

# West Monkton Church of England Primary School

School Road, Monkton Heathfield, Taunton, TA2 8PA

## Inspection dates

19–20 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
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

- The standard of teaching is too variable; despite some that is good and outstanding, there is too much that is still slow paced.
- Pupils' progress is limited by overly long introductions or explanations. This means pupils are too often passive and not sufficiently actively involved in their own learning.
- In mathematics lessons, pupils are not all clear enough what level they have reached and what their next steps should be to improve.
- The new headteacher and the governing body have not been presented with good enough pupil progress information; this has limited their ability to act swiftly to challenge why some pupils make only steady rather than rapid progress.
- Teachers have not received sufficient well-designed professional development focused on improving the rate of pupils' progress.
- The current organisation of leadership and management and staff responsibilities is not fit for purpose.

### The school has the following strengths

- The school is a calm and happy place where pupils are sure they are safe and well cared for. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well promoted.
- Pupils' attendance is good, as is their behaviour throughout the school day. They demonstrate kindness to each other and respect their teachers.
- Year 6 teaching accelerates pupils' progress so that their English and mathematics results were at the expected national level in 2012.
- Year on year, pupils consistently meet the expected standard in their reading.
- The new headteacher has ensured a smooth start to the new school year and there is a renewed vision and a sense of determination to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement shared by all staff.
- The governors are actively involved in school improvement and are seeking all the facts needed to act fully as critical friends to the school.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 12 lessons totalling over six hours of direct observation.
- All class teachers and some teaching assistants were observed.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the headteacher, a member of the leadership team, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors. The deputy headteacher was not in school. Year 6 pupils returned from their residential trip and were in school on the second day.
- Inspectors took account of the 22 responses to Parent View as well as the results of the survey undertaken by the governing body in July 2012. They also met informally with parents and carers at the start of the day.
- Inspectors looked at: pupils' books; the school's records on progress and attainment for all pupils; the school's records on monitoring and improving the quality of teaching, including information on the performance management of teachers; the local authority's review of the school's work; minutes of governing body meetings; and the school's development planning.
- Inspectors looked at how the school teaches reading, writing and mathematics.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and looked at reading records and the systems to support reading.

## Inspection team

Mo Roberts

Her Majesty's Inspector

James Hassan

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school serving a rural community north of Taunton.
- The vast majority of pupils are of a White British background.
- Few pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportions of pupils with special educational needs requiring school action and supported at school action plus or a with a statement of special educational needs are both below the national average.
- A new headteacher started this term.
- Twelve per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Improve teaching by:
  - consistently using assessment information during lessons to ensure the needs of all individuals are met
  - increasing the amount of pupil participation, right from the start of lessons, so pupils are more actively involved in their learning
  - making introductions and instructions brief and to the point to ensure the pace of learning is faster.
- Revise the school's leadership and management structure so it focuses sharply on improving the rate of pupils' progress especially by:
  - ensuring there is a more effective and rigorous analysis of the school's overall data and that it is shared with the governors so they know more precisely where pupils' progress slows or is below that expected nationally
  - monitoring the quality of teaching, especially of mathematics, to ensure that the gap in pupils' performance narrows
  - developing a consistent approach across subjects and classes to helping pupils understand the level they have reached and the next steps in their learning
  - clarifying for parents and carers how the level their children have reached compares to similar pupils nationally and reporting to them how the school is doing on its key targets for improvement.
- An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Standards in Year 6 rose in 2012 and unvalidated data suggest they reached the national level; the overall rate of pupils' progress across the school is too slow.
- There was a notable success with the higher-attaining pupils in mathematics gaining more advanced levels in 2012; however, the attainment gap between the most and least able across the school is not narrowing quickly enough in mathematics.
- There are too many pupils in Year 4 who are below the standard expected for their age in mathematics.
- The pupil premium had not been allocated until the new headteacher arrived so it has yet to impact on accelerating eligible pupils' progress. Pupils known to be entitled to free school meals currently do no better or no worse than the others in their classes.
- While some improvements have been made to writing across all year groups, there is still a legacy of underachievement to make up in Key Stage 2 and the gap between the good standards in reading and average standards in writing stubbornly persists.
- Last year's Reception class made good progress and most entered Year 1 at the nationally expected level for their age, despite being a young cohort with a lot of summer birthdays.
- Last year's phonics assessment for Year 1 showed that pupils make a good start to their reading, although there was not enough urgency in helping the very few who struggle to make quick gains as they started Year 2.
- Overall, the trends in improvement are not yet stable.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- The quality of teaching over time is too variable and so requires improvement to get to a consistently good standard. Too few lessons are good or outstanding.
- Where lessons are good or better, assessment is well used both within the lesson and to help plan future ones, so over time this enables pupils to make rapid progress. A Year 6 English lesson built extremely well on the pupils' recent residential experience as pupils wrote persuasive letters to other potential visitors.
- However, too much teaching is planned to offer broadly appropriate challenges to various groups within the class and fails to ignite individual pupils' imagination and their desire to do their very best. Too much time to complete tasks allows some pupils' attention to drift. While pupils tend to make steady progress some could do more.
- Generally good help is given to disabled pupils and those with identified special educational needs but some need to be encouraged to develop more independence.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge, but in mathematics there is a tendency to encourage pupils to complete a lot of similar computations rather than rapidly moving on when pupils have understood. Also, some explanations lack clarity and enough checks on pupils' grasp of concepts such as the inverse operation.
- Too often resources are not the best available for the task at hand. This was observed in a range of lessons including in history, mathematics and in 'shop play' in the Reception class. Reading books for Year 6 are insufficiently varied and interesting.
- Pupils like working together and when given creative opportunities apply themselves well, but these opportunities, especially at the start of lessons, are too infrequently created.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils

### requires improvement

- Although the behaviour of pupils is usually good, there is a small amount of off-task behaviour where the teaching is too slow and pupils are expected to remain inactive beyond a reasonable length of time.
- Pupils are confident and comfortable in school and were keen to say that any disagreements were mostly minor and that they can confidently rely on staff to support them if a bullying

issue arises. They said this was rare, but were insufficiently aware of all potential types of bullying.

- They know what to do to keep themselves safe when using the internet.
- Support for pupils with special educational needs in regards to behaviour is good and the systems to help pupils overcome their difficulties work well over time.
- Attendance is good and above the national average, and the school makes its high expectations in this regard very clear for parents, carers and pupils.
- Pupils like the after-school club and feel safe there. It is well run. The school's procedures to report any accidents to parents and carers are effectively organised in the after-school club but are insufficiently implemented by all adults in the Reception class.
- The school is aware of the need to tighten up some aspects of risk assessments to ensure pupils' safety further.

## The leadership and management

## requires improvement

- The new headteacher has a clear vision for the school and has quickly assessed what needs to be improved; he has the support of staff who report increased confidence that together they can raise the school to good.
- In recent years staff have developed their use of pupil performance data, but the current class report sheets do not sufficiently highlight where pupils' progress slows. This does not therefore sharply focus staff on where more effort and support are required to help those pupils in danger of falling behind.
- Teachers' professional development has not been well linked to the issues shown up in the data, except in English where there is a good ongoing drive to improve pupils' writing which already shows promising results.
- Most other improvement planning lacks clear, tight timelines and measurable outcomes. This has resulted in slower than expected progress on some key issues from the last inspection. For example, in the Early Years Foundation Stage the outdoor area has been physically improved but the need to support learning outside better was not dealt with successfully because it was not a key skill identified when selecting the new support staff.
- Leaders have not focused sufficiently on improving the quality of teaching and there were too few lesson observations available for the new headteacher to review, especially in mathematics.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and parents and carers are all well informed about the overall topics and ways to extend them at home. A good project with parents and carers last year helped Year 6 girls to improve their mathematics.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well promoted together with equality of opportunity. The school does not tolerate discrimination in any form, but its paperwork in this regard requires updating.
- The overall school curriculum documentation is not stored centrally so it is not easy for the headteacher to check the overall balance. Currently, there is not enough emphasis given to the regularity of phonics teaching in Year 2 and this had not been picked up.
- All statutory requirements regarding safeguarding are met.
- The local authority has reported accurately on the overall effectiveness of the school, but did not support the school by spotting the lack of urgency and tight timelines in the development plans.
- Given the determination of all concerned and the recent rise in standards in Year 6 and across the school in writing, the school has demonstrated it has the capacity to improve without being placed in a category of concern. It knows how to set about getting the required improvements.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors have been hindered by the lack of access to the full pupil progress data and a clear overall analysis. While they have done their best to track key issues and challenge the school they recognise the limited quality in school improvement plans.
  - They are determined to help drive pupils' progress and assist the school to reach the good category.

- They are working through the requirements for the Governor Mark and are aware of the overall strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are active in the school and successfully involved pupils in the interview process for the new headteacher.
- They would welcome support, for example in evaluating the quality of the crucial development plans.

## 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>	123804
<b>Local authority</b>	Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	402200

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>	214
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Cheryl Birkett
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ian Robinson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24–25 November 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01823 412582
<b>Fax number</b>	01823 413328
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