainment without potentially identifying individuals. Throughout the school, however, eligible pupils are currently making progress that is at least as good as and often better than all pupils nationally. This shows that the school is effective in giving all pupils an equal chance to succeed.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good in all key stages and some aspects are outstanding. Phonics, for example, is taught exceptionally well. Adults demand great accuracy from pupils in the way they pronounce sounds, and pupils enjoy acting out and counting the different sounds that make up a word.
- Teaching assistants make a strong contribution to the pupils' good learning, particularly through

the work they do with small groups who have been identified for extra teaching. They have a strong knowledge of phonics, and are often very skilled in judging when to change an activity to keep a pupil's interest or when to move them on.

- A big strength in the teaching is the way teachers are very clear about exactly what knowledge or understanding they want pupils of different abilities to gain during the lesson. They ask questions skilfully to make sure this happens, and usually make good choices about the tasks the pupils do, so that the learning is assured.
- Occasionally, though teachers know what they want to happen, the way they have chosen to get pupils there does not work as well. For example, a teacher wanted some pupils to learn to use two or three different shapes to cover a surface in a repeating pattern. This target was the right level of work but, in the activity, the pupils made stripes of single shapes rather than a more difficult pattern that mixed the shapes together. In another lesson, some lower ability pupils found a task of writing down words to match to story pictures too hard. Writing the words got in the way of them gaining a better understanding of how the story developed, and their learning slowed.
- Teachers make lessons engaging by choosing contexts that pupils find interesting, by presenting work in a lively way or by making sure the pupils are highly aware of why and what they are aiming for and how to improve their work. As a result, almost without exception, the pupils get started quickly even if the teacher is attending to someone else. They discuss their work eagerly.
- During the inspection, some particularly effective contexts were used for developing writing skills. These included describing a volcano in Year 3, and the thoughts of baby owls left alone in a nest in Years 1 and 2. In the latter lesson, more-able pupils, in particular, very rapidly developed their understanding of how a story is constructed. Some used puppets to act the story out and develop good vocabulary, and others produced quite complex labelled drawings to show how the fears of the owls grew until the mother returned.
- Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 were using charts showing the small steps of learning they were aiming for in mathematics. Year 6 pupils told the inspector that they find these very useful to challenge themselves and make sure each piece of work they do is making them learn more. Teachers show appropriately high expectations by asking, 'What is your next challenge?' and pupils respond by striving to do harder work.
- Marking is much better than at the time of the last inspection. Many books show two-way communication between teacher and pupil, as the teacher sets further challenges and the pupil comments. Older pupils say they also enjoy marking each other's work. Books show some skilful analysis by pupils of how a classmate could improve, to the benefit of both pupils involved.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are nearly all keen learners, who want to ask questions. They are good at working with each other and organising themselves. They are quiet and listen when the teacher is talking. They seldom lose concentration, partly because the work itself is so fascinating.
- Pupils are courteous, and listen to each other's views very well. They take care of each other; for example, in the playground, where a very rich variety of resources and play areas encourage pupils to play socially and imaginatively.

- Some pupils, staff and parents have reservations about the behaviour of some individual pupils. These pupils are well known to the school, and are being supported very effectively to improve their social skills and approach. The school's detailed records show that they have made significant improvements in their behaviour and attitudes.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Current national requirements for safeguarding are met. The pupils who spoke to the inspector were adamant that the school was extremely friendly and there was no bullying. They know what bullying is, and how it might occur, but simply say it does not. They are confident that if it did occur, it would be sorted out. School records show that bullying incidents are rare.
- All staff who responded to the questionnaire, and all pupils who were asked, said the school kept pupils safe. All parents who talked to the inspector and most who gave their opinions through Parent View were of the same opinion.
- Pupils are aware of ways in which they need to keep themselves safe; for example, when using the internet. They have limited involvement in helping to review hazards that might occur within the school, even though the school council does a lot in other areas. The school has suitable plans to extend pupils' involvement in this.
- Attendance fell in 2012/13, but has improved to above average since September.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher has played a key role in the rapid improvements the school has made since it was placed in special measures two inspections ago. Through being very supportive, she has made sure that teachers and support staff work seamlessly and has won the loyalty of staff and governors. She has given excellent attention to improving both achievement and behaviour, and has been innovative in improving the school's facilities; for example, in developing the excellent resources and layout of the playground.
- The deputy headteacher, other senior leaders and middle managers have been encouraged to take up key responsibilities and are making a good contribution to the school's improvements. For example, they take responsibility for specific projects in the school improvement plan. Together, leaders have established an atmosphere in which pupils expect to learn and are keen to push their own learning forward.
- Leaders' analysis of the school's strengths and weaknesses is detailed and accurate. It is based on a wide range of frequent monitoring of teaching and progress. Because the school knows exactly what it is good at or weaker at, development planning at both whole-school and subject level is focused on the right things.
- Judgements made about the quality of teaching are accurate and based on the impact the teaching is having on pupils' learning. The right points for improvement are identified, and teaching has improved well since the last inspection. Nevertheless, points identified for improvement in one observation are not always explicitly picked up the next time a teacher is observed. This means the system is not watertight.
- The subjects and topics and the way they are taught are arranged in an innovative way that supports pupils' personal skills well. The new system is working well at this early stage. Pupils spend longer blocks of time, often most of the morning, working on either English or mathematics. Through imaginative approaches, pupils learn to reflect by creating prayers and

considering abstract ideas such as what others need to be happy. The many extra clubs are much appreciated by pupils, and develop their social and sporting skills effectively.

- The school did not receive its first batch of primary sports funding until November, and is awaiting its second instalment. It has used the money appropriately. It is too early for a formal evaluation of the impact, but initial participation rates are being measured in order to give a baseline. Some of the money has been spent on widening pupils' experience of sports, including skiing and judo. This has been very effective in raising interest in sport for those who took part. For example, Year 2 pupils described with great excitement their first ski lesson, and the way they were taught to hold the right position and balance.
- The local authority has provided additional funds to ensure good support for the school in its journey of improvement. This has had a strong impact; for example, on improving teaching, training subject and other leaders, and helping governors to improve their systems and organisation.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governance is good. Governors have a clear idea of how they want to operate and how they can contribute to improving the school. They understand data about pupils' performance and are confident about questioning and challenging school leaders. They know how pupil premium funding is used and are rightly confident about its good impact.
  - Governors know how good teaching is and what the school is doing to improve it; for example, through making pay rises that are closely linked to the impact of teachers' performance on pupils' learning. They also know how well leaders at different levels are doing, and individual governors work with them on different aspects of what the school provides; for example, to check how well the school is providing for pupils who have special educational needs.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	121965
<b>Local authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	430581

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	119
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Kirsty Swallow
<b>Headteacher</b>	Emma Tayler
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3-4 July 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01536 771391
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