

Kendall Church of England Primary School

Recreation Road, Colchester, CO1 2HH

Inspection dates 25–26 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	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.

- Schools leaders have forged successful partnerships which have made the quality of teaching consistently good and improved achievement. Good links with the local authority, the diocese and partner schools have helped leaders to be more ambitious for the school and improved teachers' expectations.
- Achievement is rising, and pupils are making quicker progress as a result of better teaching. As a consequence, attainment at the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics is above the national average. Attainment at the end of Year 2 is also rising.
- Pupils behave with care and consideration for each other. They use the core values of the school to guide them to show respect towards others who are different to them.
- Pupils say they feel safe and most parents agree with them. This helps the school to be a warm and friendly community. Attendance has risen to the national average.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Progress in writing at Key Stage 1 has not been as fast for some groups of pupils as it is in other subjects.
- Some teachers, particularly in Key Stage 1, do not make clear enough to pupils what is expected of them and what they need to do to write really well.
- Teachers do not sufficiently encourage pupils to extend their vocabulary and make better use of formal rather than colloquial English.
- The needs of pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable are not always assessed on entry to the school carefully enough so that they can be quickly met.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 10 lessons or part-lessons. Eight observations were shared with the headteacher or the deputy headteacher. Inspectors also made a number of other short visits to classrooms.
- Inspectors heard pupils read, and looked at work from each year group, much of this with the headteacher.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including the school improvement plan and records on behaviour, safety and attendance. They also looked at information on individual pupils' progress, anonymised records of teachers' performance, and records of meetings held by the governing body.
- Inspectors met with pupils, interviewed a sample of staff, and spoke to parents. They also spoke to members of the governing body, a representative from the local authority and from the Diocese.
- The views of parents were obtained through the school's surveys and the 30 responses to the on-line Parent View survey. Written comments from 22 members of staff were also considered.

Inspection team

Brian Netto, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Susan Sayers

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is around the national average. About half of these speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is high. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils looked after by the local authority and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is high.
- A much higher proportion of pupils than average join or leave the school at times other than the usual.
- The school is supported by a Local Leader of Education from Mersea Island School. Further support is provided for teachers through the Lee Chapel Academy Trust Teaching School Alliance.
- The school provides a breakfast club managed by the governing body.
- The school shares the site with Puddleducks Pre-school Colchester Limited. This is inspected separately.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has had two monitoring visits by HMI. There have been some significant changes in teaching staff, including the appointment of a deputy headteacher in January 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency in the quality of teaching, particularly at Key Stage 1, so that pupils make better progress in writing, by ensuring:
 - all teachers let pupils know what is expected of them and how they can improve their writing
 - pupils are given more opportunities to increase their vocabulary and develop their use of formal language
 - the needs of pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable are carefully assessed on entry to the school so that their needs are better identified and more quickly met.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- In 2013, overall attainment in reading, writing and mathematics rose to above the national averages at the end of Year 6, the best results for some time. Pupils' progress in these subjects was significantly better than expected.
- Although attainment at the end of Year 2 in 2013 was only broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics, this represented good progress from pupils' low starting points. Progress across the school has been good since the last inspection, and information on how well the pupils are achieving provided by the school confirms that progress is now accelerating.
- Children enter the Reception Class with skills below and often well below those typical for their age. Effective links and transition arrangements with the on-site pre-school as well as other local providers help the children to settle well. They make quick progress in a stimulating and well-resourced environment so by the time they enter Year 1 most are above expectations in their skill levels.
- Year 1 pupils attained in line with the national average in the phonics (letters and the sounds they make) screening check in 2013. This was a big improvement on the previous year.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well. Many have quite complex needs but the school does all it can to address these and, as a result, they make expected progress. The school's good use of one-to-one support helps the pupils acquire skills quickly.
- Pupils supported through the pupil premium also achieve well. In 2013, pupils leaving Year 6 were 16 months behind their peers in mathematics, and 12 months and 14 months in reading and writing respectively. However, these gaps are now closing rapidly. Across the school, these pupils are now making good progress. Careful planning ensures that work is matched well to their needs.
- Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds also achieve well. Those new to learning English settle quickly and are well supported. They are fully part of the school, and make progress in line with their peers.
- Progress in writing has not been as strong for some groups of pupils in Years 1 and 2, though this is now improving. The needs and prior achievement of pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable, for example because they join the school after the start of the year, are not always quickly assessed, so their progress is delayed. However, they achieve well over time as they go through the school, so gaps in achievement close by the time they get to Year 6.
- More-able pupils perform well across the school particularly in mathematics. They benefit from being taught in small groups where the work they are given matches their needs and extends their learning.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is improving and much is now good. All teachers have high expectations and pupils respond well to this. However, sometimes teachers do not make clear precisely what pupils need to do to improve their written work, especially in Key Stage 1.
- Teaching is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children are well supported by all adults, including disabled pupils, those eligible for the pupil premium and those with special educational needs. Learning is fun, for example in an activity set on the theme of 'castles and knights'. Teachers ensure all activities are imaginative and hold children's interest well. Inspectors witnessed well-planned activities in children developed their language skills well when wearing period costumes and 'getting into character'. Practical work, such as the construction of castles and the writing of invitations to a wedding, is well managed and used effectively to develop new skills.
- The teaching of reading has improved significantly. Phonics skills are taught well and this has enabled pupils to make good progress in reading across the school. Teachers provide pupils with regular opportunities to read and encourage them to practise their phonic skills regularly so they can apply them confidently to other activities involving reading and spelling. As a result pupils read widely and often and say they very much enjoy reading both in school and at home, and look forward to the book awards given out at Friday assemblies.
- The teaching of writing is variable. In one Year 2 class, pupils were encouraged to write character sketches based on their actions. Effective questioning helped one pupil to write about his character, 'with every inch of his body trembling he fell to the floor'. This kind of challenging teaching does not occur frequently enough, however. Some teachers, particularly in Key Stage 1, do not make clear enough to pupils what is expected of them and what they need to do to write really well.
- Teachers in Key Stage 2 generally give good attention to helping pupils cope with the demands of different kinds of writing and help them understand how to write in different styles effectively. Year 6 for example, developed new skills in writing play scripts using stage directions as part of a school performance. Older pupils enjoy writing in their 'wow wicked writing' books and showing how their skills improve over time. However, across the school, pupils are not sufficiently encouraged to use more interesting vocabulary and make correct use of Standard English.
- Pupils are grouped in mathematics lessons so that work is better matched to their abilities. Calculation skills are taught effectively by ensuring activities catch the interest of the pupils and give them appropriate challenges. For example pupils in Year 4 investigated how many eye-balls were in Shrek's soup, and were challenged to find a way of proving this. This helped them develop excellent problem solving skills.
- Pupils are taught a wide range of other skills, including information technology skills, as part of the school's stimulating and well-organised curriculum. Year 3 pupils for example learnt how to produce a presentation using PowerPoint slides. They were able to research different countries represented in the football World Cup, and identify key features of that country. As one pupil discovered to his amazement, Chile has coastlines on both the Pacific and Atlantic oceans!

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils show very positive attitudes towards their work. As one pupil said, 'We want to do well, learn and please everybody'. They show respect for the school code of conduct and happily follow the 'Kendall 5' rules.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they are taught all sorts of ways to keep themselves safe, for example from cyber-bullying. They show a good understanding of the different ways people can be cruel to each other, but as one pupil said, 'Bullying doesn't really happen here. The teachers help us to talk together'.
- The school's work with families whose circumstances make them vulnerable has successfully improved pupils' attendance and reduced the number of pupils who are regularly absent. The school works well with other agencies to meet their needs as pupils' well-being is at the heart of what the school does. This is evidence for the school's firm commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity.
- Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities around the school. Some act as play leaders with the younger children during free time, whilst others are helpful around the school. They are every polite and considerate, and this helps the school to run smoothly.
- The school is a warm and friendly community. Many pupils start the day in the welcoming breakfast club. Parents say that the community is a happy one and children love coming to school.

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders have significantly improved the school since the last inspection. In part, this has been because they have used their partnerships with other schools effectively and because the local authority and the diocese have provided good support for leaders and for teachers. As a result, teaching is improving and leaders demonstrate the capacity to sustain these improvements.
- Teachers with additional responsibilities have an increasing role in checking on the effectiveness of teaching. Robust systems for checking teaching ensure that pay awards recognise the best performance.
- The curriculum is well-planned. Topics are chosen to be stimulating and to enable pupils to experience and value different faiths and beliefs and to experience different cultural activities such as visits to the theatre and museums. The strong foundation on core Christian values that permeates the school ensures that these topics contribute strongly to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school makes effective use of the pupil premium. Leaders ensure that no eligible pupil is allowed to fall behind in their achievement, and all such pupils can attend visits and after-school clubs. As a result these pupils achieve well. However, the school's systems for assessing the needs of pupils who join the school part-way through the year or key stage are not rigorous enough to ensure the needs of these pupils are always met quickly enough.
- The newly appointed teacher with responsibility for sports is helping to ensure that the sports fund helps staff become more confident in teaching sports. Good use is made of local expertise in sports and pupils say this is helping them gain a better awareness of healthy lifestyles and to develop new skills.

- The local authority's support ensures that the school has an accurate picture of its strengths and identifies the right priorities, and also helps the school to have accurate assessments of how well pupils are doing.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The effectiveness of the governing body has improved since the last inspection. Governors have made good use of a review undertaken by an external consultant. 'Governor Days' and better quality information have helped governors use their more accurate knowledge of pupils' achievement and progress towards priorities to hold the school to account. They are well supported by the headteacher and the clerk to the governing body. Their better use of data about how well the pupils are doing has helped them make strategic decisions to improve consistency in teaching. They carefully oversee the spending of funds, including the pupil premium, which is being used to close gaps in achievement, and the sports fund which has increased pupil's participation in competitive games. They have undertaken appropriate training to help them fulfil their roles and this ensures that all statutory requirements including those related to safeguarding 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	115064
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	442007

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	185
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Reverend Brian Kyriacou
Headteacher	Mark Carter-Tufnell
Date of previous school inspection	27 February 2013
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