

Aston and Cote Church of England Primary School

Cote Road, Aston, Oxfordshire, OX18 2DU

Inspection dates 26–27 June 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.

- All groups of pupils throughout the school make good progress and they achieve well.
- They are given a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make good progress from starting points which are usually typical for their age.
- Standards currently in the school are above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching is good with some that is outstanding. Teachers have good subject knowledge, plan well and teach confidently.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They are keen to learn and work hard in lessons. They say that they feel safe in and enjoy school.
- Senior leaders are very clear about the direction of the school and, with the governing body, are very committed to its success.
- Leaders manage teaching and learning well and have maintained good standards and rates of progress through a period of staff changes.
- Governors now provide appropriate challenge and support.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Good practice in marking is not consistent across subjects.
- Occasionally, progress in lessons slows because teachers do not adjust their teaching when pupils, especially more able pupils, find the work too easy or too hard.
- Some parents feel that the school does not respond consistently well to their concerns or give them sufficient information about the progress of their children.
- Governors do not monitor all aspects of the school's work closely or regularly enough.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed nine lessons or part lessons, attended an assembly and listened to groups of pupils read. Four lesson observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector scrutinised the 61 responses to the online Parent View survey and spoke to parents and carers at the start and end of the school day. The inspector also took account of several letters from parents and carers and the school's own recent survey.
- Questionnaires completed by 19 staff were analysed.
- Meetings took place with staff, pupils and governors and a telephone discussion was held with a local authority representative.
- The inspector observed the school's work and scrutinised pupils' books, records of pupils' progress, the school's checks on teaching and learning and its development plan, records of behaviour and attendance, and safeguarding documents.
- The inspection was carried out in response to a complaint made to Ofsted which raised serious concerns. The complaint was deemed to be a qualifying complaint and Her Majesty's Chief Inspector decided that an inspection of the school should take place to follow up the whole-school issues that were raised. The inspection sought to establish:
 - whether leadership and management of the school, including governance are effective and meet statutory requirements
 - how educational standards in the school compare with those in other schools nationally.

Inspection team

Carol Warrant, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Aston and Cote Primary is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children in the care of the local authority) is well below average.
- The percentage of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also average.
- Most pupils are of White British origin.
- Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher has taken up post. There has been considerable change within the governing body, with four changes to the Chair of the Governing Body in the last two years. There have also been several changes to teaching staff.
- A pre-school operates on the school site. As it is managed independently it was not part of this inspection.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics in Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching to outstanding in order to raise pupils' achievement further by:
 - extending the good practice in marking to all subjects, especially mathematics, so there is clear guidance for pupils on how to improve and time for them to check their mistakes
 - making sure that pupils, especially the more able, are challenged appropriately throughout lessons.
- Strengthen leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - the school improves its communication with parents and carers and responds appropriately to all parental concerns
 - governors gather more comprehensive evidence of all aspects of the school's work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children generally enter the Reception class with knowledge and skills that are broadly typical for their age. Their personal and social skills are developed well so they become keen to learn and interested in the world around them. Speaking and mathematics skills are also promoted well and current pupils are demonstrating a good level of development.
- Standards at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage dipped in 2013 and too few children reached a good level of development. Children in that year group had untypically low starting points. These children are now reaching the standards expected for their age due to making rapid progress in Year 1.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 2 are currently on track to show good improvement over the below average standards reached in 2013. There have been particularly impressive improvements in writing and current standards are above those seen nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' current work and school assessments show good progress in Years 3 to 6 and that most pupils are reaching standards at or above those expected for their age. Detailed information presented by the school provided firm evidence to show that all groups of students in Year 6 are on track to reach above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics this year. These standards are consistent with pupils' achievement over the past five years.
- Achievement in reading is a strength throughout the school. Pupils in Year 2 are very enthusiastic readers. They read fluently and with confidence because of earlier successful teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make). They understand what they read and can make accurate predictions about what might happen next in a story. They know how fiction differs from non-fiction and happily talk about their favourite books at home.
- By Year 6 pupils recognise the importance of reading and read widely to improve their learning. Some pupils read from electronic devices because, they say, 'It's better value for money.' They have a very good understanding of what they read, including underlying meanings. They read clearly and use good expression when they read aloud to an audience.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress. Gaps in their learning are quickly identified and specific plans are made for them. Pupils are supported skillfully in lessons and in small groups to achieve well from their starting points.
- Pupils supported by pupil premium funding make good progress. School leaders keep a particularly close watch over their progress to make sure that the funding is used effectively and that the school provides equality of opportunity for all. For Year 6 in 2013, there was little difference in the attainment in reading, writing and mathematics, between the few pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and others in the school.
- More-able pupils are provided for well. Good challenges are planned for them and assessments show that they normally reach the expected higher standards, with a few gaining the even higher Level 6 in mathematics in Year 6.

The quality of teaching is good

- Discussions with pupils and a scrutiny of the work in their books show that teaching has been typically good or better over the last year, despite the staffing changes that the school has faced.
- Teachers and teaching assistants develop good relationships with pupils that give them the confidence to learn. This contributes to pupils' consistently good attitudes to their work.
- Activities capture pupils' attention and they show great delight in all that they are asked to do and rise to their teachers' high expectations. For example in a Year 4/5 mathematics lesson pupils worked extremely well together to solve problems involving the totals of the visible faces

of three stacked dice. They worked cooperatively and logically, challenging each other to find the highest and lowest totals. They confidently applied their prior mathematical learning and described their strategies mathematically.

- Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning. They regularly lead sessions with small groups within each class. This enables pupils of all abilities to have individual help to make good progress.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are well supported by teaching assistants who show great patience and skill to deliver carefully planned interventions individually or in small groups and to support pupils so that they are able to participate fully in their lessons and make good progress.
- Classrooms are well set out with pupils' work on display, challenges to stretch thinking and plenty of support for learning.
- All staff know individual pupils very well. They generally use this knowledge to make sure that pupils are given activities and challenges that are just at the right level to enable them to learn well and make good progress. There are occasions, however, when work does not reflect pupils' different abilities and their response to tasks, especially for more-able pupils. Here, learning is held back because pupils sometimes mark time as they wait for others to catch up after completing work that does too little to extend their thinking or deepen their skills.
- Most teachers' marking and assessment of pupils' work are regular and accurate. Teachers frequently provide good guidance about how pupils can improve their work, especially in writing. However, this good practice is not consistently applied across the school in other subjects, especially in mathematics, and as a result pupils do not always make as much progress as they could.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. This is seen typically in lessons and around the school. Pupils' enthusiasm and eagerness to learn are resulting in the good progress seen in lessons and in pupils' books. They are eager to learn and strive to produce their best work.
- Good behaviour management by teachers and good relationships support positive learning behaviour. Pupils check each other's work thoughtfully.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how they should behave and how it affects their work. As a result, pupils talk positively about their work and their teachers.
- Very occasionally, if pupils are set a task that is either too complicated or too easy, their concentration lapses and as a result they sometimes do not make the progress they should.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe in school. School records and the parents' questionnaire in the summer support this view and most of the parents and carers who responded to Parent View also agreed. The school provides a nurturing environment and all pupils are very well cared for.
- Pupils develop good social skills. Older pupils help to look after younger pupils around the school and all are kind and respectful to each other. Pupils take a pride in all aspects of the school environment and help to look after it.
- Pupils have a good awareness of different types of bullying, including name calling and physical and cyber bullying. They say that any form of bullying is extremely rare, and they are confident that if bullying did occur, it would be dealt with swiftly.
- The school has maintained above average attendance, reflecting pupils' enjoyment of coming to school.

The leadership and management are good

- School leaders are single-minded in their ambition to drive the school forward. This ambition is shared fully with governors and staff who are now working collectively to bring about

improvements and to raise achievement.

- Leaders check the school's work robustly and have an accurate view of its overall performance. The local authority shares their view. It has provided appropriate support, particularly to governors, and is confident about leaders' capacity to lead and manage the school successfully.
- Teaching and learning are managed well. Less effective teaching has been confronted and resolved by leaders. Good support for new teachers has helped them to settle quickly into the school and good progress has been maintained. The school is now focused on further improving pupils' achievement by raising teaching quality to outstanding.
- Middle leaders are making good headway with plans to bring in the changes to the National Curriculum in September 2014. They maintain a varied and stimulating curriculum that helps pupils to achieve well and enjoy their learning.
- Most parents and carers are complimentary about all aspects of the school's work. However a minority of parents and carers feel that the school does not respond consistently well to their concerns or give them sufficient information about the progress of their children.
- Primary school sports funding has boosted work in physical education by enabling the school to extend the range of activities it provides, including competitive sport against other local schools, and acquire more resources for them. There are further opportunities for teachers to improve their teaching skills by working alongside the school's specialist sports coach. The school successfully provides for pupils' well-being and their personal development through its variety of clubs, sports teams and educational visits and visitors to the school as well as annual residential trips.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Current governors have a wide range of experience and skills. Following considerable changes to the governing body, they recently arranged for an external review of governance. In response to the findings of this review they have already improved the way they hold school leaders to account. They have undertaken training which has given them a better understanding of using available national and school data to check pupils' progress and how the school compares to other schools. There is now a good level of support and challenge. They know how the pupil premium funding is allocated and the positive effect this is having on the progress of these pupils. Governors know about the quality of teaching and make sure that the system for managing the performance of staff is robust and linked closely to pay for teachers and senior leaders. The governing body ensures that safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements, that there are equal opportunities for all and that discrimination in any form is not tolerated. However, there still remain some aspects of the school's work that are not yet checked on well enough. Governors are aware of these and are working diligently to remedy this as quickly as possible.

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	123106
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	446904

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.

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	138
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Catherine Souch
Headteacher	Paula Phillips
Date of previous school inspection	12–13 July 2010
Telephone number	01993 850435
Fax number	01993 851915
Email address	office.3120@aston-and-cote.oxon.sch.uk

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