

The White Bridge Junior School

Greensted Road, Loughton, IG10 3DR

Inspection dates 19–20 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement.

- Pupils' achievement is not yet good because the progress of pupils, especially the most able, from their individual starting points is not rapid enough.
- Progress varies between year groups and is faster in mathematics than in reading and writing.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 are improving but are not high enough yet in reading and writing.
- Pupils do not have enough time to write at length. Pupils who find learning and using letter sounds (phonics) difficult do not have enough time to practise these skills.
- Although teaching has improved considerably this year, it is not good enough in all classes to promote consistently good achievement.
- Not all teachers are setting high enough expectations for pupils' achievement, including neat handwriting and presentation of work.
- In lessons, the younger pupils do not always listen carefully to their teacher or work as hard as they can do to complete their work.
- Leaders keep detailed records of pupils' progress but they are not yet using this information to best effect to identify which groups are making insufficient progress so they can do something about it.

The school has the following strengths

- This is an improving school. Since her appointment, the executive headteacher, supported by the governing body, has taken robust action to bring about improvement in the quality of education for pupils in the school.
- Attendance has improved to an above-average level. The number of exclusions has declined.
- Teachers' and teaching assistants' good relationships with pupils lead to a positive atmosphere in classes. Pupils say they feel safe in school.
- Behaviour in Years 5 and 6 is good. Pupils are kind and well mannered. They enjoy taking on responsibilities around the school and do so very capably.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 13 lessons some of which were observed jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. They visited two spelling sessions, attended an assembly and observed break time and lunchtime arrangements. The inspectors also heard pupils from Year 3 and Year 6 read.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders and the Chair of the Governing Body and other governors. Inspectors met with representatives of the school council, Year 3 and Year 6. A discussion took place with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took into account the 28 responses to the online questionnaire Parent View, the outcomes of the school's own questionnaire completed by 70 parents, and discussions with parents at the start and end of the school day. The views of 18 staff who completed the staff questionnaire were also taken into account.
- Inspectors looked at the school's work and at documentation including: leaders' evaluation of the school's effectiveness; the school development plan; information relating to safeguarding; and records of pupils' attainment and progress. Inspectors sampled pupils' books in each class.

Inspection team

Cheryl Thompson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Lynn Lowery

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school. This school and the White Bridge Infant school share the same building but have their own fields and play areas. They are run as separate schools.
- A recent consultation with parents and the local community was undertaken to seek views on amalgamating the two schools and reopening the school as an all-through primary school in September 2015. The results of the consultation are expected imminently.
- In January 2014, the headteacher of the infant school was appointed as a part-time executive headteacher of this school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British origin.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs at school action is well above average. Similarly, the proportion of pupils at school action plus or with a statement is well above average, with a high number of pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties in Year 3.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is broadly average. In this school, this extra funding is for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and raise achievement further in reading and writing by ensuring that:
 - all groups of pupils, particularly the most able, have work in lessons that is at the right level of difficulty to help them make good progress
 - pupils are given enough time to write at length
 - staff check on all groups of pupils to see that they are learning well in class reading sessions
 - Year 3 pupils who have difficulty learning phonics have more frequent opportunities to practise and reinforce their skills
 - all teachers set high expectations for pupils to work at a good rate and present their work to the best of their ability.
- Increase the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that data about pupils' progress is analysed precisely so that any underperformance by groups or classes is noted quickly and action taken.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils enter the school with knowledge and skills that are similar to those found nationally at the start of Year 3. Their achievement over time has not been good enough to ensure that when pupils leave Year 6 they have achieved average or above standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In the past, leaders did not always accept that pupils had done as well as they had in the infant school. As a consequence, teachers did not set high enough expectations to make sure pupils made good progress, especially for the most able pupils.
- Since the start of this academic year, and then the appointment of the executive headteacher, who is also headteacher of the infant school, teachers accept assessments of pupils' achievements in Year 2 and are beginning to set higher expectations. As a result, pupils' rates of progress are increasing. A notable example of higher expectations is that a higher than national average proportion of Year 6 pupils is likely to attain the level expected of Year 8 pupils in mathematics this year compared to 2013 when a smaller number attained this level.
- In the main, pupils make the best progress in Year 6. In this year group teachers set their pupils challenging targets, especially in mathematics. Pupils are keen to do well, know their targets and want to meet them. They make good progress in catching up on slower learning in preceding years. However, pupils' slower progress in the past is still evident in the below average standards attained in reading and writing this year. In mathematics, standards at the end of this year are above average; pupils have made rapid progress this year.
- Pupils' progress in reading and writing is slower than in mathematics. Across the school, pupils' writing books show that they are usually keen to write and have imaginative ideas. However, they do not always have enough time to write at length. For example, on occasions, a few pupils manage only to write the date and what it is that teachers expect them to learn.
- Pupils in Year 3 who find learning phonics difficult do not make enough progress. They do not have enough opportunities to practise learning and using phonics to help them make rapid progress.
- Pupils like reading. The school has identified that pupils do not have enough opportunities to 'read between the lines' and work things out for themselves in order to read with a deeper understanding and make more rapid progress. In class reading sessions, the group of pupils reading with their teacher or a teaching assistant make good progress. Other groups in the class have appropriate tasks but do not always have enough input from staff to help them understand what is asked of them to enable them to develop good comprehension skills.
- The achievement of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs requires improvement. In their class work they do not always have the right sort of task or support to help them make good progress. In the one-to-one or small group teaching sessions with staff who know them well, pupils often make good progress in their learning.
- The achievement of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding has improved since 2013 when the gaps in attainment were almost two years. Pupils now make similar progress to their classmates. The school's most recent data show the gaps to be around two terms in reading, writing and mathematics.

The quality of teaching**requires improvement**

- Teaching is still too variable and, as a result, pupils' progress has not been consistently good as they move through the school. For example, teachers do not always set high enough expectations for pupils' achievement, including the presentation of work, work rate and neatness of work.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are sometimes too low. They do not ensure that all pupils are working at the most appropriate level. As a result, some pupils find the work too easy, do not always apply themselves wholeheartedly to their tasks and do not make rapid progress.
- The quality of teaching has improved considerably in the past two terms, since the appointment of the executive headteacher. Inadequate teaching has been eliminated. School records indicate that there is a much more good teaching. The school's data shows that pupils' rates of progress in most classes have increased, and notably so in Year 6.
- In lessons where teachers' expectations are high, teachers ensure pupils know exactly what is expected of them. As a result, pupils work enthusiastically to complete their tasks. In a mathematics lesson for Year 6, in response to their teacher's very high expectations, pupils opted to attempt the most difficult work and persevered with the task set of simplifying algebraic equations.
- The marking of pupils' work has improved a great deal. There are examples of good marking with pupils being given clear guidance to improve their work. However, there remains inconsistency in the quality of marking and its impact on pupils' progress. Some marking does not always indicate the next steps in pupils' learning, nor are there regular opportunities provided for pupils to reflect on, and apply their teacher's suggestions for improvement. For example, teachers do not ensure that pupils routinely punctuate their work and spell common words correctly.
- Teaching assistants are usually deployed effectively and provide good support. Alongside teachers they strive to ensure that all pupils, including potentially vulnerable pupils, pupils who speak English as an additional language, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, are fully included and have equal access to the same learning opportunities as other pupils.
- Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well in the main. In Years 5 and 6, teachers set very high expectations for pupils to share their ideas with each other and with adults. The recent introduction of 'learning leaders' is very successful in the older classes. Pupils explain to their classmates how, for example, they have worked out an answer to a mathematics problem. Such opportunities help pupils reinforce their learning very effectively.

The behaviour and safety of pupils**requires improvement**

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Pupils' attitudes to learning are closely related to the quality of teaching and are not yet consistently good in all lessons. At their best, pupils' attitudes to learning make a strong contribution to their progress. However, where teachers' expectations are not high enough, pupils are not motivated to work as hard as they should. Sometimes, for example, pupils chat too much and do not apply themselves to their tasks.
- Pupils behave well around the school and are polite towards adults. At break times pupils are respectful of one another and play well together. Pupils say that behaviour 'has improved a lot

since the new headteacher took over'. Pupils are very confident that the executive headteacher deals firmly and fairly with behaviour issues.

- The behaviour of the older pupils is good and in lessons where there is a high level of challenge, it is outstanding. The older pupils have a mature approach to taking responsibility and are very proud to undertake their roles as prefects and school councillors.
- Pupils understand what bullying is and the different forms it can take, including emotional and cyber-bullying. Pupils told inspectors that, in their view, there are a few disagreements which soon get sorted out but there is no bullying in the school.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Leaders ensure that access to the building is secure and staff are rigorously checked prior to appointment. Pupils say they feel safe in school and that 'teachers do care for us'. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations such as road and water safety as well as when using the internet.
- Pupils say they enjoy coming to school and demonstrate this with their above average level of attendance.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- The executive headteacher has brought about considerable improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' progress in the past two terms. However, although the gaps in pupil's knowledge and understanding are closing, and most pupils now make better progress, these improvements have yet to be fully reflected in national tests.
- The executive headteacher provides very strong leadership. She has a crystal clear understanding of pupils' achievement when they start in the school because she knows them well from her role as head of the infant school from which they transfer. As a result, she has insisted that teachers raise their expectations for pupils' achievement. This insistence has proved more successful in the older classes; there is more to do in the younger classes.
- The school collects data on pupils' progress regularly. This data is used well for checking on the progress of an individual pupil in a specific class. It is not yet being used as effectively for tracking the progress of different groups of pupils or classes to check what needs to be done to improve their progress further.
- The executive headteacher has quickly established a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. She has observed all teachers teach lessons and, with senior leaders, has looked at work in pupils' books. From this monitoring, areas for improvement were identified.
- The local authority has recently provided good support. It has organised for all teachers to have coaching from an outside agency. The impact of this is that the quality of teaching is improving at a good rate. Staff say they feel more confident in their teaching and class organisation.
- Senior leaders are developing their roles well and, together with the executive headteacher, hold teachers to account for their pupils' progress. As a result, there is a much stronger focus on how well individual pupils are making progress and what teachers will do to ensure pupils do not fall behind.
- The executive headteacher is ensuring that teachers meet the targets for their performance

which were set prior to her appointment. The executive headteacher is reviewing targets for next year to ensure a close focus on pupils' making good progress.

- Staff, parents and pupils agree that they like the improvements made by the executive headteacher. Pupils say that they feel safer in school now and think they have to work harder. Parents say that there have been good changes for the better but a small number feel there is more to be done to improve communication with them.

- The school is using the primary sports funding effectively to promote further pupils' engagement with sporting activities and to further develop the staffs' knowledge and skills for teaching physical education activities. Pupils say they enjoy the increased range of clubs and the opportunities for competitive sport. They are particularly proud of their recent success in local and national football competitions.

- **The governance of the school:**
 - There have been a high number of changes of governors since the previous inspection which has slowed the development of governance in the school. There is a new Chair and Vice Chair of Governors.
 - Governors have undertaken training with the local authority and are developing their roles well. They recognise that they have more to do to fully understand for themselves how to compare the school's performance with schools nationally to see if it is doing well enough.
 - Governors have been proactive in consulting with parents regarding the amalgamation of the infant and junior schools and are working well with the governing body of the infant school to secure the best quality of education for pupils in both schools.
 - More experienced governors have a good understanding of how targets are set for teachers and of appraisal systems. Decisions about teachers' pay are closely and appropriately linked to performance and responsibilities.
 - Finances are managed well, including spending of pupil premium and sports funding in order to increase pupils' achievement.
 - The governing body makes sure that the school meets the current national requirements for safeguarding and child protection.

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	114867
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	442013

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	242
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sue Sawyer
Headteacher	Julie Witteridge (Executive Headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	23 April 2013
Telephone number	020 85085772
Fax number	020 85320164
Email address	admin@whitebridge-jun.essex.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2014

