

# The Gerrards Cross CofE School

Moreland Drive, Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire, SL9 8BD

**Inspection dates** 12–13 June 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b> <b>1</b>
Achievement of pupils	Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching	Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management	Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- Pupils' achievement is outstanding. They make excellent progress across the school and in all subjects.
- Pupils' attainment is consistently above average by the end of Year 6. They use their excellent reading, writing and mathematics skills to very good effect to support their learning in different subjects.
- Across the school, teachers inspire and engage pupils highly effectively. They make work fun and exciting and help pupils to develop an exceptionally strong love of learning.
- Pupils feel very safe and their behaviour is exemplary. They are highly motivated and are very keen to do their best.
- Activities such as a recent science week as well as numerous visits and clubs provide pupils with many memorable experiences. These contribute extremely successfully to pupils' excellent personal development.
- Extremely strong leadership and management are instrumental in the school's success. As a result of this, pupils achieve highly and teaching is outstanding. There is no complacency. The school continues to improve quickly because leaders are very clear about the main priorities.
- The delightful atmosphere in school reflects the way that leaders value and respect all members of the school community so that all feel part of the push for continued excellence.
- The governing body supports other leaders very well in their determination to provide the best possible education for pupils.
- Almost all parents and carers are pleased with the work of the school, especially the way that adults care for their children. Parents and carers support the school well and play an important part in its success by funding projects and helping their children at home.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 19 lessons, of which around half were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made some short visits to lessons.
- Discussions were held with pupils, members of the governing body and members of staff.
- The inspectors took account of the views of 60 parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View. The inspectors also read letters from parents and carers and talked to some at the start of the school day.
- The inspectors observed the school's work, heard some pupils read, and looked at a number of documents, including: the school's own information about pupils' learning and progress; planning and monitoring documents; the school development plan; records relating to behaviour and attendance; safeguarding information; and health and safety documentation.
- The inspectors analysed 47 questionnaires from staff.

## Inspection team

Mike Capper Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Jane Richmond	Additional Inspector
Lea Hannam	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds but around one in six has English as an additional language. Most of these pupils are from Indian backgrounds. Very few pupils are in the early stages of learning English.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported through school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is much lower than that found in most schools. This is additional government funding provided to give extra support to those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and to children who are looked after. There are no eligible pupils in Years 5 or 6.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The Gerrards Cross Church of England School converted to become an academy school on 1 January 2012. When its predecessor school with the same name was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding.

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

- Extend the role of leaders and other staff in improving education beyond this school by building more partnerships with other establishments.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### is outstanding

- Pupils' achievement is outstanding. Their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is consistently significantly above the national average by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils' progress in the current year has been even better than previously because of improved systems for checking the progress of individuals or groups. This means that any pupil who is falling behind is even more quickly identified and helped to catch up. Consequently, progress is excellent across the school, with pupils using their very well-developed literacy and numeracy skills to very good effect to support their learning in different subjects.
- Most children are working at the levels typical for their age when they join the school in the Reception class. They make rapid progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage in all areas of learning, including phonics (letter and the sounds they make).
- Pupils build extremely well on this in Key Stages 1 and 2. By Year 6, pupils read very confidently from a very wide range of texts. They write enthusiastically and spell and punctuate accurately, using stunning vocabulary to engage the reader. In mathematics, as they get older, pupils carry out increasingly complex calculations and use this knowledge extremely well to solve problems.
- The school very successfully promotes equality of opportunity by ensuring that all groups do extremely well. Indian pupils attain and achieve as well as others. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive high-quality support, enabling them to learn very quickly. More-able pupils also make extremely rapid progress. A very high number of pupils in the current Year 6 are already two years or more ahead of the expected level for their age.
- Although there are too few pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding to comment on their attainment by the end of Year 6 without identifying them, this group achieves extremely well across the school. Additional support is very closely tailored to each pupil so that it is sharply focused and successful. This ensures that the gap between the attainment of eligible pupils and others closes very quickly.
- Pupils with English as an additional language make rapid progress in improving their speaking skills and their attainment in English and mathematics is as high as others' by the end of Year 6.

### The quality of teaching

### is outstanding

- Teaching inspires and motivates pupils extremely well. The excellent relationships between adults and pupils mean that there is a very purposeful and happy atmosphere when a class is working. Pupils willingly try out new work because they know they can do this without fear of failure. As one pupil said, 'If we are finding something difficult, the teachers help us until we get it.'
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children are given high-quality support, with adults intervening at just the right time to move their learning on when they are working in small groups or by themselves. Throughout the day, there is a successful focus on language development so that the very small number of pupils with English as an additional language make rapid progress in improving their speaking skills.
- Across the school, pupils' books show that reading, writing and mathematics are taught extremely well, with skills improving very quickly. Teachers have very high expectations of pupils and do not willingly accept second best. When pupils are working, teachers constantly check their understanding so that they can adjust work if need be. Consequently work nearly always provides the right level of challenge for pupils, including the more able.
- Teachers make very imaginative use of resources such as modern technology to bring subjects alive. For example, the use of small computers helped a class of Year 3 pupils to quickly access information about sharks and to improve their understanding and knowledge of their different habits.
- Pupils who need additional help are given it quickly both in and out of lessons. Support outside

lessons for pupils such as the disabled or those who have special educational needs is very well targeted and helps to improve skills very quickly. One pupil commented, 'I like going to my group because I get lots of help and I can do my sums better now.'

- Parents and carers are very positive about the quality of teaching and support teachers well by ensuring that homework is completed on time. Homework is enjoyable and is appreciated by most pupils.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Parents and carers feel, and inspectors agree, that pupils' behaviour is unfailingly excellent. Pupils are very polite and courteous and have excellent manners. School logs confirm that poor behaviour is extremely rare and is tackled very quickly.
- The pupils are brilliant ambassadors for the school and greatly enjoy their work. Their desire to learn well plays a very large part in their success in lessons. They try hard all of the time and are very proud of their school. They work unflaggingly in lessons, tackling work with enormous determination. As one said, 'We need to work hard to do well.'
- The school promotes extremely good relationships and tackles discrimination very robustly. Pupils from differing backgrounds get on very well together. Indian pupils are very clear that, in their words, 'there is never any name calling.'
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Pupils say that 'bullying doesn't really happen here' but they are very confident that any 'falling out' is tackled very quickly. They like the 'white box' where they can write down their worries and they are certain that if they do this, 'the headteacher will sort it out.'
- Pupils are very clear about how bullying can take many forms. They explain the potential dangers they may face when using the internet and know what they should do if they have a concern.
- Activities such as cycling proficiency training and visits from outside groups ensure that pupils are highly aware of how to stay safe in the local community.

### **The leadership and management** are outstanding

- This is a school that has not stood still since becoming an academy. The passion of leaders to accept nothing but the best for pupils shines through. This is reflected in high-quality provision in all aspects of the school's work. Leaders are extremely successful in ensuring that pupils achieve very well. They have done this without losing their focus on developing pupils' love of learning and valuable personal skills such as perseverance and resilience.
- Leaders work together extremely well to check provision and to find out what still needs improving. Already strong, this has been improved further in the current year as a new system for checking the progress of individual pupils has been used to great effect to identify any who would benefit from extra help.
- The school has an excellent track record for improving teaching and supporting new teachers. Middle leaders, such as teachers in charge of subjects, play a key part in this process. They are excellent role models in their own work and provide high-quality support to colleagues.
- The school focuses extremely well on developing pupils' healthy lifestyles and physical well-being. This area of the school's work has improved considerably over the last two years. The school is using new funding provided by the government to very good effect to extend sporting opportunities and to enhance the skills of teachers. Leaders check the impact of spending by analysing participation rates in physical activity. Participation rates are already high and are increasing as the range of activities is extended. This is helping pupils to achieve their potential performance levels in physical education.
- The curriculum (subjects and topics taught) helps pupils to develop extremely good literacy and

numeracy skills. The strong focus on developing pupils' creativity is seen in the high-quality artwork on display around the school. Activities in lessons, and clubs and visits, contribute extremely well to pupils' great enjoyment of school and to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They leave school as well-adjusted, happy and very confident individuals who have been extremely well prepared for the next stage of their education.

- As a relatively new academy, leaders are just beginning to develop partnerships with other schools but this is still comparatively underdeveloped. Consequently the school does not yet play a big enough part in improving the wider education system by, for example, sharing its many examples of excellent practice with other establishments.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. Members of staff are carefully checked for suitability for working in school and are very well trained in how to care for the pupils.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The very skilled and well-trained governing body provides high levels of challenge and support to other school leaders. Governors ensure that they are not over reliant on information from the headteacher and have good systems for finding things out for themselves. Governors also make good use of an external consultant to check provision. This means that they have an accurate understanding of how well the school is performing in comparison to others. They know where teaching is especially strong and how the school continues to improve teaching. They check that only good performance is rewarded financially. Governors ensure that all spending is sharply focused on improving provision for pupils, monitoring closely additional funding to ensure that it is used well to improve the attainment of eligible pupils.

## 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>	137774
<b>Local authority</b>	Buckinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	444321

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	420
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Keith Wilson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Nicola Flower
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
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