

Yorkley Primary School

Lydney Road, Lydney, GL15 4RR

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		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Inconsistencies in the quality of teaching in Years 1 to 6 over the last few years mean that some pupils have a lot of catching up to do.
- Until last year, the pace of learning was too slow and too little emphasis was given to extending pupils' writing skills and ensuring they had a good grounding in basic numeracy.
- Standards of attainment in writing and mathematics are below average because the older pupils have too many gaps in their learning.
- Although pupils' reading skills are broadly average, their writing generally lags behind. They use a limited vocabulary in their written work and do not write extensively enough outside English lessons.
- Pupils often find difficulty in solving mathematical problems because they cannot instantly recall multiplication tables and other basic number facts.

The school has the following strengths

- School leaders and governors are fully committed to driving improvement. The quality of teaching and the rate of pupils' progress are rigorously monitored. As a result much of the teaching is now good.
- Strong leadership has significantly improved the quality of teaching, to the extent that almost all year groups made around twice the expected progress over the last academic year.
- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because the teaching is good and they have a wide range of opportunities to develop their early reading, writing and number skills.
- Pupils feel safe and behave well both in lessons and around school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 12 lessons and 6 teachers, of which five were joint observations with the headteacher. Sessions led by teaching assistants working with individuals or small groups of pupils were also observed.
- The inspector discussed pupils' reading habits with them and listened to them read. He had a meeting with a sample of pupils from Key Stage 2.
- Meetings and discussions were held with governors, a representative from the local authority and school staff.
- The inspector took account of the 12 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and the 14 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including the school improvement plans, priorities for development, achievement data and documents relating to safeguarding children.

Inspection team

Rob Crompton

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Yorkley is a smaller than average-sized primary school where almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average. The proportion of pupils who are supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium is above average.
- The school meets the current floor standards, the minimum standards for pupils' attainment and progress expected by the government.
- The premises were completely refurbished and extended during the last school year. Alterations included a new hall, kitchen, library and administration area, plus some additional or remodelled teaching spaces.
- The school has been accredited with the Healthy Schools Award and the Activemark.
- Pupils are taught in five mixed-age classes: Reception and Year 1, Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4, Years 4 and 5, and Years 5 and 6.
- A new Chair of the Governing Body was elected in September 2011. The headteacher took up her post in April and two new teachers were appointed in September.
- A privately managed playgroup is located on the school site but is inspected separately.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the teaching at Key Stages 1 and 2 so that it is consistently at least good by:
 - ensuring that the work is set at the right level for all pupils
 - ensuring that the structure of lessons allows sufficient time for pupils to work independently
 - embedding the successful strategies that are evident in the most effective lessons, including:
 - establishing a brisk pace
 - proving practical tasks which engage and motivate pupils
 - using questioning to deepen pupils' understanding.
- Accelerate pupils' progress in writing and mathematics by:
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to practise, consolidate and extend their writing skills in different subjects
 - encouraging pupils to use more of the vocabulary they come across in their reading when they are writing
 - increasing pupils' confidence in tackling mathematical problems by ensuring they have a secure grounding in basic number facts.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- As children start school in Reception, their knowledge, understanding and skills are generally low. Due to good provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage, they progress well. However, their skills in literacy and numeracy are typically below those expected when they enter Year 1.
- Until recently, pupils were not building well enough on their starting points and consequently standards of attainment in English and mathematics have remained below average at both key stages. In the past year, however, the school's tracking records show that progress has improved substantially at both key stages, particularly in reading, where pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 reached broadly average standards.
- Progress in writing and mathematics has also accelerated, but a legacy of underachievement has left gaps in pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. The kind of vocabulary that pupils come across in their reading does not often feature in their written work.
- Pupils' knowledge of basic number bonds and multiplication tables is patchy. For example, although pupils know $8 + 2 = 10$, and $6 + 4 = 10$ and so on, they do not immediately see how this can help them calculate $80 + 20$ or $66 + 34$. Although pupils in Year 4 had instant recall of 3×4 , they struggled to calculate 30×4 .
- The positive impact of the whole-school focus on reading in the past year can now be seen in pupils' writing. Pupils in Year 1, for example, tackle independent writing confidently due to their sound grasp of letter sounds. Samples of Year 6 pupils' work from the previous year show improving standards of presentation and a widening range and clear purpose to their writing. However, there remains a gap between pupils' attainment in reading and writing that is wider than found nationally.
- Pupils who are disabled and those with special educational needs make similar progress to others from their relative starting points. A specialist teacher has been appointed. School data supported by inspection evidence show that attainment and progress are improving securely as a result of good leadership.
- The progress of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is also improving. This is due to the judicious use of the funding received through the pupil premium which provides them with effective support. This includes additional teaching in small groups, funding for educational trips and extra learning resources.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Previous weaknesses in the quality of teaching meant that, until last year, pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 were not making the expected progress. The quality of teaching has improved and much is now good, but there remain some inconsistencies.
- In a few lessons, activities are not well matched to the different abilities of pupils. This means some pupils find the work too difficult and others complete tasks very quickly when they could tackle more demanding work.
- Teachers occasionally spend too much time introducing lessons, leaving insufficient time for pupils to get to grips with new ideas. The skilled teaching assistants come into their own when actively engaged with pupils but, when teachers spend too long talking to the whole class, assistants are not used effectively to support good learning.
- Where the teaching is most effective, pupils are fully engaged in their learning and enthusiastically share ideas. For example, pupils in a Years 4/5 literacy lesson were inspired by incisive questioning and encouraged by the teacher to draw up a list of features of instructional texts. Questions such as, 'Do you agree?' and 'Who can put that in another way?' sustained their engagement and helped to deepen their thinking.
- Children make a good start in Reception because adults make learning fun. For example, children responded gleefully as 'Spot the dog' asked them questions and led a counting song.

They went on to choose from a wide range of counting and sorting activities, during which the adults took every opportunity to extend children's vocabulary as well as their numeracy skills.

- Provision for disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium has been improved. Well-targeted one-to-one or small group interventions, including those led by a newly appointed specialist teacher, are helping to accelerate the progress made by these pupils.
- Teachers consistently model and promote good social skills and pupils respond well. For example, as pupils in the Years 3/4 class were sorting, smelling and tasting vegetables, the teacher successfully encouraged them to take turns and share resources. Pupils are given opportunities to discuss moral dilemmas and challenging issues, such as prejudice and racial stereotyping.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Good behaviour is evident in all areas of the school. Pupils show a high degree of courtesy and consideration for adults and one another. Teachers make the rules clear and set good examples in the way they treat others.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. Pupils in the Years 4/5 class, for example, proudly demonstrated their design and technology skills when rigging up a light, fan and doorbell as they constructed model houses. They were fully engaged, shared equipment readily, supported one another in group work and listened politely to what their classmates had to say.
- Pupils are able to define what bullying is and are aware of different types of bullying. They told the inspector that any kind of bullying in school is extremely rare and are confident that if any incidents occur they will be dealt with appropriately by adults. The school keeps detailed records of the rare examples of disruptive behaviour and takes timely and effective action to resolve any problems.
- Pupils feel safe and parents and carers are confident their children are well cared for. Pupils are aware of the potential risks to their well-being and how to avoid them, such as how to use the internet safely.
- Celebrations of good attendance and close home–school working have resulted in improved attendance. Attendance is now regular and punctuality is good.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher are the driving force behind the school's improving effectiveness and are bringing about rapid and secure improvement. Following an incisive review of the school's work, leaders accurately identified clear priorities. The deputy headteacher provided essential stability and continuity as first a new Chair of the Governing Body was appointed and then a new headteacher.
- In order to bring necessary urgency to their action planning, school leaders worked closely and successfully with a local authority consultancy team during the past year. This level of guidance is no longer necessary as school leaders are able to move the school forward without intensive support.
- The headteacher has harnessed the skills of effective senior leaders and the governing body and, with their cohesive support, has brought further improvements. Underperformance in teaching has been eliminated through some judicious reallocation of responsibilities. Nevertheless, there is no complacency among staff. All know that they are accountable for the continuing acceleration of pupils' progress.
- Rigorous systems for monitoring teaching and managing teachers' performance have been

quickly embedded. The national standards for teachers are clearly articulated to all staff and used effectively as a tool in driving improvement, maintaining high expectations and pointing to where inconsistencies remain and improvement must be made.

- There is a united determination to ensure equal opportunities, foster good relationships and eliminate any discrimination. Decisive action is accelerating the progress of all pupils, including disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development runs through most areas of school life. The curriculum is enriched by a range of clubs and visits which assist pupils' learning and their personal development. For example, pupils talk enthusiastically about how participating in residential trips broadens their outlook, develops their self-confidence and raises their awareness of children from different backgrounds.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - has a clarity of vision underpinned by robust self-evaluation
 - provides well-focused challenge and support for school leaders
 - has a strong capacity to drive further the improvements that have already taken place
 - ensures resources, including the pupil premium, are managed efficiently and have a positive impact
 - ensures safeguarding arrangements fully meet requirements.

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	115555
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	401520

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	138
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Taylor
Headteacher	Kate Burke
Date of previous school inspection	28–29 September 2009
Telephone number	01594 562201
Fax number	01594 563305
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