

# Epping Upland Church of England Primary School

Carters Lane, Epping Green, Epping, CM16 6QJ

**Inspection dates** 7 – 8 March 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Teaching is consistently good and some is outstanding. Pupils of all abilities achieve well and make good progress from their low starting points.
- Behaviour is exemplary. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They work hard in lessons, are keen to learn and say that they feel very safe. They are cared for very well.
- Teachers know their pupils well. They plan stimulating activities that help all to succeed.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy reading; they have many opportunities to use and apply their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects.
- The imaginative range of subjects and topics offered by the school provides a wide range of exciting opportunities for pupils to learn and develop their knowledge, understanding and skills. It promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very effectively; this is a strength of the school.
- Leaders, governors and managers at all levels are committed to providing the best education possible for all pupils. They have a clear and accurate understanding of the strengths of teaching and achievement and of how they can be further improved
- Parents have positive views about the school and agree with their children that the school is a safe place in which to learn.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Variations in the quality of teaching mean that the most able pupils do not always make as much progress as their abilities indicate they are capable of.
- Some members of staff do not consistently apply the school's marking policy to help pupils to improve.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 10 lessons, of which four were joint observations, two with the headteacher and two with the deputy headteacher. In addition, the inspector made a number of other shorter visits to lessons. All teachers were observed. The inspector listened to pupils read.
- Discussions were held with the chairman of the governing body, staff and representatives from the local authority.
- Formal and informal discussions were held with pupils about their work, their learning and their behaviour in the school.
- The inspector attended an assembly, observed break times and looked at the school's website.
- A wide range of documentation was looked at, including school self-evaluation, the school's baseline data, assessment data from the monitoring of pupils' progress, improvement plans and governing body minutes. School policies, performance management documentation and records relating to behaviour, safety and attendance, together with the school's safeguarding procedures, were also evaluated.
- The inspector took account of the 29 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the views of several parents who spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- Questionnaires from 19 staff were considered.

## Inspection team

Susan Thomas-Pounce, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. There are five classes in the school. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in the Reception class. There are four other classes made up of, Years 1 and 2, Years 2 and 3, Years 4 and 5, and Years 5 and 6.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. One other sizeable group includes Gypsy/Roma Travellers.
- The proportions of pupils of minority ethnic heritage, those who speak English as an additional language and those at the early stage of learning English are below the national averages.
- A lower than average proportion (14%) of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs and are supported at school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is just below average.
- The proportion of pupils arriving at or leaving the school at times other than the start or end of the school year is above average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has built an extension to meet the increasing numbers on roll.
- The school does not use any alternative provision involving off-site education for pupils.

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

- Improve teaching so that it becomes outstanding and raise pupils' achievement further by:
  - ensuring the most able pupils are set work that is difficult enough to make them really think and which enables them to achieve the highest levels
  - improving the quality and effectiveness of teachers' marking by developing consistency in practice so that all teachers give pupils clear guidance on how to improve and provide time in lessons for them to act on it.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Class size on entry varies significantly from year to year in this small school but, generally, children start school in the Reception class with skills that are below those typically expected for their age. They settle well and are happy, safe and well motivated.
- The good teaching in the Reception class ensures pupils make a good start to school. They join Year 1 with skills and understanding which are broadly in line with what would normally be expected for their age. The school's own tracking data and work in pupils' books and displayed on walls confirm that pupils make good progress as they move through the school.
- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is in line with the national average and the school's data on current pupils' performance indicates that the current Year 6 pupils are working at average, or higher, levels. This is the result of the good teaching found throughout the school and means that all pupils are being well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- Standards in reading are above average at the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2. The school has successfully used a programme to support the learning of letters and sounds (phonics) in regular sessions. Pupils are able to blend letters well as they read and transfer this skill into their writing. An example of this was seen in the Reception class where at the close of the phonics session, a child proudly showed the class the complete sentence she had written. The teacher celebrated the achievement effectively, noting that not only were the newly learnt words used but all were spelt correctly.
- Writing standards are good but a little lower than in reading. Pupils in a Year 5/6 class are developing their writing skills well and are able to use their learning to edit their work to make their stories more exciting.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics. In a Year 4/5 numeracy lesson, progress for all pupils was good because pupils worked independently on calculating proportions using a range of resources. Any weaknesses in their understanding were quickly identified and resolved by the teacher. Teaching assistants work effectively in classrooms and successfully support those pupils who need such help.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs attain higher standards than similar pupils across the country and make good progress from their starting points. This group of pupils do well because their individual difficulties are quickly identified. Good support and intervention from school staff and outside agencies are swiftly put in place.
- The small number of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium receive additional support as required. The use of the additional funding to increase the number of staff to support these pupils and others with their behaviour and emotional needs is helping to remove barriers to learning, enabling these pupils to improve their attainment and to close the gap with their peers. Pupils in receipt of free school meals attained results that put them no more than a term behind their classmates in English and mathematics. Gypsy and Roma pupils made good progress achieving higher than their peers nationally.

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**The quality of teaching is good**

- Most teaching is at least good but not enough of it is outstanding to ensure that all pupils make the rapid and sustained progress necessary to raise standards further. Teachers have high expectations of pupils. They use a variety of methods and ways to challenge, motivate and interest pupils and ensure that they develop a range of skills.
- Good teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures that achievement is good. Children in the Reception class are given a good balance of interesting and exciting activities to choose from, both indoors and out.
- Teachers throughout the school make good use of the 'Free Friday' programme which helps to promote high-quality talk for learning. This was seen when pupils put 'post it' notes on a model dolls house to illustrate their ideas on how they might reduce waste in their own homes and save energy.
- Numeracy is threaded through the topic-based work of the school. This imaginative approach to learning not only develops pupils' individual confidence but also their creative thinking. Teachers ensure pupils' learning is well supported by clear learning intentions and pupils often self-assess their work.
- During lessons and assemblies, pupils are fully involved in their learning and imaginative planning ensures the very effective development of spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills and knowledge. For example, questions in an assembly challenged pupils to reflect on the impact of global warming across the world. Pupils showed a high level of empathy and sensitivity to eco issues as the younger children enthusiastically sang a song about 'Polar Bears' who find 'ice is nice'
- Teachers make lessons interesting and they ask questions which encourage pupils to explain their ideas. However, teachers do not make enough use of the answers pupils give to adapt lessons so that they fully engage and challenge pupils, especially those who are more able.
- Pupils' work is regularly marked and this marking helpfully tells pupils how successful they have been in their work. This feature is stronger in some year groups than others. Across the school it is used less well to tell pupils how to improve their work and teachers give pupils too little time to act upon any advice they give.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**

- Parents, pupils, staff and governors share the same, very positive, views of pupils' behaviour. Pupils are extremely well behaved at all times. Their attitudes to learning are exemplary. Pupils are proud of their school and enjoy all aspects of school life. They compete to get house-points for good behaviour and helpful actions.
  - Pupils of all ages work extremely well together in pairs or small groups, discussing what they have to do very sensibly and helping each other over any difficulties. Pupils respond extremely well to the excellent spiritual, moral and social guidance they receive.
  - Pupils join in school activities very readily and thoroughly enjoy their assemblies and the regular opportunities for collective worship. During the inspection the quality of singing by the school was excellent and the experience did much to boost the self-esteem of all those participating.
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- Records held by the school show that poor behaviour is almost unknown. The school has very clear procedures for managing pupils' behaviour, which teachers follow closely. Pupils know what is expected of them. Consequently, the school is a calm and orderly place.
- Discussions with pupils show that they have a good awareness of the different forms of bullying. Pupils say that incidents of bullying are rare but that, if it occurs, they have full confidence in staff to care for them and keep them safe. Pupils are adamant that they are safe at all times. They know how to keep themselves safe and are aware of potential dangers presented, for example, when using the internet.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and are consistently punctual to lessons. Parents who responded to the online questionnaire and every parent who spoke to the inspector said they would have no hesitation in recommending the school to others. Attendance is average but improving.

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

- The headteacher's determination and effective management have enabled the school to develop well since the previous inspection and all the issues raised have been thoroughly addressed. Staff share the headteacher's vision, are strongly committed to raising standards and expect the best from their pupils throughout the school.
  - The headteacher, staff and governors, make sure that all pupils from every background have an equal opportunity to succeed. Gaps in achievement are picked up early through the school tracking system and appropriate interventions put in place. These are reviewed regularly by school leaders and altered as needed to ensure no child falls behind.
  - The school has a strong sense of community. There are positive relationships between the school and parents are very impressed with the school, its leaders and staff.
  - There are well-planned arrangements for overseeing teachers' effectiveness and making sure this is linked to salary progression. Senior leaders monitor teaching and hold staff accountable for pupils' progress. The school is working closely with another school on a 'Good to Outstanding' programme to improve the overall quality of teaching.
  - Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong, being well supported by the exciting and imaginative opportunities used to promote learning. Learning is also enhanced through extra music, art and sport. Strong partnerships with the local church and other schools broaden pupils' horizons as well as enabling them to participate in fund-raising for local and international charities.
  - School leaders and governors work closely with, and welcome the support offered to them by, the local authority and the School improvement adviser.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - Governors have a clear strategic vision about how to help the school continue its journey of improvement. They are knowledgeable about the school as a result of regular visits and detailed briefings from the headteacher. Governors work closely with the headteacher and staff, providing strong support and challenge regarding all aspects of the school's work. Governors are well informed about the attainment and progress of all year groups on a termly basis and have a clear picture of how well pupils do in relation to national averages. They
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ensure that the school meets its statutory responsibilities, including those for safeguarding. They effectively hold the school to account and ensure that there is a clear link between pupil achievement, the new teachers' standards and any salary progression. They are regularly updated on the training needs of staff and well trained themselves. The resources committee oversees the school budget and makes sure that pupil premium funding is used well to support the achievement of this group.

## 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>	115097
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	403255

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>	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>	138
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Colin Tankard
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sarah Hurwood
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 March 2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	01992 572087
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