

# Chiltern Primary School

Chiltern Way, Duston, Northampton, NN5 6BW

**Inspection dates** 28 February–1 March 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- Most pupils achieve well across the school because teaching and learning are generally good.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress because of effective teaching.
- Children's progress in phonics (the links between letters and sounds) is outstanding in Reception.
- Behaviour is good and pupils feel safe because they know staff care about them.
- The headteacher has successfully tackled issues highlighted in the previous inspection and significantly improved teaching and achievement. Staff work well as a team.
- Governors are equally committed to improvement and use their individual expertise well to support staff. Their regular visits help them to find out for themselves how effectively the school is tackling its priorities.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some independent learning activities in Reception are too easy and prevent children from making good progress.
- Teachers' introductions to lessons and closing remarks at the end are sometimes too long. This slows pupils' learning down and reduces their progress.
- The checks leaders make on teaching are not sharp enough to ensure that all teachers have high expectations of what their pupils can achieve.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed all of the teachers in 15 lessons. Three were joint observations with the headteacher and one of the two assistant headteachers.
- Meetings were held with the pupil council and a group of eight Key Stage 2 pupils, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body, and staff with leadership and management responsibilities.
- A discussion took place with a representative of the local authority to assess the support and advice provided for the school.
- There were 15 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) by the end of the inspection. The inspector took account of these and also sought the views of parents and carers as they arrived at school with their children.
- The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information on pupils' recent and current progress, planning for school improvement, minutes of governing body meetings and records of checks on teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding were scrutinised.
- The breakfast club and after-school club were also visited.

## Inspection team

Joseph Peacock, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Vreta Bagilhole

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school but numbers are increasing. Next September, new buildings provided through a private funding partnership will accommodate an intake of 60 in Reception and 60 in Year 3. Eventually, there will be two classes in each year group.
- The school teaches children in the Early Years Foundation Stage in one Reception class. There is one class for each year group except in Year 2 where a teacher and teaching assistant have been provided to develop a second class which only has five pupils at present.
- The proportion of ethnic minority pupils is increasing and now accounts for one third of all pupils. Twenty per cent of pupils are learning English as an additional language and most of these are at the early stages of learning to speak English.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional funding for children known to be eligible for free school meals, in local authority care, or with a parent in the armed services, is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is broadly average. The proportion who are supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is above average. Eight pupils are on the autistic spectrum.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision for its pupils off site.
- Pupils frequently join or leave the school partway through their primary education. Some have recently arrived in this country.
- Day care, organised and managed by the governing body, is provided each morning and after school.

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

- Ensure that more children achieve the age-related standards in each area of learning by the end of the Reception Year by increasing the level of challenge in activities which children choose for themselves.
- Raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 by ensuring that:
  - the work teachers set meets the needs of pupils of different abilities in all parts of the lesson
  - teachers' explanations and lesson introductions are clear and succinct and hold pupils' attention and interest
  - leaders check teachers' planning and the quality of teaching and learning in lessons regularly to make sure that teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are high enough.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start school with skills and understanding well below those typical for their age. Speaking and listening skills are much lower than usual because of the increasing number of children with limited English. Although most children make good progress, their attainment when they join Year 1 is below the level expected.
- In Reception, most children make outstanding progress in learning letters and their sounds due to the excellent arrangements for the teaching and learning of phonics. Children are taught in relatively small groups with others of similar ability, ensuring that learning is relevant to their individual needs. This is especially helpful for children who speak English as an additional language.
- Children work well together in Reception. In one lesson, for example, the groups working with adults indoors and out made significant progress in phonics, in counting and adding numbers or writing labels when planting flower seeds. However, some of the activities children choose for themselves, such as playing with construction materials or using wheeled toys, lack purpose or challenge and do not hold the children's interest for long. Progress is not as good as it should be in these activities.
- Staff work hard to overcome the significant barriers to learning pupils face. Attainment fluctuates from year to year, but over time is rising in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 and 2 to reach average standards, overall, that are broadly average by the time they leave.
- More-able pupils generally do well but the low starting points pupils bring to the school mean that the proportion of lower attaining pupils who achieve average standards is not yet high enough. The number of average ability pupils who achieve above-average standards is rising, but only slowly.
- In Years 1 and 2, pupils make good progress in reading and writing because of the school's continued emphasis on learning phonic skills. This gives pupils secure strategies for reading and spelling words. Throughout, there are good opportunities to write in lessons, with pupils often using computers. Parents who listen to their children read often are helping to raise standards.
- Standards are rising in mathematics because all pupils know what their targets are. The regular use of practical tasks by teachers, such as estimating and measuring the field and playground, and using computers to write number sentences are ensuring that these targets are met by the great majority of pupils.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good. The expertise of teachers and teaching assistants, who work closely with individuals or small groups of pupils, makes sure that all achieve well. Pupils who are on the autistic spectrum, for example, are fully integrated in lessons and usually have individual support with their tasks. This enables them to make good progress.
- The effective assessment of pupils' language skills quickly identifies which pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds need extra support to learn to speak English. This includes many of those who join the school during the course of Key Stage 1 and 2. A teacher with specialist knowledge and training provides daily support for these pupils in small groups. This support successfully

promotes skills in reading, writing and mathematics, as well as developing pupils' understanding and use of English.

- The school has used its additional funding to provide individual help for pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium. This has been effective, and most of these pupils make good progress. There is now no significant gap between the attainment in English or mathematics of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and others in the school. This group of pupils also progresses well when compared with similar pupils nationally.

### **The quality of teaching is good**

- Teachers mostly have high expectations of pupils. Most use assessment information effectively to match tasks in reading, writing and mathematics closely to pupils' different ability levels. At its best, teaching ensures that there is a good pace to learning. Teaching assistants are particularly helpful in ensuring that pupils of all abilities succeed in completing their work.
- In Reception, teachers and teaching assistants ensure that children have the support they need to learn new skills. The teaching of phonics is a key strength, enabling all to learn letters and their sounds quickly. Staff and volunteer helpers are very caring and attentive, ensuring that all children enjoy their time in this class.
- Teachers make frequent and accurate checks on pupils' rates of progress. This is much improved since the previous inspection. Those who are falling behind are quickly identified and supported. All pupils know what level they are working towards from assessment sheets in the front of their exercise books, and what they need to do to achieve it.
- Marking is thorough and gives pupils clear guidance on how to improve their work. This has been improved significantly since the previous inspection.

Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because their individual learning needs are recognised and catered for in teachers' lesson planning. Skilled and conscientious teaching assistants make sure that pupils on the autistic spectrum or those who speak English as an additional language are well supported, both in the classroom and outside it.

- In a few lessons, teaching requires improvement. In these, teachers talk for too long to the whole class and some pupils lose concentration as the introduction is either too hard or too easy for them. Lengthy introductions and ends of sessions that are not relevant for different groups of pupils mean that, in some lessons, some pupils do not make the progress they should.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Pupils are well behaved. This adds to the family atmosphere in school. 'Everyone who works here is welcoming' was a typical comment from pupils. All enjoy attending the breakfast and after-school clubs.
- Pupils are safe and enjoy coming to school. Attendance is average and there have been few exclusions in the past two years. Parents spoken to during the inspection agree that their children enjoy school and feel safe. 'It is a hidden gem with a village school atmosphere in town' was a typical view.

- Pupils are rarely concerned about bullying. All pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying, such as making racist comments, name-calling and misuse of mobile phones or emails. The school takes care to ensure that pupils who do not speak English confidently have someone who can translate their concerns and make them known to staff.
- Behaviour is consistently well managed and any cases of inappropriate behaviour are normally dealt with immediately and effectively by staff. Pupils greatly appreciate the work of the learning mentor who, they say, listens to their concerns and helps to sort out any disagreements quickly.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The effective leadership and management of the headteacher and two assistant headteachers have created a strong staff team. Together with staff, previous issues have been successfully tackled. More recently, challenges presented by increasing numbers of pupils, including many for whom English is an additional language, have been met. As a result, all groups of pupils are making good progress.
- Senior staff and subject leaders are fully involved in the process of checking pupils' progress on a regular basis. Any pupils who are falling behind in any subject are identified each half term and supported. Staff are working as a team to enable even more pupils to attain higher standards.
- Teaching is checked in detail through half-termly lesson observations, helping to make sure that it is effective in promoting learning. However, these checks are not always sharp enough to ensure that teachers have consistently high expectations of pupils in all parts of lessons.
- The leadership and management of provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are good. Parents and carers are fully informed about progress and involved in regular reviews. Most are pleased with the learning support provided for their children by staff and specialists from a wide range of other agencies, such as educational psychologists.
- Leaders and the governing body make sure that progression through the pay scale is closely linked to teachers' performance. The *Teachers' Standards* are used effectively to judge the quality of teaching.
- The local authority provided effective support during the period of marked change when the school took significant numbers of newcomers and pupils who were learning English as an additional language. The local authority now checks the school's performance each term to see that all groups continue to make good progress.
- The good range of after-school clubs in sport and music contributes well to pupils' achievement and to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Religious studies, topics covering world religions and well-established links with Gambia and Uganda give pupils a good understanding of other cultures and faiths.
- The school fosters good relations with parents and carers. Those who responded to Parent View were very positive about their children's experience of school. All agreed that staff treat every pupil equally, and they appreciate the family atmosphere. Discrimination is not tolerated in any form.

**■ The governance of the school:**

- The governing body has reviewed and revised its role to fit in with changes to the school intake. They are keen to use their individual expertise to gather evidence from monitoring visits and help the school to raise standards. Through their frequent visits, they know how good teaching is and how the school's performance compares to that of other schools nationally. All insist on being kept fully informed by staff and the headteacher. They are beginning to use their monitoring visits to check much more closely on the school's progress with its identified priorities. The performance of the headteacher and all teachers is checked using information about pupils' progress and the standards achieved, and governors take these into account when determining pay and promotion. Governors are appropriately trained. All are expected to attend training sessions. Financial resources, including pupil premium funding, are well managed and their impact checked. The governing body has a good knowledge of child protection and safeguarding matters, and all current national requirements relating to safeguarding are met.
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## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	121924
<b>Local authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	402065

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	215
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sylvia Lake
<b>Headteacher</b>	Penny Howell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 September 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01604 753830
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