

Latchingdon Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

The Street, Latchingdon, Chelmsford, CM3 6JS

Inspection dates

5–6 February 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Effective leadership by the headteacher, senior leaders and governors is ensuring the school continually improves. They have ensured good teaching and achievement across the school since the last inspection.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well, especially through the school's emphasis on spiritual matters.
- Pupils are well behaved in lessons and around the school. Their positive attitudes to learning are reflected in their regular attendance and punctuality and their eagerness to participate in school activities.
- Pupils feel safe in school because it is effective in ensuring their safety.
- Teachers make effective use of well-chosen resources to stimulate pupils' learning. They ask challenging questions to test pupils' understanding.
- Teaching assistants work closely with teachers to provide helpful support for learning.
- Pupils across the school are progressing well in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Disadvantaged pupils are making at least the progress expected of them with some who are exceeding the expectation. These pupils are also doing better than their classmates in reading and writing.
- Strong leadership in the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures strong links with parents and effective teaching. As a result, children make good progress and quickly settle into their routines.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, activities do not challenge the thinking of the most-able pupils.
- Teachers do not always check that pupils respond to the guidance they are given in marking to improve their work.
- Marking does not always tell pupils how well they are using grammar, punctuation and spelling in written work.
- Subject leaders are not checking that teachers give pupils the necessary guidance in use of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited eight lessons to look at the impact of teaching on pupils' learning. Most observations were carried out jointly with senior leaders and nearly all teachers were seen.
- The inspector heard six pupils read and looked at samples of pupils' work across the school, including from the early years provision.
- Meetings were held with: senior leaders, subject leaders, three members of the governing body, a local authority representative, a representative of the diocese and a group of 10 pupils of all ages. Informal discussions were held with 14 pupils at lunchtime and break time.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents. The 54 responses to Parent View (the online questionnaire for parents) were considered alongside the returns to the school's most recent survey of parents. A meeting was held with nine parents; written responses submitted by parents were considered; informal discussions took place with eight parents who accompanied their children to school.
- The inspector took account of 95 responses to the school's most recent survey of pupils' views and considered the eight completed questionnaires returned by staff.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including: safeguarding policies, records of behaviour and attendance, minutes of governing body meetings, the school's evaluation of its work, the school development plan, information about children's progress in the early years provision and information about pupils' progress across the school over time.

Inspection team

Declan McCarthy, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average primary school, serving the villages of Latchingdon and Althorne.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds; a few speak English as an additional language.
- More pupils are eligible for the pupil premium than in most schools. The pupil premium provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those in care.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The children in the early years provision attend full time.
- An independently run pre-school, which is inspected separately, is housed in a separate part of the main school building.
- More pupils join the school throughout term time than in most schools. In 2014, a few pupils entered the school during Year 6, including a few who could not speak English.
- The school received an interim assessment by Ofsted in January 2013, which confirmed that the school's good performance had been sustained.
- The school is currently applying to join the Vine Multi-Academy Trust with the Diocese of Chelmsford and has consulted other stakeholders.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and raise achievement by making sure that:
 - learning activities always challenge the thinking of the most-able pupils so they make excellent progress
 - teachers check pupils' responses to the guidance they are given from marking about how to improve their work
 - teachers' marking always guides pupils to be accurate in use of grammar, punctuation and spelling in written work outside what they do in English lessons
 - subject leaders check that teachers are informing pupils how to improve the use of grammar, punctuation and spelling in written work.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, well supported by other leaders, has enabled the school to sustain good teaching and achievement since the last inspection. Leaders with helpful support from governors have successfully established a culture where effective teaching and pupils' positive behaviour flourish. Consequently, the school has improved.
- Improvements since the last inspection include more effective and accurate tracking systems to record pupils' rate of progress. Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage and support for disadvantaged pupils have also improved. As a result, pupils are achieving more and teaching is better directed at ensuring increasingly accomplished learning.
- The school has an accurate view of its effectiveness and uses the information from monitoring to establish the right priorities for further improvement. Consequently, improvement is well focused on key priorities.
- The leadership of teaching is good. Lesson observations and staff meetings are used effectively to identify areas for improvement in teaching. Leaders rigorously check the impact of teaching on pupils' learning from their observations and from frequently checking pupils' books. This process leads to accurate evaluation of the impact of teaching on the learning of all pupils and enables leaders to identify and address any weaknesses. Newly qualified teachers value the helpful support and guidance they receive to improve their practice.
- The early years provision is well led and managed. Consequently, there are strong links with parents, and good teaching and effective support ensure the successful learning and well-being of children in Reception.
- Subject leaders are contributing well to raising pupils' achievement and improving the quality of teaching. They regularly meet with subject leaders from local schools to share successful practice. They have worked closely with senior leaders to develop the new curriculum and are currently devising systems to measure pupils' progress in each subject area. However, they have yet to check how well teachers are promoting pupils' use of grammar, punctuation and spelling in subjects other than in English.
- The new curriculum provides a suitably balanced emphasis on developing reading, writing and mathematics. The curriculum meet the learning needs of pupils, strengthens the community links with the local church and provides praiseworthy opportunities to participate in celebration of festivals, such as Christmas and Easter. Festivals of other religions are also a prominent part of learning.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. There are worthy opportunities for pupils to reflect during assemblies and to consider those less fortunate than themselves in fund-raising activities for world charities. The consistent application of the school's code of conduct develops pupils' sense of right from wrong. Pupils are provided with insightful opportunities to consider the harmful effects of alcohol, drugs and smoking, which help them to understand priorities for a healthy life. Pupils' many opportunities to work together, to take turns and to take responsibility develop their social skills well.
- The curriculum prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain and helps them to appreciate British values. Creativity, thankfulness, forgiveness, honesty, hope and courage are promoted well through the school's spiritual and moral ethos and assemblies. Pupils have good opportunities to celebrate different world faiths in religious education and in assemblies. Their growing understanding promotes tolerance of different cultures and religious traditions of people living in Britain. Pupils learn about responsibility and the rule of law. They experience democracy at first hand through elections to the school council.
- Many sporting and musical events take place with local schools. These help pupils to extend their learning and experience.

- Leaders ensure that pupils are well prepared for transfer to secondary school through strong links with other schools. Year 6 spend time in their new schools during the summer term and this facilitates a smooth transfer.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity well. Different groups of pupils are making the same strong progress and are able to participate fully in the school's curriculum. The school promotes supportive relationships among pupils and staff and tackles discrimination of any kind directly.
- The school seeks parents' views and takes account of them. Consequently, most parents endorse the work of the school and would recommend it to others.
- Leaders make effective use of pupil premium funding to provide additional individual support to improve reading, writing and mathematical skills of disadvantaged pupils. As a result, these pupils are making better progress than their classmates in reading and writing.
- The primary school sports funding is used well. It provides for an additional after-school club run by a qualified coach and coaching by a senior teacher of physical education to develop staff skills and provide pupils with access to a range of sporting events. Consequently, pupils benefit from more opportunities for physical activities, exercise vigorously and stay fit and healthy.
- The local authority provides helpful support and challenge for the school. It has an accurate view of the school's effectiveness. The support given in mathematics is helping to improve teaching and pupils' progress in the subject.
- The school ensures that statutory requirements for safeguarding are met. All training in safeguarding and child protection is up to date, appropriate levels of supervision ensure pupils' safety and procedures for checking the suitability of staff and visitors are robust. Consequently, pupils are safe in school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are effective. They support and challenge the school well to improve.
 - They have a good knowledge of the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' learning through regular updates in the headteacher's reports and through their own visits and observations in the school.
 - Governors manage the headteacher's performance and set improvement targets linked to school priorities. They are effective in managing the performance of teachers, and make sure that successful teaching is recognised and any underperformance is challenged.
 - Staff are provided with clear targets, which are linked to the national teaching standards to improve their practice and raise pupils' achievements. The Chair of the Governing Body and the headteacher met all teachers individually to analyse the impact of their teaching on the progress pupils were making. Further action to ensure improvement was decided where necessary.
 - Governors carefully consider the school's data on pupils' attainment and progress and use the information from this to challenge the school when necessary.
 - They make sure that the school uses the funding for the pupil premium and primary sport well to achieve good value for money reflected in pupils' better achievement.
 - Governors oversee arrangements for safeguarding effectively. For example, they make sure all policies are up to date and regularly reviewed. They check on the security of the school premises and accommodation and carry out regular reviews of health and safety.
 - Governors make sure that British values are promoted within the school and are currently considering how the school might better deal with any form of extremism.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils behave well in the playground and around the school. Their behaviour in lessons is conducive to purposeful learning and they respond well to the management of behaviour by staff.
- All pupils say that behaviour is good, a view confirmed by the school's own survey of pupils' views and by parents who spoke with the inspector during the inspection. Although some parents think behaviour is not orderly as it should be, school records show few incidents of misbehaviour and few fixed term exclusions. During the inspection only behaviour that was conducive was observed.
- Pupils' positive attitudes to learning are reflected in their regular attendance and punctuality. In discussion, all pupils said they enjoy coming to school and are keen to participate in school activities – reflected in their frequent engagement with lunchtime and after-school clubs. They show a pride in their work, which is usually presented very neatly, and are proud to wear their school uniform.
- Pupils show respect for others and are polite and courteous to visitors. Their good behaviour has a positive effect on their personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Children of Reception age have positive attitudes to learning. They enjoy their learning, settle readily into routines and behave well during indoor and outdoor activities.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The school grounds are secure and all potential risks in school and on educational visits are rigorously assessed.
- The school thoroughly checks the suitability of staff and visitors to work with pupils.
- Pupils, staff and parents say that bullying is rare and when it occurs it is usually dealt with effectively. Some responses to Parent View doubt that bullying is dealt with effectively. However, school records on the few incidents of bullying show that it is usually dealt with directly and effectively. Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying and, in discussion, older pupils were able to talk, for example, about the dangers of bullying through social-networking sites. The inspector found little to endorse the negative views expressed by some parents about bullying.
- Pupils say they feel very safe in school. They were observed playing safely in the playground at break times and lunchtime and arriving safely to school with their parents in the morning. They move safely from one area of the school to another. They abide by the safe rules for using the internet and use equipment safely.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Pupils are making good progress over time as a result of effective teaching. The work in pupils' books, visits to lessons and hearing pupils read show that the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics has a positive impact on pupils' learning.
- Teachers use well-chosen resources to stimulate learning. For example, children in the Reception Year used cubes to make towers of numbers adding one more and one less to enhance their understanding of number. In Year 6, pupils wrote explanations of machines they had created; they shared ideas before carefully explaining to the class how their machines worked. Pupils worked enthusiastically together and greatly enjoyed these activities.
- Teaching assistants provide helpful support for learning in lessons and contribute to making work challenging for all abilities. For example, in a Year 1 and 2 lesson observed, the teaching assistant worked

well with a group of pupils to develop their literacy skills in researching and writing about dinosaurs. At the same time, the class teacher worked with other pupils who used computers to research and describe the characteristics of different dinosaurs. All pupils achieved well from the challenging work they were given.

- Disadvantaged pupils, the disabled and those who have a special educational need receive well-directed support for their learning, enabling them to make at least the expected and in some cases even better progress over time.
- Those pupils who join the school late, particularly the few who speak very little English on arrival, are provided with helpful additional support which enables them to make good progress.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work well together in promoting pupils' positive attitudes to learning. Pupils' good behaviour contributes well to the progress they make.
- Teachers expect pupils to achieve well and challenge them to do so. For example, in a Year 3 lesson, the teacher challenged the pupils to improve the sentence, 'The cat ran along the wall.' A variety of adjectives, adverbs, verbs, phrases and subordinate clauses were formed. As a result, pupils made rapid progress in their writing with sentences such as, 'As quick as a flash, the old grey cat bounced along the crumbling stone wall.'
- Teachers ask testing questions to explore pupils' knowledge and understanding of the subject. Consequently, they know how well pupils are learning and support those who struggle.
- Marking has improved since the last inspection. Teachers inform pupils how well they are managing their work and provide clear guidance to them on how to improve it. However, pupils do not always take action in response to the guidance given and some teachers do not check that pupils have responded as required. Therefore, pupils do not learn as well as they could.
- Marking does not always focus enough on helping pupils to improve their use of grammar, punctuation and spelling in lessons which are not designated English lessons. As a result, pupils' writing is sometimes inaccurate and does not improve as quickly as it should.
- Although the most-able pupils are usually taught well, occasionally they are not fully challenged and are given tasks which are too easy. Consequently, their progress slows.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children enter the early years provision with knowledge, skills and understanding broadly typical for their age, but often weaker in communication, language, literacy and social and emotional development. The children make at least the expected progress in all areas of learning and are well prepared for entry to Year 1.
- Slightly fewer pupils reached the nationally expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check in 2014 than in most schools. (The check tests pupils' understanding of the sounds that letters make.) All pupils in Year 2 who repeated the phonics check reached the expected national standard.
- In 2014, the attainment of pupils in Year 2 was ahead of that in most schools in reading, writing and mathematics. These pupils made consistently good progress in all areas from their starting points as a result of effective teaching. In the last three years, attainment at Key Stage 1 has risen steadily. Currently, attainment is above average in all subjects.
- In 2014, the attainment of Year 6 was a little below that in most schools in English, mathematics, and in the use of grammar, punctuation and spelling. Nevertheless, these pupils made good progress from

their starting points. Most pupils who were present throughout Years 5 and 6 achieved well, and some reached the higher levels, particularly in reading. The pupils in this year group who entered the school late, including those unable to speak English, were not in school long enough to benefit from the provision and attained lower results. Currently, Year 6 pupils are on course to reach broadly average standards in English and mathematics this year, based on the strong progress they are making.

- Some pupils in both key stages struggle to write accurately. The marking of their work for grammar, spelling and punctuation errors is not effective enough in lessons not specifically designated as English lessons.
- Disabled pupils and those who have a special educational need make at least the progress expected of them and, sometimes, outstanding progress from their starting points. Their success results from the consistently strong support they receive from teachers and teaching assistants.
- In 2014, the most-able Year 2 pupils were ahead of similar pupils nationally in attaining Level 3 or above in reading, writing and mathematics. At Key Stage 2, the most able were ahead of pupils nationally in attaining Level 5 and above in reading, but not in their other subjects. Currently, a small number of pupils are on course to reach the highest levels in the national tests in 2015 and the school's data confirm inspection findings that they are making good progress. Occasionally, when they are given work that is too easy, their progress slows down, in their written work in particular.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve well. In 2014, Year 6 disadvantaged pupils made better progress from their starting points compared to their classmates in reading and writing and broadly the same progress as others in mathematics. They attained standards approximately half a term ahead of their classmates in reading, a term ahead in writing and half a term behind the others in mathematics. Their attainment was slightly above that of all pupils nationally in reading, and below in writing and mathematics.

The early years provision

is good

- Good leadership of the early years provision ensures strong links with parents and good teamwork among staff. As a result, most parents come into school for half a day each week to work with their children alongside the staff and see the progress being made. Consequently, children feel happy, secure and settled in school, behave well and are very keen to join in all activities.
- The early years leader ensures that all staff promote children's safety and well-being strongly. There is thorough supervision of all activities and rigorous application of all welfare and safeguarding requirements. As a result, all children feel safe and enjoy school.
- Children make at least the expected progress in all areas of learning because teaching is good. The system for tracking children's progress is thorough and has improved considerably since the last inspection. It is now easier for parents and staff to see the progress each child is making in each area of learning.
- Staff provide a wide variety of learning activities to stimulate children's interests. As a result, learning is successful and progress good.

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	115121
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	448451

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	105
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ann Garrigan
Headteacher	Margaret Amery
Date of previous school inspection	9 December 2009
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