

# Radwinter Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Water Lane, Radwinter, Saffron Walden, CB10 2TX

**Inspection dates** 3–4 October 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.

- Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Attainment is rising and progress rates are increasing across the school. They are especially strong in Key Stage 2.
- Teaching is always at least good. It is sometimes outstanding.
- Literacy and numeracy skills are taught well and reinforced in other subjects.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because they are well supported by highly skilled learning support assistants.
- Pupils feel very safe, and their parents and carers agree.
- Behaviour is exemplary, as shown by pupils' care for each other and the enthusiasm with which they approach learning.
- The headteacher has worked closely with all staff, including subject leaders, and with governors and parents, to improve teaching and raise attainment across the school.
- Governors have a well-developed understanding of the school and its needs. They have taken on training to understand what the school's data are telling them.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching and support staff do not have enough opportunities to observe and share best practice in classroom skills within the school and with other schools.
- Marking does not always refer to pupils' learning targets and teachers do not consistently ensure that pupils respond to the teachers' indications about what to do next to improve and reach those targets.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out by one inspector.
- The inspector visited eight lessons taught by four staff. He also observed a range of activities to support individuals or small groups of pupils. Three joint observations of teaching were conducted with the headteacher.
- The inspector listened to pupils reading.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, members of the governing body, staff, the School Improvement Partner and a group of pupils. He spoke with parents in the playground before school. The inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority by telephone during the inspection.
- In planning and carrying out the inspection, the inspector took account of the 55 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and responses to an inspection questionnaire from 14 staff.
- The inspector observed the school's work. He also looked at the school's development plan, data on pupils' progress and achievement, records of the monitoring and evaluation of teaching, a wide range of policies and procedures, and arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils. The inspector attended an assembly and the school's harvest festival in the local church.

## Inspection team

Michael Sutherland-Harper, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. It has recently increased in size.
- The very large majority of the pupils come from White British backgrounds.
- No pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below the national average, as is the proportion who are supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is below average. This is additional government funding for particular groups of pupils, including those known to be eligible for free school meals and children in local authority care.
- The headteacher has been in post since April 2012. She was acting headteacher from September 2010.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Raise the quality of teaching and learning to outstanding by:
  - increasing opportunities for all staff to observe and share best practice in classroom skills within this and other schools
  - ensuring that all marking consistently refers to pupils' targets over time and that teachers follow up to ensure that all pupils act promptly to correct mistakes and act on the advice they are given.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Attainment on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage is in line with, and sometimes slightly below, age-related expectations. Cohorts are small so that there is some variation between years but children make good progress generally. The 2012 cohort contained a wide ability range, including a relatively high proportion of children with special educational needs. This was the reason why the normally high results dipped. They have risen again in 2013.
- Children show strengths in number skills and in personal and social development. Reading and writing skills have been weaker over time. The school has refined its teaching of the links between letters and sounds (phonics) to address this issue. In a Reception and Year 1 lesson, the teacher used a variety of approaches, including beating out word patterns to a rhythm, interactive games and passing around a large plastic ball marked with individual sounds, to successfully reinforce skills for reading and writing.
- Results in the end of Year 1 phonics screening check were above those nationally in 2012 and were strong in 2013 as well. Key Stage 1 results rose in 2013 after a dip in 2012, especially in mathematics, when the small cohort included a number of pupils working below age-expected levels. In order to address this, the school has organised work in smaller groups within classes in numeracy and other subjects. Current school data indicate that standards for pupils in the current Year 2 are on track to be similar to those in 2013.
- Progress and attainment in Key Stage 2 are strong. For example, in 2012, Key Stage 2 results for the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 were in the top 20% of the country. Results in 2013 were high as well, continuing a trend of results significantly above national levels in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Reading is developed well. Pupils make good progress as they move through the school. They read with fluency, at least at the level expected for their age in Key Stage 1. They are able to break down words into letters and sounds, but with some variation in skills, which the school is now successfully addressing. In Key Stage 2, pupils develop the ability to read even more expressively, are ready to predict outcomes and increasingly read above age-expected levels.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to their peers because their needs are accurately and quickly assessed. They are well supported by highly skilled learning support assistants.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium are small in number but make steady progress as they move through the school so that, by the time they leave, progress is similar to their peers in English and mathematics. They are helped to progress well through booster classes and one-to-one support.
- Pupils enjoy school as shown by their engagement in lessons across the school and the way in which they talk with enthusiasm about subjects and work on particular topics.

### The quality of teaching is good

- All of the teaching observed during the inspection was at least good and some was outstanding.
- Teachers and learning support assistants work well together in all classes to ensure that pupils

make at least good progress in all lessons.

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage benefit from teaching which links practical work with opportunities to explore and develop indoors and out and individually. Consequently, positive attitudes to learning are developed from the earliest stages onwards.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and make regular and effective use of questions to check understanding and include all pupils in activities. Staff adjust their planning and methods readily to best match work to pupils' abilities in lessons. In a Year 2 and 3 mathematics lesson, the teacher used a variety of resources, including mirrors and folded paper, to draw pupils into an enquiry about lines of symmetry. She accompanied this with a demonstration of what was required at all stages of the lesson in terms which pupils clearly understood, frequently checking on pupils' progress. At the same time, the learning support assistant worked effectively and closely with a small group of pupils on similar work, carefully adjusted to meet their precise learning needs.
- Pupils have good opportunities to work independently and with each other, as they did when weighing objects in a Year 4 science lesson. The school prides itself on linking classroom opportunities with its work as a 'forest school' in this kind of independent learning activity.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because highly trained learning support staff work closely with them, in and out of lessons, to ensure that individual needs are fully met. This work is facilitated by the close, trusting relationships between staff and pupils. As a result, there is equality of opportunity in all classrooms and no sign of discrimination of any kind.
- More-able pupils are well challenged because teachers plan for engaging tasks, such as writing about your imaginary dragon in a Year 4 lesson, which are open-ended and afford rich opportunities for the use of imagination. Such activities also contribute to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Literacy and numeracy skills are taught well in English and mathematics. They are reinforced through learning in other subjects.

Marking and assessment procedures are well developed. Marking is regular and often provides pupils with good guidance on the next steps they need to take to move their learning on. However, teachers do not always follow up their marking to ensure that pupils make corrections. This means that errors are sometimes repeated. Most books contain forms listing target levels but these are inconsistently filled in to show when pupils have reached them or to show the progress pupils have made towards those targets.

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

- Behaviour frequently outstanding in class and around the school. It is never less than good. Pupils are polite. They are proud to help adults and each other. Pupils feel honoured to serve as playground 'buddies' who look after others.
- Pupils are very aware of the school's behaviour policy with its clear emphasis on rewards and sanctions. Their respect for the rewards was very evident in an assembly conducted by the headteacher during the inspection, where many pupils came proudly forward to talk about their achievements in and out of school. There, as elsewhere, they showed behaviour of the highest standards.

- Pupils feel safe. Their parents agree. Parents who replied to the online survey were virtually unanimous in recommending the school. Pupils feel that behaviour is good and that there is little or no bullying. Any incidents which arise are quickly sorted out. Pupils say that there is always someone to whom they can turn if they have a problem of any kind.
- Pupils are aware of the different forms of bullying, such as name-calling and cyber-bullying. They have been trained to stay safe when using the internet and in other everyday situations which they might encounter. For example, behaviour and attention to safety were exemplary as pupils crossed roads en route to the harvest festival at the local church. Not only did they watch out for themselves but for each other as well. They were quiet and attentive whenever instructions were given.
- Pupils enjoy attending school, as evidenced by the large number attending breakfast and after-school clubs, and serving enthusiastically on the school council. Their enthusiasm for learning is a direct result of the interesting way in which subjects are taught.
- In a Year 4 science lesson, pupils took every opportunity to find other items which they could weigh to extend the range of objects which the teacher had given them. They did this without any unnecessary noise, discussing and confirming their observations with each other. In addition, in an assembly, pupils demonstrated exemplary respect and attitudes towards pupils receiving awards for their achievements.
- Attendance is generally above average, with very little lateness or persistent absence, thanks to the stringent measures which the school has put in place.

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

- The headteacher has a clear vision of the school as a place where all pupils learn and achieve so that they are 'ready to fly'. The headteacher leads by example. She has worked closely and successfully with all staff, parents and governors to share and implement that vision. Parent and staff questionnaires showed high levels of satisfaction with the school.
- The school development plan is closely focused on continually raising achievement and the quality of teaching. Subject leaders work well together, expressing pride in the dialogue between staff. They have taken on an increased share in the monitoring and evaluation of teaching to ensure that it is always at least good so that pupils are now increasingly exceeding expected progress rates across the school.
- Teachers are judged against the national *Teachers' Standards*. Training to develop skills is a high priority and is regularly made available to ensure that staff are up to date with the latest thinking and have increasing skills to take learning forward in the classroom. Leaders recognise that staff classroom skills could be further developed if these skills were shared even more across the school and in work with other schools.
- Leaders monitor the quality of teaching. The headteacher and governing body ensure that pay rises for teaching staff are tied to their pupils' performance.
- The curriculum offers a broad and balanced range of subjects. The school is currently preparing in advance for the new curriculum which will be coming in shortly at national level. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of visits, visitors and trips, drawing on well-developed links with the local community. A close focus on reading, writing and mathematics helps to ensure that these aspects are developed across other subjects whenever possible.

- The school is planning to use the new funding for physical education to train all staff through more work with a local coach who comes in, at present, once a week as part of the school's links with a local secondary school. Pupils participate keenly in sports activities, amongst others, as these form a good proportion of the very well attended after school clubs.
- The local authority has worked closely with the school to support the new headteacher and ensure that progress rates continue to rise.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Right and wrong are carefully considered, pupils are expected to get on well with each other and be interested in the exploring ideas and their own surroundings. As a result, pupils are developing into responsible citizens, keenly aware of the world around them. This was exemplified in a Year 5 and 6 lesson, where pupils were asked to identify how they would promote equality if they had limitless ability to change the world for the better.
- The school has a good capacity to improve because of clear-sighted leadership. Leaders' determination to raise the quality of teaching to the highest levels is now bearing fruit through regular staff training and increasingly regular monitoring and evaluation of pupils' progress.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors have a good understanding of the school, its strengths and areas for development. They have been well trained in the use and understanding of data to follow rates of progress. Committed to the school, they are also linked to subjects and attached to classes, which they follow up the school. As a result, they are aware of the quality of teaching across the school. They visit regularly and have challenged the school whenever necessary; for example, about possible expansion and the maintenance of high standards. They know the amount of the pupil premium, how it is spent and the impact it is having through, for example, small-group and one-to-one interventions.

## 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>	115191
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	425371

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 aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	116
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Amanda Rivers
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kate Hockley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 October 2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	01799 599248
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