

Prettygate Junior School

Plume Avenue, Colchester, CO3 4PH

Inspection dates 7–8 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The effective leadership of the new headteacher has quickly established a strong shared ethos which has brought about rapid improvement following a period when standards had dropped.
- Pupils achieve well in a wide range of subjects including reading, writing and mathematics at Key Stage 2.
- The overall progress that different groups of pupils make between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is good and is accelerating rapidly.
- A relentless focus on the quality of teaching by leaders and governors has ensured that teaching is good and improving.
- Teachers provide effective feedback which helps pupils understand how to improve their work.
- Pupils are very proud of their school. They behave well, and display highly constructive attitudes to their learning as a result.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The proportion of pupils who make greater than expected progress is not higher than average.
- Pupils are not all challenged enough to do as well as they can, especially in developing their writing skills.
- In a few foundation subjects, lesson planning does not always identify the important skills or how they will be developed.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 20 lessons. Two of these were observed jointly with the headteacher. An assembly was also observed and an inspector listened to readers from Year 3.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaks, lunchtimes, before and after school.
- Inspectors took account of the 51 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View), and responses to an inspection questionnaire from 37 members of staff.
- Inspectors analysed the most recent public examination results for the school. They scrutinised the school's current assessment data, the school development plan, pupils' work, minutes of meetings and policies, safeguarding documentation and the school's self-evaluation summary.
- Inspectors met with senior and middle leaders, teachers, pupils from all year groups, governors and a representative from the local authority.

Inspection team

Paul Lawrence, Lead inspector	Seconded Inspector
Janet Watson	Additional Inspector
Edwin Powell	Additional Inspector

Paul Lawrence is appointed as an Additional Inspector, under the powers relating to additional inspectors, in paragraph 11 of Part 2 of Schedule 12 to the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

Full report

Information about this school

- Prettygate Junior School is of an average size for a maintained mainstream primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action, around 3%, is well below the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, around 10%, is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding, around 14%, is higher than the national average. Pupil premium funding is additional funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2013.
- The school meets the current government floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and raise achievement by:
 - keeping a close eye on which pupils are making greater than expected progress and which pupils need targeting to increase their rate of progress
 - providing work which consistently challenges pupils to reach the highest standards of which they are capable, especially in writing.
 - ensuring that lesson planning in the foundation subjects maps out how fundamental skills and the understanding of key concepts will be systematically developed and deepened over time.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher leads with sensitivity, passion and determination. Since joining the school, his leadership has refocused the school on its stated vision of ensuring every pupil can 'flourish and achieve.' The strength of his leadership is recognised overwhelmingly by staff, pupils and parents alike.
- With the strong support of the headteacher, senior and middle leaders now feel prepared for, and confident about, their leadership responsibilities. As a result they make a significant impact on the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school.
- School leaders set, and consistently apply, clear expectations and boundaries for pupil behaviour, which are well supported by sanctions and rewards. The strong relationships which result create a positive atmosphere around the school which allows effective teaching and learning to take place. School leaders have clearly established an ethos which promotes equal opportunities and challenges discrimination.
- School leaders rigorously analyse the strengths and weaknesses of the school and then plan how to continue to improve, with a consistent focus upon teaching and learning. Performance management is used effectively to identify teachers' strengths and their training needs.
- Annual reports to parents provide a clear and thorough evaluation of each pupil's strengths and targets. The reports provide information about the standards which are currently being achieved and how this compares with national expectations. They therefore effectively help parents understand how their child is progressing.
- High-quality, vibrant displays of pupils' work clearly show both the pupils' fascination in learning about the world around them and also the great importance school leaders attach to this. Leaders effectively encourage pupils to respect and value the diversity of modern Britain and the wider world. Pupils are given the opportunity to participate actively in the life of the school community, for example through organising charity appeals or serving on the school council.
- The school provides a broad and balanced range of learning opportunities, both within lessons and through a varied programme of clubs. Curriculum planning is strong in reading, writing and mathematics. However, planning in a few of the foundation subjects does not always give enough attention to how important skills and the understanding of key concepts will be developed coherently over time.
- Additional funding provided by the government for physical education and sport has been used effectively. It has enabled the provision of specialist sports coaching within the school day, a larger number of competitive sports fixtures with other schools and a greater range of extra-curricular provision. This has resulted in greater participation rates.
- The local authority has supported the new headteacher well since his appointment. Termly visits have led to reports providing apt, practical advice confirming priorities for improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors undertake their responsibilities with rigour and enthusiasm. They fulfil their duties effectively, including ensuring that the school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements, and undertaking the performance management of the headteacher.
 - Governors are clear about the quality of teaching in the school and are committed to supporting further improvement. They ensure that the school performance management process rewards good teaching and supports teachers' own training needs. Governors apply their knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses to contribute effectively to the school's strategic planning.
 - Governors regularly analyse data about the school's performance. They have been rigorous in monitoring the performance of pupil groups, such as those for whom the school receives pupil premium funding and those who have special educational needs. Governors ask challenging questions of the

school's leadership, although the written records of their meetings do not reflect this rigour.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They move around the site in a calm and orderly manner between lessons and at breaks and lunchtimes. They are usually polite and courteous to adults and other children.
- Pupils say that they are very proud of their school and of their work. They believe that staff are genuinely caring and supportive, and in return pupils are respectful and attentive. They look smart and care for the school buildings well.
- The atmosphere in lessons is always purposeful and productive and can be lively and energetic when pupils are engaged in more active aspects of their learning. On occasion, some pupils lose focus and concentration in lessons, but pupils generally enjoy their learning and this has a positive impact on their achievement.
- Attendance is well above the national average and this reflects pupils' eagerness to learn. Pupils are punctual to school and to individual lessons. A very large majority stay after school to participate in extra-curricular activities. Participation in sport is particularly high and the school has a strong track record of sporting success.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. It carries out its safeguarding responsibilities rigorously, for example in recruitment. Parents overwhelmingly believe that their children are safe at school. The school site is secure and access is well monitored.
- The pupils themselves have a sound understanding of how to keep themselves and each other safe. They are taught to reflect thoughtfully on the risks involved in any activity, and they are taught comprehensively about e-safety.
- Incidents of bullying do occur but they are not common, and are dealt with effectively by the school. They are thoroughly recorded and monitored. Pupils are confident that they know they can talk to someone at school if they have a problem. Pupils can post any worries in a 'concern box' and these are effectively followed up.

The quality of teaching is good

- Effective teaching has a positive impact on pupils' learning and progress in reading, writing, mathematics and across the wider curriculum.
- Teachers foster constructive, trusting relationships with the pupils in their classes. Teachers and pupils share an expectation that learning will be purposeful and productive. Pupils are confident to venture answers to questions and risk making mistakes as they know this is part of the learning process.
- Teachers ensure that their classrooms are attractive, positive places to learn. Carefully chosen and well-maintained displays of pupil work provide examples of what can be achieved in lessons, and these serve to inspire other pupils. Lists of key words and definitions on classroom walls are actively consulted during lessons.
- Teachers use a wide variety of effective teaching strategies. Pupils are taught not only how to make the most of teacher explanations by listening intently and reflectively, but also how to engage cooperatively in group work and undertake their own research.
- The quality of marking is a strength. It is regular and thorough, supports whole-school literacy by identifying improvements needed in spelling and grammar and provides helpful feedback to pupils about

how they can improve their work. Pupils respond effectively to the advice given.

- Teachers maintain consistently high expectations that all pupils will make good progress in their lessons. However, they are not always clear which pupils are capable of making even greater progress than this, and as a result they do not always provide work which allows pupils to reach the highest standards of which they are capable.
- On occasion, in some subjects teachers rely too heavily on work which requires 'gap filling' or very short answers when pupils could be given further opportunity to develop their writing skills.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Achievement in reading, writing and mathematics is good. Effective teaching in these subjects ensures that pupils of all abilities learn well. The progress that pupils make has accelerated rapidly in the last year. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' attainment is above the national average.
- Pupils acquire and deepen their knowledge, skills and understanding across the range of subjects they study. Their literacy, numeracy and communication skills are regularly reinforced in different areas. As a result, almost every pupil is really well prepared for, and confident about, moving on to secondary school.
- In 2013 the attainment gap in reading, writing and mathematics of disadvantaged pupils and the attainment of both other pupils in the school and other pupils nationally, was equivalent to one year's learning. As a result of the school's focus on these disadvantaged pupils they have made more rapid progress and, in 2014, the in-school gap in each of these subjects narrowed to no more than one term.
- The school's meticulously planned provision to support the needs of pupils with disabilities or special educational needs results in them learning well. The deployment of teaching assistants is particularly effective and this focused support ensures that these pupils make good progress, in line with their peers.
- The most able pupils make good progress. In some subjects this progress is even more rapid because the school has adopted strategies to increase the degree of challenge for them, for example by providing an additional teaching group in both Years 5 and 6 for the most able mathematicians.
- Although the proportion of pupils who make more than expected progress is in line with the national average, the school is not doing enough to make this higher still. Although the school monitors pupils' progress against their targets, leaders do not currently routinely monitor which pupils are exceeding expected progress and which are falling short of this.

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	114743
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	449338

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	Junior
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	256
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Ross
Headteacher	Barry Hawes
Date of previous school inspection	2 October 2008
Telephone number	01206 577608
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