

Messing Primary School

School Road, Messing, Colchester, CO5 9TH

Inspection dates 16–17 June 2015

| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Not previously inspected as an academy | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|--|----------|
| | This inspection: | Good | 2 |
| Leadership and management | | Outstanding | 1 |
| 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.

- Since the school became an academy the leadership of the headteacher, the governing body and the Trust has been outstanding in addressing the improvements needed at the school.
- All leaders have focused successfully on improving the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. This has been supported by good recruitment that has strengthened the teaching team.
- The school provides a very caring and safe environment for pupils and is strongly focused on their individual needs.
- Achievement is good because pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics from their different starting points. There are no significant differences in the achievement of different groups of pupils.
- The provision in the early years is good and supports children's learning effectively because of outstanding leadership.
- The teaching is good. Teachers plan interesting lessons that keep pupils interested and engaged in learning through the use of a wide variety of different activities.
- The school provides well for all pupils including those who are disabled, those who have special educational needs and the most able.
- The curriculum is well-planned for mixed age classes and contains an excellent range of creative topics which ensure pupils can use their skills in different ways.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent and they are well-prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and they have good attitudes towards learning. The school ensures they are kept safe.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Sometimes teachers do not check pupils' progress regularly enough during lessons. This means they do not know when to adjust activities to help pupils understand more clearly, or to move them forward quickly.
- The resources for computing and the use of new technology are limited and teachers do not make sufficient use of them because their skills and knowledge need further development.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed pupils' learning in seven lessons or parts of lessons. Four of these lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings and discussions took place with the headteacher, representatives of the New Hall Multi-Academy Trust, a representative of the local authority, members of the governing body, staff, pupils and parents.
- The inspector examined samples of pupils' work, some jointly with the English and mathematics leaders and other staff, and several pupils read to the inspector.
- The inspector took account of the 23 responses to the online parent survey, Parent View, as well as the 31 responses to the school's own recent questionnaire. The inspectors also talked to parents and took account of the 10 questionnaires completed by staff.
- The inspector looked at a range of documents produced by the school, including data on pupils' progress and attainment, procedures for safeguarding, and the school's own evaluations of its work. They considered reports to the governing body and minutes of their meetings, and the school's action plans for raising attainment.

Inspection team

Geof Timms, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Messing Primary School is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The predecessor school, called Messing-Cum-Inworth Primary School, became a sponsor-led academy in September 2013. It is now part of the New Hall Multi-academy Trust which is led by a large and successful independent school. When the predecessor school was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged as inadequate.
- Virtually all the pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- Children attend the early years provision in a mixed age class with Year 1 and 2 pupils on a full-time basis.
- The headteacher was in post at the time the school became an academy. Since that time, the school has doubled in size.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is well above average.
- A broadly average proportion of pupils are disadvantaged and supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school is too small to be included in the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement continue to improve by:
 - checking learning more regularly during lessons and adapting tasks if necessary
 - improving the resources for teaching computing and developing teachers' skills in using new technology more effectively.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The change to academy status with New Hall School as sponsor has had outstanding benefits for the school. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and is very effectively supported by the outstanding governing body and staff from the Trust. Leaders are focused on the pupils' achievement and good behaviour, and on ensuring high quality teaching. Because of this the school has made extremely rapid improvements over the past two years in all aspects of its work.
- The leadership is appropriately shared among staff. Those with responsibilities for subjects or for other aspects of the school's work, such as the provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, or for children in the early years, ensure that all staff work as a very strong and effective team for the benefit of the pupils.
- The leadership of teaching is outstanding. Through clear and robust systems for checking on teachers' and other staff performance, weaknesses are addressed, and extra training sought if appropriate. Leaders deal with less effective teaching firmly and this, together with effective recruitment, has brought about rapid improvement.
- Leaders monitor the work of the school through a wide range of activities. Regular meetings are held between the headteacher and teachers to assess the progress of individual pupils in their classes. Appropriate support in a small group or on a one-to-one basis is put in place if needed. Pupils' work and displays are scrutinised, and discussions with pupils are held to check their progress.
- The Trust provides excellent support and challenge for the school. Help with finance, premises issues and human resources ensures the school runs efficiently. For example, the school benefits from shared teaching expertise in physical education and music. In addition, the school actively seeks and uses expertise from the local authority and from other local schools so it is not cut off from good practice and advice that can be found locally.
- The school ensures pupils are well-prepared for life in modern Britain through their work to instil British values. Pupils learn about democracy through visits from a local councillor. They demonstrate an excellent understanding of the need to respect and show tolerance for each other. The school is building closer links to a school in London which takes pupils from very different backgrounds and heritages.
- Additional funding for the disadvantaged pupils is used well to support their learning. Leaders plan and track this funding and its impact on an individual basis. Because of this, pupils make good progress and any gaps in attainment are narrowing.
- The extra funding provided for sporting activities is used to provide an excellent range of opportunities. The Trust enables pupils to use facilities such as the swimming pool at the sponsoring school, and teaching expertise provides pupils with access to good coaching. They are able to sample a wider range of sports such as fencing. In addition, teachers are able to work alongside coaches and learn from them. Because of this provision the participation in sporting activities has risen.
- The school has developed an excellent curriculum, which is broad and balanced. Strong links are made between subjects so pupils can use their skills in different ways. The school extends pupils' horizons through a wide range of activities, such as residential experiences and learning about different faiths and cultural differences. The school ensures pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Staff promote equality of opportunity well. This ensures good relations are fostered and there is no discrimination.
- Together with leaders, governors ensure that all safeguarding requirements are fully met and the school's related procedures are effective.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is exemplary and provides the school with outstanding levels of support and challenge. The

governing body holds leaders to account for achievement and the quality of teaching. They regularly visit the school and know its strengths and weaknesses well. They produce detailed reports on their visits so all governors are equally aware of the school's successes and priorities for improvement. For example, recent visits have focused on changes to teaching in mathematics or matters concerning safeguarding and health and safety. Governors have an excellent knowledge and understanding of the data on pupils' progress and the quality of teaching at the school.

- Governors carry out their statutory duties well. They are fully involved in decisions about teacher's pay and understand well how this is linked to performance and responsibilities in order to improve teaching. Governors are fully supportive of the headteacher when actions to tackle any underperformance are required.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. This view is supported by the vast majority of the parents who completed the Parent View questionnaire. Pupils talk positively about the school and one said, 'We love it'. They told the inspector it gives them a good education and they talked enthusiastically about things that they enjoy doing. They appreciate the small size of the school because it means that the teachers have 'time to focus on us'. Pupils say they like the way they are given challenges to improve their work.
- Pupils show respect for their school and its surroundings and resources. They do not drop litter and they are clearly proud of their work, which is carefully and neatly presented. Pupils' response to the school's expectations of their behaviour and social development is good. They have good opportunities to take responsibility and learn about democracy, through activities such as the school council. They have good aspirations for life after school and talked about wanting to be fashion designers, biologists or teachers. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- The vast majority of the pupils behave well in lessons. Although learning rarely slows because of poor behaviour, occasionally some pupils do not stay fully engaged or involved in their lessons. When moving around the school, in assemblies, or at break times, pupils are well behaved and play together well. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their work and other aspects of school life such as clubs and sporting opportunities.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. All of the parents who responded to Parent View said their children enjoy school, are safe and well looked after. The overwhelming majority would recommend the school to other parents. Staff put a high priority on ensuring pupils' and children's safety. On school visits, such as the recent camping trip, or during activities on the school site, risks are assessed appropriately and supervision is good.
- Pupils are clear that bullying rarely happens in school. They have a good understanding of what constitutes bullying and how to deal with it. All those spoken to were confident there are adults in school they can trust and to whom they would talk if they had any worries. The 'chill-out club' provides pupils with an excellent opportunity to discuss concerns, whether arising in school or at home, through discussion with a very caring member of the staff.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to keeping themselves safe. They are aware of risks such as those they may come across while using new technology. They know how to keep themselves safe when using computers and are aware of why the school teaches them about e-safety. Their safety outside school is promoted through projects such as the 'Crucial Crew' event.
- Attendance has improved and is currently above average. Most parents ensure their children attend school regularly and are punctual. There is very little persistent absence but if it occurs the school deals with it appropriately.

The quality of teaching is good

- Since the school became an academy, the outstanding leadership of the headteacher, governing body and Trust staff, has had a very positive impact on the quality of teaching. Teachers have been challenged to improve the progress pupils make and they have risen to this challenge well. Where teaching was weaker this has been addressed through successful recruitment.
- Teachers and learning support assistants form an effective team. All adults know the pupils well as individuals and provide good support for their learning and differing needs. Although they often work with less-able pupils, learning support assistants also provide real challenge for the more-able through expert questioning and discussion.
- The school has updated its systems for assessing and recording learning in line with recent changes to the use of levels, and these are good. Teachers and leaders are very knowledgeable about the progress made by individual pupils. This knowledge of individual pupils is used well to provide them with activities at an appropriate and often challenging level. For example, recent changes to the teaching of mathematics mean teachers now ensure tasks are more open ended and provide more challenge.
- The marking of pupils' work is good and has been a recent focus for improvement. It makes clear what pupils have done well and what they need to do to improve. Pupils talk about how the marking and target setting help them learn. Teachers and learning support assistants often provide useful verbal feedback on an individual basis. This ensures pupils' responses to the teachers' comments and suggestions have a positive impact on their learning especially in literacy and numeracy.
- Teachers plan activities that take advantage of the natural links between subjects, and this helps to use pupils' skills in a variety of ways. For example, Year 5 and 6 pupils use their design and technology, and art and design skills in a history topic on ancient Greece, enabling them to create excellent models of mythical creatures.
- The teaching of reading is good and the staff ensure pupils develop a love of reading. This is helped by good teaching that encourages the use of books for research, such as that in Years 1 and 2 when pupils were learning about the Great Fire of London. A further strength is the teaching expertise available through links with the sponsoring school, especially in physical education where expert coaching skills are clearly enabling pupils to make excellent progress.
- When teaching is less successful, teachers do not always check regularly enough whether the tasks they have provided are helping pupils learn. This means they miss some opportunities to alter tasks so they are more effective.
- Developing pupils' vocabulary has a high profile across all subjects and in many lessons. A lot of opportunities are provided for pupils to talk, learn new words and extend their vocabulary. In addition, imaginative ideas, like 'word of the day' in Years 3 and 4, are effective in extending their experience of new words.
- Teachers plan and provide imaginative activities that interest pupils and extend their learning. The new curriculum has been well planned and introduced so that important changes, such as those in the mathematics curriculum, have been successful and shared with parents. However, the teaching of computing is less well-developed due to the lack of resources available and teachers' less-well-developed knowledge and skills in this subject.
- Teachers and teaching assistants provide good support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs on a one-to-one basis. This means such pupils are able to take a full and active part in school life and make good progress.

The achievement of pupils is good

- The small size of each year group means that the results of pupils leaving Year 6 in 2014 have not been reported because of the risk that individual pupils might be identified. In general, the small cohorts mean that the results vary widely year by year. In 2014, for example, there were only six pupils in Year 6.
- The progress of most pupils through Key Stage 2 in 2014 was above that expected in reading, broadly average in writing but below in mathematics. The school rapidly addressed and improved the teaching in mathematics and current pupils are making progress in all three subjects that is above that found nationally.
- Progress at Key Stage 1 is strong. All of the current Year 2 pupils are making at least the expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils make good progress in phonics (how letters combine to make different sounds) due to effective teaching. Currently a well-above average proportion of the pupils in Year 1 are on track to reach, or exceed, the expected level. Pupils' reading skills are good. They develop into confident readers who maintain a good level of interest in a wide range of books. An unusually high number of the younger pupils talk enthusiastically about reading factual rather than story books.
- Progress in literacy and numeracy is good across the school. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are good and they are articulate and interesting to talk to. They produce some high quality work in other subjects such as art and design, physical education, geography and history, in topics such as the Great Fire of London.
- In 2014 there were too few disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 to comment on their attainment and progress. In many cases throughout the school, these pupils also have other barriers to their learning. The school works successfully to identify and address any significant gaps in their knowledge and skills on an individual basis. These pupils are given good support and consequently make good progress. As a result, any gaps in pupils' attainment are narrowing.
- Throughout the school, the most-able pupils are well challenged and make good progress. In physical education, for example, staff ensure activities extend and challenge the more talented pupils appropriately. Older pupils are able to attend some events such as quizzes at the sponsoring independent school.
- The high proportion of the pupils who are disabled and have special educational needs make good progress from their starting points because of the good teaching they receive on an individual basis. The school provides them with effective additional help from both teachers and learning support assistants.

The early years provision is good

- The provision for the Reception children is effective because of the outstanding leadership. This has a positive impact on how well they settle into school and develop good learning habits. The teachers and the learning support assistants who work with these children plan a good range of imaginative and interesting activities. For example, opportunities to play with construction equipment helped children develop really imaginative ideas about travelling on magic carpets.
- Leaders ensure staff use their time effectively and children are well prepared for Year 1. Staff from other schools have visited to find out more about how successfully to teach the early years in mixed age classes. The small size of year groups means there is always a wide range of levels demonstrated by children when they start school. However, some often start with lower than expected skills in communication, number, and emotional and social skills. From their different starting points children make good progress. The progress made especially in children's speaking and listening skills has helped them become better learners.

- Adults assess children's learning when they start school. This is repeated on a continuing basis throughout the year. Assessments are accurate and well supported by evidence that illustrates the good progress children make. Good-quality, detailed records are kept in books that highlight children's learning through examples of their work, observations made of their learning and comments from children and parents.
- Children's behaviour is good and their safety is ensured by good supervision and careful risk assessments of activities. Children are clearly happy at school as shown by their enthusiasm when taking part in activities. They behave well, including when outside or in a different environment such as assembly or working outdoors. Staff ensure children are kept safe.
- Children make good use of their outdoor area and enjoy, for example, taking indoor learning further through these activities. For example, one girl explained how she was using different containers in the water to compare how much they held. This work is extended through good questioning by adults. Because of this the teaching is good and activities have an appropriate focus on creative aspects such as art or music, as when children composed sound patterns to represent aspects of the story of Jack and the Beanstalk.

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 | 139252 |
| Local authority | Essex |
| Inspection number | 450023 |

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

| | |
|--|--|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy sponsor-led |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 61 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Katharine Evans |
| Headteacher | Jackie Halliday |
| Date of previous school inspection | Not previously inspected |
| Telephone number | 01621 815415 |
| Fax number | 01621 815297 |
| Email address | headteacher@messingprimaryschool.co.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.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone [0300 123 4234](tel:03001234234), 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.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

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.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2015

