

# Cranford Church of England Primary School

Church Lane, Cranford, Kettering NN14 4AE

<b>Inspection dates</b>	26–27 April 2016
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school

- Pupils' achievement is outstanding, they make excellent progress in reading, writing and mathematics as they move through each key stage in the school.
- Leadership is outstanding. The visionary headteacher has successfully developed an exceptional leadership team and has embedded strong values across the school.
- Teaching is outstanding in every class. Teachers and teaching assistants relentlessly check pupils' understanding and quickly act to address misconceptions.
- Reception children make excellent progress from their starting points. The proportion reaching a good level of development has risen each year and remains above the national average.
- Phonics is very well taught and as a result, Year 1 pupils taking the national phonics check outperform others nationally.
- Disadvantaged pupils make excellent progress in reading, writing and mathematics. By the end of Year 6, the small numbers of disadvantaged pupils in recent years have been ahead of their classmates and peers nationally.
- The most able pupils make good progress, and are supported well by staff. A new tracking system is being tested in one class to check which activities have the most impact on pupils' progress, to help further improve their support.
- Pupils' behaviour, attitudes to learning and respect for each other are exemplary. Pupils show great pride for Cranford and this contributes to the exceptionally positive atmosphere. Pupils feel very safe in school and have excellent strategies to keep safe online.
- Attendance has risen and remains high. Pupils genuinely enjoy coming to school and their enthusiasm and passion for learning underpin their many successes.
- The exciting and vibrant curriculum is a great strength of the school. The innovative topics and range of activities contribute to the excellent promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Communications with parents are excellent. Parents embrace the variety of opportunities to come into school and to help their children learn.
- The highly effective governing body asks challenging questions to steer school improvements.

## **Full report**

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Extend the tracking system currently being trialled for the most able pupils to the whole school, so that:
  - the progress of all of the school's most-able pupils is closely monitored
  - only the most effective and appropriate resources and activities are used to drive up achievements further, so that more pupils make outstanding progress.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding

- The visionary executive headteacher has successfully developed outstanding leaders within the school. The relentless focus on values has raised the school culture to one of high aspiration. Leaders' high expectations are reflected throughout the school.
- Leaders, as class teachers, demonstrate their excellence in the classroom. They lead by example and share their expertise with their partner school. Staff express unanimously positive praise and support for the headteacher, and value the school's contribution to their own professional development.
- Leaders make sure that teachers' pay and performance link directly to whole-school priorities and pupils' progress. This has helped to improve the quality of teaching so that it is now typically outstanding.
- The school reviews all aspects of its work thoroughly and acts quickly to address any gaps so that the pace of improvement is not slowed. School development plans are realistic and sharply focused. Plans to raise standards are linked to close checks on the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement, and are shared by all leaders.
- Equal opportunities are rigorously promoted and no pupil is denied access to anything that the school has to offer.
- All leaders follow school policies closely and, as class teachers themselves, offer high-quality verbal and written feedback when marking and commenting on pupils' work. They encourage reflection and model the school values for pupils to follow.
- Communications with parents have become a strength of the school's work. Parents regularly take part in workshops and attend half termly drop-ins and weekly 'Stay and Read' sessions on a Friday, to review achievements with their children. The termly parents' forum is a popular venue to exchange views with school leaders and keep up to date with new initiatives.
- The carefully planned curriculum excites and engages pupils. Pupils enjoy learning through topics and this is greatly enhanced by stimulating trips and visits. An example is a meal in a Mexican restaurant to extend pupils' work on the 'Aztecs' and deepen their cultural knowledge.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptional. Pupils learn about others' faiths and beliefs through RE lessons and thoughtful assembly plans. Everybody knows that Tuesday is multicultural assembly day and Thursday is all about values. School values align closely with British values and lie at the heart of all of the school's work.
- The local authority and the diocese have supported the school at a 'light touch' level in recognition of the school's improvements and strong leadership.
- **The governance of the school**
  - Governors are highly effective in steering school improvements. Governors sit on each of the committees, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities. This provides a sharp focus on all aspects of the school's work and has deepened governors' understanding of current issues.
  - Governors visit the school frequently and understand school assessment information about pupils' progress. They use this understanding to ask leaders appropriate and challenging questions about pupils' achievement.
  - The governing body has fully supported the appointment of the headteacher as executive headteacher of Mears Ashby School and ensured that leadership within the school has been successfully developed through effective performance management.
  - Link governors monitor the impact of additional funds on raising the involvement of pupils in sports, and also monitor how the funding has enhanced teachers' skills and confidence to lead PE lessons.
  - Governors monitor the impact of pupil premium funding to make sure that it is used effectively. They check on the successful closure of learning gaps, for the small number of disadvantaged pupils.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. School leaders have excellent partnerships with parents, carers and external agencies. This has helped to ensure that pupils are supported and kept safe. The safeguarding governor makes thorough checks on all safeguarding practices and governors ensure that their own training is up to date. Governors have made improvements to strengthen the security of the school site and most recently added a secure electric gate to control access to the school during the day. Governors are committed to doing all they can to keep pupils safe and know precisely what to do in the event of a safeguarding concern.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment **is outstanding**

- The quality of teaching is outstanding in every class. Teachers know precisely what pupils are capable of achieving and express this high expectation to their pupils. This message is firmly delivered in every lesson and pupils readily make their best efforts to do well.
- Lessons typically contain a good variety of challenging activities and opportunities for pupils to be involved throughout. Pupils participate keenly and this adds to their enjoyment of learning.
- The headteacher places a strong emphasis on the importance of effective learning. She ensures that teachers make regular checks on what pupils are doing, so that misconceptions are quickly addressed and pupils' learning is unimpaired.
- Pupils frequently reflect on their own efforts, and the efforts of other, and develop excellent skills in assessing work. In an English lesson, a class of six and seven year olds used a detailed checklist to pinpoint the components of a good performance and sensitively offered critique when their classmates performed part of a story.
- Teaching is enhanced by the highly effective use of an excellent range of resources, including tablet computers in every class, interactive whiteboards, and colourful mathematics equipment, such as bead bars, to provide variety in the ways that pupils learn.
- Teachers and teaching assistants form highly productive partnerships. Teachers direct their assistants with great skill and sensitivity to ensure that pupils with additional needs and those who are the most able receive high-quality support and achieve very well. Adults know their pupils and are sensitive to their needs, providing the right balance of support at the right time. As a result, they help to ensure that all pupils make their very best efforts and the progress that they can.
- Pupils appreciate the value of the 'take home tasks' set at the start of each topic theme. They make their own choice of which one to complete each week and show excellent commitment in sticking to the 'hand-in' dates. This prepares them well for the disciplines of secondary school life.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare **is outstanding**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- The small size of the school means that staff take the time to get to know pupils and their families well. Every child is known as an individual and adults skilfully provide the highest levels of care and support. Pupils with additional needs receive sensitively tailored support, which enables them to learn and make excellent progress.
- The school places a strong emphasis on pupils' health and emotional well-being and has many established partnerships with external specialists to support those who are most vulnerable. The weekly visit by Ernie, a 'pets as therapy' dog, is a welcome motivator for reluctant readers and a reassuring 'friend' for pupils feeling vulnerable.
- Older pupils frequently keep a watchful eye over younger ones in the playground and pupils volunteer to be buddies to help new pupils to settle in. This shows the very caring ethos of many pupils in the school.
- This is a very reflective school and pupils have many opportunities to think about their own and others' points of view. Pupils show great sensitivity when listening to their classmates and offer helpful suggestions when their advice is sought.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Attendance has risen and remains consistently above average, pupils arrive on time and genuinely enjoy coming to school.
- School values lie at the heart of pupils' exemplary attitudes to learning. Pupils keenly discuss their meanings and show their thoughtfulness, care and consideration for each other. They are exceptionally polite and listen patiently to others without interruption.
- No interruptions to learning were seen during the inspection and this concurs with the school's own checks of behaviour. Parents, carers and staff agree that behaviour is excellent and there are very few occasions where this is not the case.
- Pupils say that they feel very safe in school, and are well informed about staying safe online. Pupils understand the different forms of bullying and when asked about bullying in school, they passionately

state that 'at Cranford it is exceptionally rare'. Adults are always on hand for them to share their concerns with and pupils are confident that any issues are dealt with quickly and effectively.

## Outcomes for pupils

## are outstanding

- Pupils make excellent progress across the school from their different starting points. When compared with pupils nationally, their progress in 2015 was particularly high in reading and mathematics. The proportions of Year 6 pupils making more than expected progress in reading exceeded the national figure.
- The small number of Year 2 pupils reached above average standards in every subject last year and the proportions of those gaining the higher levels in reading and mathematics have risen.
- The very small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress. Their needs are identified on an individual basis and effective support is put into place.
- Reliable school-tracking information and pupils' current work indicate that they are making excellent progress. This is consistent across subjects and in the majority of year groups. Pupils currently in Year 6 are working at levels ahead of their classmates in 2015 and are on track to exceed the standards expected for their age by the end of the year.
- The small number of pupils with special educational needs or disability make excellent progress in line with that of their classmates. This is as a result of receiving tailored, highly effective support in class and through specialist input.
- The most able pupils make good progress. Teachers identify these pupils and provide challenging tasks to stretch them further. A group of talented writers has been formed and has recently produced its first school newspaper. Others in a Year 3 and 4 class are being tracked to see how different activities help them to excel. This practice is not yet widespread across the school.
- Pupils who are eligible for support from the pupil premium funding make at least good progress in most year groups. The small number of these pupils in Year 6 made excellent progress in all subjects and successfully narrowed the learning gaps compared with others nationally in 2015. Additional funding is used effectively to provide targeted support and allow pupils to access all aspects of school life.
- Pupils in Year 1 show a secure grasp of the principles of reading. Results in the national phonics screening check have been well above the national standard for the last two years and current pupils are working at a similarly high level. Pupils have exceptionally positive attitudes towards reading and embrace the broad variety of reading experiences offered to them in class. Boys particularly enjoy using 'reading eggs' on tablet computers and keenly compete to reach the next level. This means that they read extensively in class and at home.
- Mathematics provides a steady stream of opportunities to practise skills learned, and pupils deepen their understanding through elements of their topic work. During the inspection, Year 5 pupils learning about ancient Greeks diligently unravelled a series of challenging Roman numerals to reveal important dates in the early calendar.
- Pupils' achievements are higher than they were at the time of the previous inspection because the school now exudes a culture of high aspiration underpinned by outstanding teaching in every class.

## Early years provision

## is outstanding

- The very small number of children in the early years make excellent progress. Children typically enter with skills and abilities that are in line with those expected for their age. By the end of the Reception Year, the proportion of children attaining a good level of development is rising and was above the national average for the first time last year. Current children are working ahead of their predecessors and a higher proportion than previously have reached the 'exceeding' level across all areas. This represents outstanding progress.
- Teaching is outstanding and excellent support from the Reception class teaching assistant means that children settle in easily and quickly become involved in the array of stimulating learning activities. Exceptional phonics teaching develops children's early reading skills very well and adults provide excellent opportunities for children to practise and extend them further.
- Adults encourage children to reach high standards in everything they do and pay close attention to the quality of children's spoken and written responses. In a session to develop subtraction skills, children

listened out for numbers in a story, and responded excitedly when they heard them. On another occasion, a child answering 'four' corrected himself to say, 'I heard four mentioned', this is typical of the culture of high achievement which is replicated throughout the school.

- Adults know each individual child in the Reception class very well and make excellent use of assessment to track their progress. They are adept at identifying where additional help is needed and this is swiftly put into place if required. This ensures the excellent progress of every child in this small, close-knit unit.
- Adults encourage safe play and safe use of resources and children learn these school values at an early stage. Children play together in harmony, they share resources and happily wait for their turn to speak in class. School routines are quickly learned and children are well prepared and ready when the time comes to move up to the Year 1 class.
- Parents frequently attend 'stay and read' sessions and spend time reading with their children. Their input to children's learning journals is good and they share their children's achievements at home through stars displayed on the classroom door.
- The excellent leadership of the early years ensures that standards remain high in all areas and children quickly develop their love of learning and desire to succeed.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	121966
<b>Local Authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection Number</b>	10001819

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	89
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	the governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Bob Townson
<b>Executive Headteacher</b>	Julie Grey
<b>Telephone number</b>	01536 330300
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.cranford.northants.sch.uk">www.cranford.northants.sch.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:head@cranford-ce.northants-ecl.gov.uk">head@cranford-ce.northants-ecl.gov.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	12 November 2013

## Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school and the number of pupils has increased slightly since the last inspection.
- The executive headteacher is also in charge of Mears Ashby Primary School.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and, therefore, supported through the pupil premium is well below average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are in the care of the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and disability is well below the national average
- The early years consists of children in the Reception Year. All pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes, each covering two year groups.
- A higher proportion of pupils than is typically seen nationally join the school during the year.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Governors oversee the school's daily breakfast and after-school clubs.
- The school's website meets current statutory requirements.

## Information about this inspection

- The lead inspector observed nine lessons, including phonics (letters and their sounds) and guided reading. Seven were jointly seen with the headteacher and one with the deputy headteacher.
- The inspector observed support in class for pupils who need additional help with their learning, listened to readers and attended a whole-school assembly.
- The inspector looked closely at pupils' work in every class and did some of this jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector spoke informally with parents at the start of each day and took note of their views through the 38 responses to the online Parent View survey.
- The inspector spoke with pupils around the school and met with a group of pupils from each class for a discussion about their experiences of life in the school. She also looked at the school's own recent survey on teachers' marking to gather pupils' views.
- The inspector met with three governors and spoke with a school adviser and representative of the diocesan board about their work with the school. Discussions were held with school leaders responsible for checking English, mathematics, the early years and for co-ordinating special educational needs.
- The inspector checked school documentation on attendance and behaviour and looked closely at pupils' current progress and the monitoring of safeguarding. She looked at records of governors' meetings and how the school manages staff performance.

## Inspection team

Aune Turkson-Jones, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector



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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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