

Roxwell Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

The Street, Roxwell, Chelmsford, CM1 4PE

Inspection dates 24–25 September 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Roxwell is a 'small school with a big heart.' The school maintains a friendly, purposeful atmosphere. Pupils feel valued as individuals and part of a family community. The well-balanced curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- The headteacher, well supported by an able and well-informed governing body, has worked effectively to ensure continual improvements in the quality of teaching and the achievement of all pupils. Parents, rightly, have great confidence in the school and its staff.
- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and particularly mathematics.
- Pupils enjoy school, where they feel safe and well cared for. They behave well and get along with one another.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. They plan lessons carefully to cater for the wide range of abilities in mixed-year classes. Planned activities interest and engage pupils well. Teachers assess pupils' work regularly.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is well managed. Children quickly develop confidence and learn how to do things for themselves within a caring atmosphere. They experience a wide range of stimulating activities and make good progress in all areas of learning.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' progress in writing is not as good as in reading and mathematics.
- When marking written work, teachers do not consistently provide pupils with clear guidance on how to reach higher standards.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector, together with the headteacher, observed pupils of all ages engaged in a range of activities in different subjects. He also looked at pupils' written work in all classes.
- Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body and one other governor, the headteacher and other school leaders. Discussions took place with a representative of the local authority and the school's external advisor.
- The inspector spoke to a group of pupils and informally with other pupils in lessons and around the school. He listened to pupils reading and talked to them about their reading habits.
- The inspector examined several of the school's documents. These included: the school's own evaluation of its performance and its improvement plan; information about pupils' progress and the support given to disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs; evidence about the quality of teaching; and records relating to behaviour, safeguarding and attendance.
- The inspector took account of 27 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), including 17 written comments, and the views expressed by parents as they arrived at school. He analysed 15 questionnaires returned by staff.

Inspection team

James McVeigh, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Roxwell is smaller than the average-sized primary school. Children start school in the Reception class. There are three other classes, each containing two year groups.
- Almost all pupils come from a White British background. There are very few pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium (extra government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or in local authority care) is similar to the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action plus, a statement of special educational needs or the new education, health and care plan is above the national average. The proportion supported through school action is below the national average.
- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching further by ensuring that when teachers mark pupils' work they consistently provide guidance on how pupils can improve it.
- Accelerate pupils' progress in writing by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to write at length and in a wider range of styles
 - raising the profile of writing in the school so that pupils' achievements in writing are celebrated as much as those in reading.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and governors share a clear and ambitious vision for the school, focused sharply on improving teaching and learning. The headteacher is a very positive role model for staff and pupils showing professionalism, fairness and determination. The school has acted effectively on the recommendations in the last inspection report: attendance and the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage have improved.
- Roxwell is a fully inclusive school. All pupils, including those with disabilities and special educational needs, are well integrated into the Roxwell 'family.' There is a firm commitment to equality of opportunity for all and all forms of discrimination are discouraged. Staff morale is high: they feel part of a successful and caring team and are proud of their school. Parents speak highly of the welcoming atmosphere of the school and accessibility of staff, how happy their children are there and how well they are doing.
- The quality of teaching has improved as a result of leaders' regular checks on lessons, teachers' planning and pupils' work, and through talking to pupils. Pupils' progress is followed closely and each pupil sets targets for improvement with their teacher and the headteacher. Teachers themselves are set challenging targets for improvement each year, including the achievement of the pupils they teach. Suitable opportunities for further training are made available for teachers and teaching assistants.
- The school is working collaboratively with other schools nearby on such things as assessment and teaching skills. Roxwell has led in several areas, including raising the standard of phonics teaching and the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Leaders have evaluated the school's strengths and areas for improvement accurately and produced a clear and concise plan for further improvement. Other managers, such as those in charge of subjects, are helped to develop the necessary leadership skills (including through training) and take on increasingly important roles. Child protection issues are handled quickly, effectively and sensitively.
- The school has planned for a broad and balanced range of subjects, including a sufficient amount of teaching time on literacy and numeracy. However, writing does not have the same high profile as reading, for which there are reading challenges and recognition in assemblies of pupils who read regularly. There are good opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through lessons, assemblies, trips, for example to theatres and museums, and strong links with a school in Africa. Pupils are helped to develop a good understanding of British values, for example, democracy through the operation of the school and class councils.
- Further enrichment to pupils' experiences comes from a good range of clubs, including numerous sports clubs. Leaders have used the primary school sports funding effectively to develop teachers' expertise in coaching sport and to improve pupils' enjoyment of sport and their health. Increasing numbers of pupils participate in regular physical activity. The breakfast and after-school clubs offer pupils a safe and sociable atmosphere and a simple meal.
- The local authority offers effective but 'light-touch' support, recognising the school's strengths and the improvements it has made.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are fully aware of the extent of their duties. They have a good range of skills relevant to their roles and augment them further with training. They receive concise reports from the headteacher and arrange regular visits to check on the school's work. Governors understand information about the performance of teachers and pupils. They check that additional funding is used effectively and that any underperformance is tackled promptly.
 - The governing body is closely involved in determining the school's development and holds leaders firmly to account. Governors set challenging targets for the headteacher and make regular checks on progress.
 - Governors are raising their profile with parents and are now gathering parental views more effectively

to better inform their decisions.

- Governors make sure safeguarding requirements are fully in place.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils say that misbehaviour in lessons or around the school is rare: an observation that parents, staff and governors agree with. Pupils know that their good behaviour helps them to achieve well at school. They know the school's rules, rewards and sanctions and are keen to earn a 'dojo' in the ongoing competition for house points.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They respond well to their teachers and settle quickly in lessons and are eager to learn and contribute. They share resources sensibly and are helpful in distributing and collecting materials for activities.
- Pupils get on well with each other. They usually listen considerately to one another's ideas and are polite and courteous when moving around the school. Just occasionally, some pupils lose concentration and do not try as hard as they could.
- The school's insistence on good behaviour and that no pupil should be excluded from an activity is effective. Pupils are learning to respect others who are different or have different opinions. At playtimes, all pupils had someone to play with or talk to.
- School records show very few incidents of misbehaviour in recent years. The few that have occurred have been analysed carefully and handled effectively. No pupils have been excluded for at least the last three years.
- Pupils know what bullying is and know the different forms in which it can manifest itself. They state that bullying in any form is extremely uncommon.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Visitors are appropriately vetted and the site itself is secure. Pupils say they feel safe at school.
- Pupils have learned about health and safety. They recognise the healthy diet they get at school and know that regular exercise is necessary. They are aware of such things as road and fire safety and 'stranger danger' from visitors like the police and fire services.
- The school's focus on improving attendance and punctuality is effective. Attendance has improved over the last three years and has been above average for two. Similarly, punctuality is good, in part due to the breakfast club.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers expect good behaviour and high work rates from all pupils. They plan activities that engage and motivate pupils well. For example, a teacher, using real materials, followed exactly the sandwich-making instructions of pupils in Years 3 and 4. In this good-humoured demonstration pupils gained a better understanding of how to make instruction lists.
- Relationships are very good in all classes. Pupils like their teachers and enjoy learning. Teachers manage behaviour well and pupils respond to instructions with little fuss. Classrooms offer good climates for learning, being well ordered with bright displays, including pupils' achievements and key learning points.
- Teachers ensure all pupils are involved in activities, for example by encouraging pupils to discuss their answers and by giving the necessary attention to pupils of all abilities. Teachers use their subject knowledge effectively to question pupils so they have to think harder, such as when Year 5 and 6 pupils had to explain how they would go about solving a problem in mathematics.

- Teachers plan carefully to cater for the wide range of abilities in the mixed-year classes, including ensuring higher ability pupils are suitably stretched. The role of teaching assistants is carefully considered so they have the greatest impact on pupils' learning. Teaching assistants support their groups or individual pupils well, showing good skills in questioning and recording pupils' achievements and areas for further improvement clearly.
- Teachers assess pupils' progress regularly, including by marking their written work and through checking the accuracy of assessments with colleagues at their own and other schools. Good use is made of assessment information in planning future activities or giving homework. When marking pupils' written work, teachers use praise well to celebrate what pupils have done. However, the quality and regularity of advice on how to improve their work are not consistent.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Although there is some variation in the progress in different year groups, in part due to the small numbers of pupils, overall, pupils are making securely good progress throughout Key Stages 1 and 2 in reading and writing and they achieve particularly well in mathematics.
- The school's small year groups, often less than 10 pupils, make meaningful comparisons with national performance figures difficult. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has been improving over the last three years. The most notable improvement has been in mathematics. In 2014, school data show that attainment in reading and writing was broadly average, but above average in mathematics. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 shows a similar pattern.
- Pupils quickly grasp basic concepts in numeracy, such as number facts and times tables, and develop sound techniques for calculations. They apply their skills in other subjects, such as science and physical education, and in problem-solving which helps to maintain their interest in and enjoyment of mathematics.
- Phonics (the sounds letters make) is taught well. Pupils in Year 1 have performed above the national average in the phonics screening checks of the last three years. Pupils use their good phonics skills well and quickly become competent readers. The school encourages a love of reading, for example through the use of reading diaries, reading challenges and celebrating pupils' achievements in assemblies. Consequently, pupils enjoy reading and read often at school and at home.
- The most able pupils make good progress in all subjects and attain standards above national averages, particularly in mathematics. Teachers provide very challenging activities for them in mathematics and suitable extension work in other subjects that helps them to maintain their high pace of learning.
- Pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs make good progress. The school identifies their needs at an early stage, making good use of external specialists to recognise and provide effective planning and support. Teachers and teaching assistants provide extra, and for some pupils, intensive support through a range of well-planned and well-targeted activities.
- Disadvantaged pupils, some of whom also have special educational needs, are supported well through a good range of activities, for example one-to-one tuition, in-class support by teaching assistants and funding for trips and clubs. As a consequence, most make rapid progress and begin to catch up with their classmates. There were too few disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 to meaningfully compare the attainment gaps between them and similar pupils nationally in 2013 and 2014.
- In the last three years pupils' attainment in writing by the time they leave school, although broadly similar to national averages, has not been as high as in reading and mathematics. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to write extensively, particularly in Key Stage 1, and in Key Stage 2 there is too great a focus on writing stories at the expense of writing in a wider range of styles.

The early years provision**is good**

- Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children begin with skills and understanding that are broadly typical for their age except in communication and language and physical development, where they are lower than typical. They make rapid progress in the caring atmosphere, particularly in speaking and listening and in developing fine and gross motor skills. A higher proportion than nationally reach a good level of development and children are well prepared for Year 1.
- Children quickly become self-confident and socialise with others well. Most children follow instructions readily and know the class routines. For example, most children wash their hands and collect and eat their snacks sensibly and with little help.
- Staff have a good understanding of how children learn. They plan activities, inside and outside, based on each individual's ability that successfully promote children's personal development and skills. Phonics is taught well. Children who are disabled or have special educational needs are well supported and suitably challenged to make similar progress to their classmates.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed well. Children's progress is followed closely and their achievements are carefully recorded in their learning journals. Checking by other schools ensures teachers' assessments are accurate. Safeguarding has a suitably high priority.
- The Reception area is bright, well organised and designed to stimulate children's imagination. Displays and activities effectively promote children's early skills in reading, writing and numeracy. Adults have made the best use of the relatively small outside space.

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	115118
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	448670

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	87
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Beth Miller
Headteacher	Claire Newson
Date of previous school inspection	27 April 2010
Telephone number	01245 248229
Fax number	01245 248229
Email address	admin@roxwell.essex.sch.uk

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