

Whaplode Church of England Primary School

Mill Lane, Whaplode, Spalding, PE12 6TS

Inspection dates

3–4 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Standards by the end of Key Stage 2 are average, even though pupils start school with skills at the levels expected for their age group.
- Pupils' progress through the school over time is no better than expected, and some more-able pupils do not make enough progress.
- Teaching is not consistently good. The work set in lessons is not always matched closely to pupils' ability levels, and the guidance teachers give when marking pupils' books is not always helpful.
- While progress in reading and writing is improving, progress and attainment in mathematics are not improving at the same rate.
- The way senior leaders and subject leaders check how well pupils are doing is not robust enough to ensure they make good progress in all subjects.
- The school has not been effective enough in supporting staff to develop their subject knowledge and leadership skills.

The school has the following strengths

- Over the last academic year, the progress made by most pupils has improved in reading.
- Last year, progress in writing and mathematics improved in some year groups.
- Pupils who are supported by the pupil premium make good progress.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is particularly good.
- The governing body is willing to tackle difficult issues to ensure effective support and challenge.
- Good partnerships with other schools are helping to improve standards and teaching.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 19 lessons, of which four were joint observations with the headteacher and assistant headteacher.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, school staff, including senior and middle leaders, and a representative of the local authority. Informal discussions were held with parents.
- The inspectors took account of the 10 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and previous questionnaires carried out by the school.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at monitoring information, improvement plans, analysis and tracking of pupils' progress and safeguarding arrangements. They also sampled pupils' work, listened to pupils read and checked attendance.

Inspection team

Susan Hughes, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Lesley Sanderson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups and of those who speak English as an additional language are both below average.
- The proportions of pupils who are supported through school action, and at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs, are above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to consistently good so that:
 - in mathematics, all staff have the subject expertise necessary to set work that helps pupils to make good progress
 - more-able pupils are consistently provided with challenging work that matches their abilities
 - pupils regularly receive high-quality feedback to ensure they know what they need to do to make rapid progress.
- Improve leadership and management, including governance, to ensure that:
 - strategic planning tackles all issues identified through the school's self-evaluation
 - more rigorous monitoring of performance supports staff in meeting the needs of the school
 - checking of the development of pupils' skills across different subjects is effective.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Progress overall requires improvement. Children start school with skills in line with expectations. They enter and leave Key Stage 1 with average reading, writing and mathematical skills. Standards in English and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2 are average.
- Progress in reading is improving in most year groups. Pupils' reading skills demonstrate a systematic teaching of phonics (the sounds letters make) and the good results of the phonic screening test for Year 1 pupils reflect this.
- Last year, progress in writing was good in Years 1, 2, 3 and 6. Progress was good in mathematics in Years 1, 2, 3 and 5. However, a lack of consistency across the school means that this has not yet had a significant impact on standards in mathematics and English.
- Progress in mathematics is not as good as in reading and writing in most classes in Key Stage 2. This means that standards by the end of the key stage, although broadly average, are lower in mathematics than English, and showing fewer signs of improvement.
- Pupils who are supported by the pupil premium make good progress. Money spent on additional adults in the classroom is well focused to ensure that pupils at risk of not making progress are helped. A subsidised breakfast club also helps pupils to arrive on time and ready to learn.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs generally make progress in line with other pupils, though a few make slower progress in writing. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make progress as rapidly as their peers, as do those from ethnic minority backgrounds.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Despite some good and outstanding teaching, this is not a consistent picture across all classes. More-able pupils are not always given work suited to their ability. For example, they often start working with the rest of the class and are only given more challenging tasks once they have completed the easier work. This means that not enough pupils attain high standards.
- The teaching of mathematics is less effective than the teaching of English. Not all teachers have a clear understanding of how to build pupils' skills in the different areas of mathematics, and this means that the teaching of skills is not always systematic or well matched to different abilities.
- Teachers have a good understanding of how to teach reading. Pupils demonstrate good phonic skills and can talk about their books in a mature way. They say they enjoy reading, and are making good progress. Most pupils are currently reading at or above their expected reading age.
- In the best lessons work is matched closely to pupils' ability levels. Incisive questioning by teachers, high expectations and good use of 'talk-partners' ensure that all pupils are fully involved in their learning. This was seen to good effect when pupils in Year 4 were challenged to review their knowledge of multiplication facts to solve mathematical problems.
- Support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good. Pupils with specific learning difficulties are sensitively supported to enable them to take a full part in class

activities.

- Marking in literacy books is intended to give pupils a guide to the next steps in their learning, but is not always specific enough to be helpful. Although pupils acknowledge teachers' comments, there is little evidence of them making an active response to the guidance.
- Marking in other subjects across the curriculum is encouraging but does not generally show pupils how to improve their work. This means that pupils can correct their work but do not always have a clear idea about what they need to do to reach the next stage in their learning.
- Homework is regular and appropriately linked to learning in the classroom. For example, pupils in Year 6 were asked to prepare an opening for a story to be completed in the next lesson. They are clear about what homework is set, and say they are given plenty of time to complete it.
- Good social and moral development is evident in all lessons. Teachers consistently model and promote good social skills and pupils respond well. For example, a boy in Year 4 unhesitatingly assisted another pupil by lifting her chair into position, even though they were not working together.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour is good in and around school. Pupils show a high degree of consideration and are polite to adults and each other. One pupil summed it up by saying, 'We behave well, how we should behave.' Others willingly offered their chairs to visitors.
- Pupils have a very clear understanding of what constitutes bullying. They can talk about different types of bullying such as verbal, physical and cyber-bullying. They were adamant that this rarely happens in their school, but that any problems that do arise are quickly and effectively dealt with.
- In lessons, pupils are keen to work hard and do well. No disruption to learning was seen during the inspection, and pupils and parents say this is typical. Collaborative working and the sharing of resources and ideas are evident in all lessons.
- Pupils take responsibility for each other's well-being. For example, play leaders from Years 5 and 6 are trained to organise activities for younger pupils on the playground, while trained peer mediators intervene and support other pupils where appropriate.
- Visits from organisations such as the police give pupils a good grounding in how to stay safe in a range of situations. Pupils can talk about safety on the road and what may constitute unsafe situations, such as when they are accessing the internet.
- The school works closely with parents to raise attendance figures. These are now above average.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- School self-evaluation is accurate. However, school improvement planning has not addressed the issues identified through the evaluations quickly enough. This means that standards are not
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rising as rapidly as they should be.

- The school ensures that teachers are accountable for the progress of pupils in their class. However, the development of individual teachers' subject knowledge and leadership skills requires improvement.
 - Leaders and managers have drive and ambition for the school to improve. This is evident in the support and training that have already resulted in improved progress over the last year.
 - Pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics is tracked effectively. Underachievement is identified quickly so that suitable support can be put in place. This is effective for many pupils, but not the more-able pupils. Progress in other subjects is monitored, but less rigorously.
 - The school provides opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills across different subjects. For example, Year 5 pupils practised letter writing while investigating properties of materials. The development of mathematical and communication skills across subjects is not yet embedded.
 - The school has forged strong partnerships with other schools. This gives opportunities for sharing good practice and expertise between staff.
 - Spiritual education is evident through close links with the church. In collective worship, pupils are given the opportunity to reflect on questions such as what truth and trustworthiness mean, and to discuss their implications.
 - 'Circle time' is highly valued by pupils and they talk enthusiastically about the 'Circle Time Book' where they can write their concerns or request to talk about them to a member of staff. They show a mature approach to moral values and codes of conduct, which are clearly displayed.
 - Pupils learn about other cultures through exciting themed weeks such as India week and Kenya week. There are also opportunities for pupils from different cultural backgrounds to celebrate and share their own cultures with the rest of the school.
 - The local authority has provided a good level of support for the school through developing teachers' professional skills and those of the leadership team.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - is led well, and unflinchingly supports and challenges the headteacher
 - has a clear policy for monitoring school improvement
 - understands the impact of recent initiatives and interventions
 - relies too heavily on the headteacher to monitor the impact of pupil premium spending and the performance management of teachers.
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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

Unique reference number	120555
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	405939

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	193
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cyril Hearn
Headteacher	Mary Grist
Date of previous school inspection	19 October 2010
Telephone number	01406 370447
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