

Layer-de-la-Haye CofE VC Primary School

High Road, Layer-de-la-Haye, Colchester, CO2 0DS

Inspection dates 12–13 September 2012

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress in all key stages. Progress rates are rising. Pupils have careful support through a range of interventions.
- Key skills are developed well and help to ensure that pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching is good overall and some is outstanding. Teaching meets the needs of all groups of pupils because adults use a good range of skills to engage pupils with learning.
- Marking and assessment procedures are effective in helping to take learning forward. Pupils are clear about their targets.
- Pupils are well behaved. Pupils feel safe and parents and carers agree.
- The school has effective strategies to ensure that there is no bullying of any kind.
- Attendance is high.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school.
- The headteacher, staff and governors are working effectively together to develop teaching and achievement in this improving school.
- Middle managers have increased responsibility in helping to ensure improvement and setting targets for teachers.
- Governors provide effective challenge and support through their involvement in school self-evaluation.
- The broad, balanced curriculum provides pupils with good opportunities to extend their knowledge and skills.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always provide pupils with enough challenge to help them rapidly reach their ambitious targets.
- Teachers do not provide pupils with enough opportunities to explain their reasoning and how they have reached their conclusions.
- Leaders and managers have not yet fully developed their use of data to ensure they can assess pupils' progress.
- Leaders do not yet monitor the impact of teaching on learning rigorously enough to drive both up to the highest levels.
- Parents and carers do not always receive enough information about how they can contribute to their children's progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 14 lessons taught by seven teachers.
- They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils.
- Inspectors took account of the 34 responses to the online questionnaire [Parent View] in planning and carrying out the inspection and also looked at the school's own record of parent surveys.
- They observed the school's work and looked at pupils' books, the school's improvement plan, assessment data, monitoring and self-evaluation procedures, a range of policies and procedures and arrangements for safeguarding.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read.

Inspection team

Michael Sutherland-Harper, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Matthew Klimcke	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Layer-de-la-Haye Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- It is situated in a village on the outskirts of Colchester and serves the surrounding area.
- The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above the national average while the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and who receive the pupil premium is below the national average.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and whose first language is not or believed not to be English are below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils in both English and mathematics.
- The school is part of a local consortium of schools.
- The school has achieved the Intermediate International Schools, Green Flag and Fair Trade Awards. It has enhanced Healthy Schools status, and a growing number of children are enrolled with the Children's University.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the majority of teaching to outstanding by:
 - increasing the level of challenge for all pupils, and especially the more able, to ensure more rapid progress in reaching aspirational targets
 - ensuring that pupils have further opportunities to explain how they reached their conclusions and the reasons for them.
- Strengthen the effectiveness of leaders and managers at all levels, including governors and middle managers, by:
 - developing the use and application of data collected on pupils' progress
 - rigorously monitoring the impact of teaching on outcomes for pupils
 - developing links with parents and carers to inform them how they can help to ensure pupils' progress in the process.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children enter the school with the knowledge and skills expected for their age and make good progress in the Reception class, especially in linking sounds and letters and in knowledge and understanding of the world. A good number exceed age-related expectations.
- Pupils make good progress in reading. Guided reading sessions help pupils to achieve good skill levels. They read well and with confidence by the end of Key Stage 1 due to their clear understanding of how to link sounds and letters. Pupils are fluent readers by the end of Key Stage 2 because they have good access to a range of books reflecting their interests, and they think about what they read.
- Effective support systems, based on identified target areas, increasingly ensure that no pupil underachieves. Pupils also feel able to take their learning forward because short, sharp tasks are linked to both their individual targets and nationally expected standards. Data on progress are collected regularly and the school is looking at ways to increase their use to ensure more rapid progress.
- Pupils make good progress in developing their literacy and numeracy skills and achieve above average standards. In mathematics, teachers provide a good blend of mental and written exercises and ensure that no task lasts for too long. Writing and reading skills are developed well through the use of engaging ideas, themed weeks and cross-curricular links.
- Pupils who are disabled and those with special educational needs make similar progress to their peers.
- Support systems are carefully targeted to guide pupils while also emphasising the need for them to arrive at their own solutions.
- Pupils enjoy learning and participate well in lessons. Pupils work well together and with adults and settle to tasks quickly. They work well independently and use information and communication technology confidently. Pupils enjoy participating in a range of clubs and groups which extend learning opportunities.
- Teachers do not always extend the more-able pupils or help them to reach the highest targets. There are limited opportunities for pupils to take a lead in explaining their learning process to their peers.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good and improving. All teaching seen during the inspection was good or better. The large majority of the few parents and carers replying to the online Parent View feel their children are well taught and, consequently, make good progress. Pupils say they are taught well and inspectors agree with these views.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They make effective use of questioning to advance pupils' skills. For example, in a good mathematics lesson in Year 6, when a pupil asked a question about the way forward with a calculation, adults responded with further questions

which led the pupil to develop his own solutions.

- Teachers reinforce pupils' understanding in a variety of ways. Key skills are consolidated across the different subjects pupils study. Teaching also has an additional impact because resources used in classes are linked to pupils' interests and actual experiences. Initiatives like science week encourage pupils to take their learning forward and mean that growing numbers are joining the Children's University to seek further understanding.
- Well-developed spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills are a strength of the school. Topics, like the Nile, develop pupils' use of their imagination and lead to a sense of awe and wonder. Tasks which require pupils to work together reinforce pupils' perceptions of other points of view.
- Assessment procedures are well developed. Comments on the quality of pupils' work clearly indicate the way forward. In an outstanding literacy lesson in Year 5, constant in-class review and discussion between adults and pupils about the quality of work led to rapid progress. Next steps were negotiated on an individual basis with no interruption to work produced.
- Books are marked regularly and teachers insist on neat presentation. Some opportunities are missed for pupils to self-assess, for example, whether their work is of the very highest quality. The marking, while generally good, does not always provide sufficient challenge, especially for the more able.
- Work is planned carefully to take account of individual needs. Good support systems meet the needs of all groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs or who are potentially vulnerable.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. The school has clear behaviour codes based on Gospel values and a positive ethos. Pupils get on well with each other and adults. They are well-mannered, polite and courteous, and older pupils willingly help younger ones.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. Very little low-level disruption occurs because expectations are clear and pupils are engaged. Few tasks are so long that attention wanders as a result.
- Pupils feel safe because they say there is always an adult to whom they can talk if necessary. They especially value the Rainbow Room which provides additional pastoral support whenever they have any concerns.
- Adults manage behaviour well and positively, including for those pupils who are potentially vulnerable. Good transition arrangements into and out of the school help to reinforce pupils' confidence. Quick, focused interventions, with support from local agencies and partnerships where needed, mean that no problem has time to grow.
- Pupils have a good awareness of how to stay safe. They understand how to use electronic media and the internet safely. They have a good understanding of the different possible forms of bullying. The school has clear and effective strategies for dealing with bullying of any kind.
- Attendance is high. The school has clear policies about attendance and works closely with families to ensure that attendance rates remain high. Pupils are excited by the learning

opportunities on offer and this helps to ensure high attendance rates.

- The school council and eco groups play an effective role in maintaining good behaviour. They meet regularly with a teacher and are looking at ways to make behaviour and safety around the school even better so it becomes exemplary.
- Parents and carers feel that children are well looked after and well-behaved.

The leadership and management are good

- School leaders have been effective in improving the quality of teaching and learning. The headteacher is working effectively with senior leaders, staff and the governing body to develop the school. Their main aims are to link the school more closely to its surrounding community and to help every pupil develop their full potential and an enquiring mind and to take increasing responsibility for their own learning.
- A key school focus is to improve learning through better teaching. School leaders monitor the impact of teaching on pupils well through lesson observations, drop-in sessions and improved assessment. Work with partner consortium schools has helped develop best practice.
- The broad, balanced curriculum provides many opportunities for pupils to make good progress. The different subjects on offer, together with a good range of visits and visitors, reinforce key concepts and build up both academic and vocational skills. Homework helps to broaden skills.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. The school's emphasis on Gospel values, close links with the church and many opportunities for pupils to develop a sense of awe and wonder reinforce spiritual values. Links with Kenya, visits, visitors, art and music ensure good cultural development. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong and enjoy good relationships with each other and adults.
- Subject leaders and middle managers carefully link their planning for improvement to the whole-school improvement plan. Middle managers monitor teaching and planning to reinforce skills development. Their role is increasing as refined performance management arrangements emphasise teachers' accountability for the progress of each class. Regular meetings to discuss pupils' progress consider further steps required towards meeting targets. Robust performance management procedures are based on close monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning and are linked to salary progression.
- The school makes effective use of partnerships with neighbouring primary and secondary schools, local services, the church and community to give pupils additional perspectives.
- The school communicates with parents and carers via a well-developed website, newsletters and meetings with parents and carers. Parents and carers do not yet receive sufficient information about the ways they can become involved and help their children improve their progress. However, the school is examining ways in which it can provide more frequent information to parents and carers and how they can become more actively involved in their children's learning.
- The local authority provides light touch support for this good school and is always available if its services are requested.
- The school has a good capacity to bring about further improvements because teaching is good

and improving, self-evaluation is robust and accurate and high levels of achievement have been maintained.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- brings a variety of skills to the school, including financial, community and educational expertise
- provides the support of critical friends through the work of committees which advise on self-evaluation and improvement plans
- ensures high standards and accountability through effective performance management procedures
- uses the pupil premium funding effectively and flexibly to develop individual pupils, underlining the governing body's commitment to equal opportunities and ensuring that there is no discrimination of any kind.

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	115080
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	403254

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	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Jones (acting chair)
Headteacher	Patricia Wilkie
Date of previous school inspection	12 June 2008
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