

Chipping Ongar Primary School

Greensted Road, Ongar, CM5 9LA

Inspection dates 29–30 April 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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher, governors and staff have worked effectively with the help of the local authority to improve greatly the consistency of teaching and progress in the last year.
- Achievement is now good across the school because teaching is good. Pupils develop good skills in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers give different work to pupils of different abilities, so that usually tasks are challenging but manageable.
- Children get off to a particularly good start in the Reception class.
- Teachers manage classes well, ensuring that pupils concentrate and no time is wasted.
- Teachers explain things clearly to pupils, often showing them by example what they need to do.
- The school is very effective in ensuring that all pupils, regardless of their ability or background, make good progress and are fully involved in all aspects of school life.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They get on well with each other and with staff, and enjoy all aspects of school.
- Pupils enjoy the wide range of activities provided, particularly in sports.
- Pupils feel safe in school and have great confidence that the adults will take care of them.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers occasionally give some pupils work that is too easy for them, or provide tasks that some find too difficult.
- Teachers do not always encourage pupils to seek help quickly when they are puzzled.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to use their skills in writing and mathematics in other subjects. This is a particular issue in science.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors watched 15 lessons, including three which were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Pupils were observed in assembly, at break times and around the school.
- The team held discussions with staff, with several members of the governing body, and with a representative of the local authority. Several groups of pupils were involved in formal discussions with an inspector, and many others were spoken to informally.
- Samples of pupils' work were analysed, and several pupils were heard to read.
- Inspectors took account of 62 replies to the online survey for parents (Parent View), and of the content of two individual letters written by parents. An inspector spoke informally with several parents at the start of the school day.
- The team took account of a variety of documentation, particularly that relating to keeping pupils safe, and data about pupils' progress and attendance.
- A survey of staff opinion was undertaken and 15 replies were received.

Inspection team

Steven Hill, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Alan Radford

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is below average in size for a primary school, although numbers have risen by about 10% in the last year.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds with a few from a range of other ethnic heritages. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is broadly average, but varies considerably between age-groups. The pupil premium is extra government funding given to support the education of particular pupils, principally those known to be eligible for free school meals, and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported at school action is above average. The proportion of such pupils supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- More pupils than nationally start at the school or leave at other than the usual times.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- A privately run pre-school provision uses accommodation at the school. This provision is inspected and reported upon separately.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that more is outstanding, and so raise achievement, by ensuring that:
 - teachers give all pupils tasks that are neither too easy for them, nor too hard
 - teachers encourage all pupils to seek clarification sooner when they are puzzled by instructions, and to ask for help when they find work too difficult.
- Make more frequent use of pupils' good skills in writing and mathematics in other subjects so that:
 - their learning in other subjects is enhanced, especially in science
 - they have more chances to practise their literacy and numeracy skills in different contexts.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Improvements in achievement since the last inspection, especially at Key Stage 2, are confirmed by the school's records of progress, the work seen in pupils' books, learning seen in lessons and by the local authority's regular monitoring of the school over the past year.
- Children start in Reception with skills that vary between individuals and from year to year but are generally typical of their ages. They make good progress in all areas of learning so that they reach standards going into Year 1 that have been improving year by year, and which were above average in 2013. Records show that the current class is doing similarly well.
- Standards have generally been above average at the end of Year 2, and this good progress is continuing with the current pupils in Key Stage 1.
- Standards at the end Key Stage 2 have usually been around average, but achievement for these older pupils has improved in the last two years. Although standards fell in 2013 from the previous year, this still represented an improvement in progress, because this group had lower starting points in Year 3, and many more than usual were disabled pupils or had special educational needs. Their progress across the key stage was good in mathematics and writing, but required improvement in reading.
- Pupils currently in Key Stage 2 are achieving well. The current Year 6 pupils, for example, have made better progress than average since they started in Year 3, particularly in reading. Evidence for all year groups in the key stage shows they are also doing well. Boys and girls make similarly good progress across the key stage.
- The weakness in reading suggested by last year's results at Year 6 is not replicated in any current year-groups. Reading is now a strength across the school. Pupils are taught phonics (how letters in words represent different sounds) effectively, and pupils in Year 1 do well in the national checks on phonics skills. By Year 6, pupils are enthusiastic and capable readers, with clear preferences in fiction and for different poets.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well, both in terms of their overall progress, and in the light of their particular difficulties.
- The most able pupils do well. They are often challenged by harder work in class and are keen to do as well as they can. A good proportion of the current Year 6, for example, are on track to reach the higher Level 5 in each subject, with a few on course to attain Level 6 in some areas.
- Pupils who are supported by the pupil premium make the same good progress overall as their classmates, making better progress in some year groups and subjects, and not as much in others. There were too few pupils entitled to the pupil premium in last year's Year 6 for comparisons between their attainment and that of others to be made without the possibility of identifying them. Across the school as a whole, in some year groups these pupils lag behind their classmates, but in other year groups their standards are higher.
- Pupils who arrive at the school part-way through their primary education settle in quickly and do well. The school has some notable success in helping pupils who have struggled in the past to achieve well once they have settled into the school.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is much more consistent following specific support for individuals to help them improve their practice, and regular sharing of good practice in the school.
- Lessons are well-managed and orderly. Routines are firmly established and pupils follow them well, so no time is wasted and pupils learn at a good rate. Good relationships mean that pupils respect their teachers and are keen to please them by behaving well and trying hard.
- Teaching is strong in the Reception class. Phonics is taught well and gives children a strong start in learning to read. A wide variety of activities enthuse children and boost their learning and enjoyment. Good use is made of the outdoors, as seen, for example, when children experimented with water and developed their vocabulary in using terms such as 'nearly full' and 'empty'. More-able children were challenged further, successfully starting to measure capacity and record their results in standard units.
- Teachers explain new ideas to pupils clearly, often demonstrating practically what they want them to do, or showing them on the interactive whiteboard. As a result, pupils usually realise quickly what is wanted, and get on briskly with learning. However, at times, if some pupils are not sure what they are supposed to do, they are not quick enough to ask for clarification, and teachers do not always ensure that pupils realise that this is important. This can slow their progress.
- Since the last inspection, teachers have placed a much greater stress on pupils' standards of handwriting and presentation. This has been very successful and the quality of presentation in pupils' books is of a high standard, particularly in the oldest classes.
- Teachers make good use of the skills of teaching assistants to promote learning in class. This is particularly effective in helping pupils who struggle with academic work, or who find it difficult to settle and concentrate, to make good progress and improve their behaviour.
- Teachers assess pupils' attainment regularly and use this information to plan different work for those at different stages of learning. They generally give the most-able pupils difficult tasks that develop their thinking and enable them to make good progress, and ensure that those who might otherwise struggle get easier work, and so also do well. Occasionally, teachers do not judge the level of work accurately enough, and then some pupils find it hard to cope, or others are not challenged sufficiently to make the progress they should.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. In class they settle well to work and concentrate hard. They share materials amicably, and work well cooperatively right from Reception. Relationships are good between pupils, whatever their age or background. They are keen to do well and take a great pride in their work and in its presentation.
- Pupils show great levels of persistence and perseverance with difficult work, but at times some overdo this, and do not seek help or clarification from the teacher when they need it, so their progress slows.
- Around the school and at break-times, pupils' behaviour is often exemplary. They play together happily and show great care and consideration for each other. They are friendly, polite and sensible and clearly enjoy school. This is reflected by their attendance, which has greatly improved after a dip last year.

- Pupils and parents are very positive about behaviour in the school. Pupils said that there are sometimes lapses in good behaviour, but that these are seldom serious and they were clear that problems are quickly sorted out by adults.
- Pupils in Year 6 take a great pride in the extra responsibilities they undertake and enjoy helping younger pupils, at break-times, for example.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. As a result, they feel very safe in school. They have very great confidence in the adults to look after them, one boy saying that 'All the teachers are my friends.'
- Pupils have learnt about different types of bullying, but say that it is very rare in school. A group of pupils in Year 6 struggled to think of any recent examples. In discussion, they were all confident that any problems would be sorted out quickly, and said they could rely on any of the adults in the school to support them if they needed it.
- The school has been very successful in helping pupils who find it hard to comply with behavioural expectations to improve and to then make good progress. This is illustrated particularly by the improvements made by several pupils who have started at this school after having had behavioural difficulties elsewhere.
- Behaviour is managed well in class. Occasional lapses are dealt with firmly by staff, and the learning of the class seldom suffers.

The leadership and management are good

- There has been a very successful focus on improving teaching and learning, particularly in the last year. With the help of a variety of support, organised in conjunction with the local authority, staff have worked hard to improve their practice and to raise achievement.
- The headteacher takes a strong lead in making improvements and sets clear direction, with a good mix of challenge and support from the governing body. Subject leaders provide good support to colleagues and play a full part in checking on how things are going. A very clear, positive ethos has been established, with all staff and pupils sharing in a desire to promote learning and good achievement. The staff are now a very effective team who support each other well.
- Teachers' performance is managed well and they are given clear targets for their work. These are linked to the progress of the pupils, as well as to their particular responsibilities in the school. Records show that these are monitored rigorously, and teachers are helped to improve their performance through suitable extra training. Pay progression is suitably linked to teachers' success.
- Pupils' attainment is monitored well, with effective action taken to support any who are not making the progress they should. This has contributed strongly to the improved achievement in the last year.
- The pupil premium funding has been spent well to help those who are eligible for support. Most of the money has been used to provide extra staffing to give support matched to the needs of individuals. This can be specific help targeted on pupils who struggle with their work, or extra challenge for the most-able of these pupils, so they attain high standards. Other money has

gone to ensure that pupils are able to take part in the full range of school activities, such as trips, or after-school clubs. The success can be seen in individual cases, but also in the fact that these pupils make the same good progress as their classmates.

- The school has a long-established tradition of successful participation in sports and physical education, with a wide variety of clubs available. Specialist coaches are employed to promote specific sports. There is also a good level of expertise in physical education on the staff. The school has used the extra government money to promote sports on buying specialist outdoor gym equipment for pupils to use in lessons and at break-times. Although only recently installed, this equipment is proving extremely popular and each break time shows high levels of exertion, enthusiasm and effort from the pupils whose turn it is to use it.
- The school has a good curriculum which provides many exciting opportunities for pupils' learning. Physical education is strong, and pupils develop very good skills in information and communication technology (ICT) because they have good opportunities to use ICT in different subjects, and for homework.
- The concentration by the school on consolidating pupils' attainment in English and mathematics has been successful in the last year. However, the work in pupils' books shows they have had too few opportunities to use and practise their improved writing and mathematics skills in other subjects. This is a particular issue in science, where the quantity of written work is weak and, although of a suitable quality, does not give a clear picture of how pupils are making progress in the subject.
- The local authority has provided good support to the school, particularly in the last year. It reacted to the weakness in last year's results in reading very quickly. Extra help was organised to enable leaders to support specific teachers who needed help, and to address particular issues, as well as to improve the quality of teaching across the school, drawing on the school's existing strengths as well as eliminating weaknesses. Particular help was given to the governing body to help them to support and challenge the school more effectively in making improvements. Ongoing support for the school is ensuring that recent improvements are fully consolidated.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. This is reflected in pupils' good attitudes and relationships, their hard work and their enjoyment. Pupils particularly value the improvements to their 'confidence and trust' during their residential trip in Year 5, for example. Good contributions are made in assemblies, in specific lessons in personal and social education, but also in the ongoing promotion of positive values during everyday interactions in lessons and around the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have good systems to check on how well the school is doing. They have a good understanding of pupils' progress through their use of a variety of data, and keep a track of the quality of teaching through their overview of the performance management systems, which they have recently updated. This means they are well able to challenge the school about its performance, as well as to support staff in making improvements. Governors take a full part in setting the strategic direction for the school in discussion with the staff and local authority. They have ensured that money is spent wisely, and know the impact of this, including the extra money for sports, as well as pupil premium funding. Working together with staff, they have ensured that the school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements.

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	114948
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	430737

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	178
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lorraine Gray
Headteacher	Bridget Hill
Date of previous school inspection	26 June 2012
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