

Castle Camps Church of England (Controlled) Primary School

Church Lane, Castle Camps, Cambridge, CB21 4TH

Inspection dates

24–25 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	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		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Inspired, visionary leadership from the headteacher has transformed this school. Weaknesses identified at the last inspection have been tackled head-on. It is now securely good.
- New appointments, intensive staff training and the expectation that only good is good enough have strengthened teaching. It is regularly good and at times, outstanding.
- Refurbished classrooms, new resources and a relentless drive for improvement have helped to raise pupils' achievement.
- In 2014, all pupils in Years 2 and 6 met or exceeded expectations in reading, writing and mathematics. Good teaching and rigorous monitoring ensured that every pupil, including those identified as disadvantaged, disabled or having special educational needs achieved well.
- Current data show that this improvement is set to continue. High standards are expected again this year.
- Strong leadership and systematic teaching of phonics (letters and sounds) in the Early Years Foundation Stage give children an excellent start. Standards in reading and writing are high.
- Teachers' good use of daily phonics and guided reading sessions, and more systematic teaching of mathematics, ensure that pupils quickly secure good literacy and numeracy skills. A broad curriculum enables them to apply these skills in a broad range of topics.
- Pupils behave well and feel safe in school. The school's ethos promotes care and respect for one another at all times. Attendance is high.
- Regular assemblies, events and enrichment activities contribute well to pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural education, and enable them to enjoy school life.
- The governing body shares the ambitions of the headteacher. Governors work collaboratively with her to secure further improvement. All their statutory duties, including safeguarding, are met.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Subject leadership, and the management of external funding for physical education (PE) and sport, are under-developed.
- Not enough teaching is regularly outstanding.
- Pupils have too few opportunities to use computers in their day-to-day learning.
- Best practice is not shared fully to enable the most able pupils to attain higher levels.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed all five teachers; three of these observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, pupils on the school council, four members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector checked and took account of the 22 responses by parents and carers to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the 14 questionnaires returned by staff.
- The inspector listened to a small number of Year 1 pupils read aloud.
- The inspector observed the school's website, scrutinised data about pupils' achievement, behaviour and attendance, safeguarding, curriculum planning, looked at reports used by the headteacher to check the school's work and manage teachers' performance, reviewed the minutes of meetings of the governing body and scrutinised pupils' work in lessons.

Inspection team

John Mitcheson, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Rod Warsap

Seconded Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a much smaller than average-sized primary school.
- Pupils are taught in four mixed-age classes and one Year 6 class.
- Almost all pupils are White British. Very few are from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium (government funding to support disadvantaged pupils) is below that found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- At its last inspection in November 2013, the school was judged to require improvement. Since then, two teachers have left the school and been replaced by new staff. An acting deputy headteacher is covering the leadership and management duties of the substantive deputy headteacher, who is currently on maternity leave. A teacher has been appointed on a temporary basis to teach the Year 3/4 class. There is a new Chair of the Governing Body.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more of it is often outstanding by:
 - providing time for the most effective teachers to share best practice
 - raising expectations of what the most-able pupils are capable of achieving in every lesson
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to learn using computers.
- Improve the leadership and management of the school by:
 - providing subject leaders with time and training to enable them to monitor teaching and provision in their areas of responsibility regularly and provide teachers with expert, specific advice on how to improve their effectiveness
 - thoroughly evaluating the impact additional funding is having on improving the quality and quantity of physical education and school sport.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher's outstanding leadership has swiftly brought about rapid improvements. Her high expectations and resolute commitment to raising achievement are clearly evident in the improved quality of teaching and pupils' progress, and in the high standard of their behaviour. The headteacher's high expectations and uncompromising approach to appointing high quality staff have rapidly strengthened teaching in each key stage.
- The headteacher has initiated and driven much of this improvement by putting in place rigorous systems and procedures to monitor the school's work without jeopardising its friendly, happy ethos. In doing so, she has secured the full support of staff and governors. She is developing a wider leadership team to generate further improvement and add further capacity to improve.
- Leaders of key stages make a significant contribution to raising achievement by routinely monitoring pupils' progress and the quality of teaching. Leaders of subjects and the coordinator of support for special educational needs do not make as effective a contribution to driving improvement as they should. Middle leaders, particularly those responsible for managing subjects, have too few opportunities to observe their colleagues and offer them specialist advice on how to improve.
- The headteacher's thorough self-evaluation means that she knows her school well. She has prioritised eradicating ineffective teaching and restocking the school with teachers that are aspirational and fully committed to raising achievement. Teachers and classroom assistants have received training and support to help them improve. Rigorous targets are in place to manage their performance.
- Improvements are underpinned by an extensive programme of lesson observations, learning walks, scrutiny of pupils' work and half-termly analysis of data. This is holding staff accountable for the progress made by their pupils. Staff are expected to intervene swiftly if pupils show signs of needing additional support. Lesson observations are mostly carried out by the headteacher, sometimes alongside local authority advisers.
- Refurbished facilities and new resources, including a new library, provide pupils with a rich, stimulating environment in which to learn. The quality of displays of pupils' art and design, and projects they have studied, is high.
- The school's highly positive ethos is promoted through stories, songs and prayers in assemblies, and pervades most aspects of school life. It adds a strong spiritual dimension to pupils' knowledge and understanding. It also helps to foster a calm, caring atmosphere in which all children are valued and have an equal opportunity to succeed.
- Robust improvement planning and clear policy and procedures for teaching, assessment and managing pupils' behaviour are central to the school's development. The progress made in making improvements against the timescales set in these plans is routinely monitored by the headteacher. She liaises closely with senior colleagues, governors and the local authority to ensure her views of the school's effectiveness are accurate. The school collates detailed evidence to illustrate the improvements that have been made.
- The recently introduced International Primary Curriculum is beginning to stimulate pupils' interest and enables them to study topics in-depth. This includes learning about life in the past and modern Britain, and the lives and beliefs of people from different cultural backgrounds. In this way, pupils learn about key British values, such as tolerance and the need to respect the views of others, and are well-prepared for life in modern Britain. New laptop computers have been purchased this year. The headteacher acknowledges that further training is needed to promote their regular use in lessons.
- The school complements pupils' learning in lessons with off-site visits and 'themed' days, such as re-enacting life during World War Two. This has led to notable improvements in pupils' writing. Enrichment opportunities in sport, sewing, library club and after-school club are all popular with pupils. This adds

significantly to their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.

- The school makes good use of the pupil premium and evaluates its impact thoroughly. In 2014, most of it was spent on additional support for pupils in lessons, one-to-one tuition and staff training.
- The school uses the physical education and sport premium to widen the range of opportunities for pupils. For example, on the first day of inspection, twenty pupils engaged in a dance session before school began, led by an external instructor. Her specialist knowledge and enthusiasm enabled pupils to learn new moves quickly and have fun. Most of the additional funding is paying for an outdoor climbing wall to prepare pupils for a residential experience in outdoor and adventurous activities. However, the likely impact of this on increasing participation and improving performance in physical education and sport has not been thoroughly investigated or evaluated. The school also pays for the services of the local school sport partnership. This has enabled more pupils to participate in a wider range of competitions against other schools in games, dance, fencing and cross-country running. The overall impact of these additional competitions and the other sporting activities provided by the partnership prior to the introduction of this new funding have not been fully evaluated.
- School leaders have forged stronger links with parents and carers by welcoming them into school, seeking their views and promoting the work of the parents' association. A new partnership with a local teaching school is providing additional resources to develop the school's assessment procedures.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body carries out its statutory duties effectively. Governors bring a range of knowledge and professional experience into the school to oversee its development. Their decision to appoint an outstanding leader has been instrumental in the school's improvement since the last inspection. She is held to account by governors and her performance is appraised annually. Strong relations between the headteacher and governors ensure that progress data, self-evaluation and improvement planning that are shared with them are honest, accurate and aid improvement. Governors show a growing understanding of their roles in making further improvements. They know where the school's strengths and weaknesses lie, particularly regarding the quality of teaching. They are clear about how its performance compares with that of other schools and are fully aware of how effectively the school has used the pupil premium. Governors ensure that the performance of teachers is managed effectively.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Throughout the inspection they were polite, respectful and courteous. Almost all of them behave well and display positive attitudes in lessons. Most of them behave well outside in the playground. Their social and moral understanding is good. They know the expectations staff have of them and they honour the school's values of care and respect for one another. School records confirm this. Very few incidents of poor behaviour, bullying or racism have been recorded since the last inspection. The majority of parents and carers feel that behaviour is good.
- Pupils wear their uniforms with pride. They readily volunteer to help staff in lessons and assemblies. Pupils know that if they behave and attend well they will be rewarded with house points, chosen to join the school council and have 'golden time' on Fridays. They understand the procedures teachers use to manage pupils' behaviour.
- Pupils say that a very small minority spoil things for others by messing about in lessons. They feel that the rules for managing behaviour must apply to everyone and that those who disrupt their learning should be dealt with.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The risks involved in taking pupils off-site are fully assessed. Pupils say that they feel quite safe in school.

- Pupils feel free from all forms of bullying and say that school is a friendly, happy place to be. They know how to keep themselves safe and how to look after others too. When asked about e-safety, they say that they have been taught what to do and know who to tell if they feel unsafe using computers or mobile devices.
- Pupils feel that at times, playtimes involve too much pushing and shoving in games of football and British bulldog and this leads to minor disputes. They know that the headteacher is aware of this and is making changes to ensure that everyone is kept safe.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The overall quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection. Teaching is often good and at times outstanding. New teachers joining the school have strengthened teaching. They know how to teach well and show a good understanding of how to improve the school. In addition, senior leaders' routine monitoring, effective performance management and regular staff training have all helped to increase the effectiveness of all teachers and classroom assistants.
- The school's own monitoring and the observations made during inspection confirm that teaching is rapidly improving. Expectations of staff are higher than in the past. Policies and procedures have been updated to re-affirm the agreed 'non-negotiables' and clarify what constitutes good teaching. The roles and responsibilities of teachers and classroom assistants have been made clear.
- Inspectors' own observations undertaken during the inspection confirm the main aspects the school has focused on improving. Lesson planning includes tasks suited to pupils' different abilities, and all staff manage group-work with confidence. Teachers use interactive whiteboards well to demonstrate techniques and model new learning but do not give pupils enough opportunities to use computers in lessons.
- Marking identifies the next steps for pupils to take to improve their work. Classroom assistants are suitably deployed to teach pupils in small groups and provide one-to-one support for those who need it most. Teachers regularly assess pupils' progress. This information is shared with the headteacher regularly to show that all pupils are making sufficient progress.
- The teaching of literacy is notably strong. Expert knowledge and understanding of teaching phonics have been shared across the school. Daily opportunities to read and write enable most pupils to read fluently and write in a range of genres and styles. Teachers encourage pupils to read for pleasure and complete written tasks for homework. Listening to younger pupils read aloud confirmed that they know how to decode words they cannot understand and accurately blend letters to make the right sounds.
- In mathematics, training and revised guidance is beginning to embed and enable staff to increase their knowledge and understanding and gain confidence in teaching the subject. The expertise of the school's best practitioners has not been fully shared so at times, some teachers are unclear about the best ways to teach calculations well, such as long division.
- Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well. Most pupils display positive attitudes because they are eager to learn, keen to contribute their ideas and enjoy the challenge provided for them. Questioning by teachers and opportunities for pupils to talk to partners before answering helps to check that they are all working hard and that they understand what to do.
- Expectations and the pace of learning for the majority of pupils are usually high. However, in some lessons teachers' expectations of what most-able pupils are capable of achieving are not high enough. Pupils spend too long listening to instructions when they already know what to do and could easily get on by themselves. They work steadily, rather than quickly.

The achievement of pupils**is good**

- Pupils' achievement is high in both English and mathematics. The low levels of attainment in mathematics noted at the time of the last inspection have been reversed following intensive staff training, revised guidance and routine monitoring of teaching.
- Overall results in 2014 were impressive. All pupils in Year 1 met the expected standard in the phonics screening test. In Year 2, every pupil made at least good progress and attained the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics. Similarly, in Key Stage 2 every pupil in Year 6 made at least good progress and attained the expected levels in national tests in English and mathematics. Many made above expected progress. All pupils attained national expectations in the English grammar, punctuation and spelling test.
- The school's latest monitoring data indicate that improvements are becoming embedded and sustainable. Most pupils are making good progress. The proportions of pupils predicted to meet or exceed expectations in both key stages this year are high. The school is ensuring that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- A scrutiny of pupils' books confirmed that good teaching over time is enabling most of them to make good progress. The quality and quantity of their work is high, particularly their writing. Regular marking helps pupils to understand what they do well and what they need to do to improve their work.
- The very small proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium and those who are disabled or have special educational needs prevents any accurate comparisons with national data. Their progress is monitored with the same rigour as all other pupils to ensure they achieve well. The school's data shows that currently, almost all of them are making at least expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics because they are being taught well and they are receiving extra support.
- Last year, the proportion of Year 2 pupils attaining the higher level 3 in reading was similar to that found nationally, but was lower in writing and mathematics. In Key Stage 2, an above-average proportion of pupils attained the higher level 5 in reading and in mathematics, but not in writing. A renewed focus on writing in both key stages is expected to lead to a significant increase in the achievement of more-able pupils this year.

The early years provision**is outstanding**

- Children join Reception class with limited pre-school experience. Outstanding leadership and high quality provision in a safe, stimulating setting enable them to acquire the good behaviours and positive attitudes needed for their learning to flourish. Consequently, they make exceptional progress.
- In 2014, the proportion of children leaving Reception with a good level of development was above that found nationally. Current assessments show that this will be maintained this year. A larger proportion of children are expected to attain a good level of development, including children eligible for the pupil premium.
- A key strength of provision is the systematic teaching of phonics. This gives children a thorough understanding of letters and sounds, and a love of learning. They quickly learn how to read and write so by the time they leave Reception class many of them read freely and often. The quality of their written work in their topic books is exceptional. They write at length using punctuation and complex vocabulary. They are taught how to improve their poetry, sequence instructions and write newspaper reports.
- Teachers and support staff provide children with good teaching in literacy and in numeracy daily which secures the foundations for their future learning in Key Stage 1. They balance this with a wide range of well-planned, child-led learning within and outside of the classroom that captivates children's interest and enthusiasm. Their physical development is aided by weekly physical education lessons taught by the class teacher and external sports coach.

- Detailed records are kept of how well individual children are progressing and what further support they need to make the next steps in their learning. Regular assessments recorded in their learning journey diaries clearly illustrate the rapid progress they make. This record, and the short tasks they are asked to complete at home, help to establish strong partnerships with parents and carers.

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	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. 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.

School details

Unique reference number	110784
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	453735

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	111
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Fiona Larcombe
Headteacher	Alexandra O'Connor
Date of previous school inspection	14 November 2013
Telephone number	01799 584270
Fax number	01799 584442
Email address	office@castlecamps.cambs.sch.uk

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