

Ampfield Church of England Primary School

Knapp Lane, Ampfield, Romsey, SO51 9BT

Inspection dates

7–8 November 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

- Pupils' achievement, particularly in writing, is not good enough, particularly in Key Stage 2. This is due to weaknesses in the pupils' use of grammar, punctuation and their spelling.
- Teaching requires improvement. Even though some teaching is good there is too much that is not good enough. Teachers spend too long introducing lessons and this slows the pace of learning.
- Too often work set is either too hard or too easy for pupils.
- Pupils in Key Stage 2 are not always clear about what they need to do to meet their targets for improving their work, particularly in writing.
- Staff with responsibilities are inconsistent in how effectively they check how well pupils are doing and shape their subjects.
- The governing body's challenge to the headteacher about improving effectiveness has not always been strong enough because governors have relied too heavily on leaders to provide them with information.

The school has the following strengths

- The new executive headteacher and head of teaching and learning have made an excellent start in speeding up achievement.
- Pupils feel safe, they behave well and enjoy school and learning. Attendance is above average.
- New systems for checking teaching and learning are thorough and accurate. This has resulted in senior staff choosing the right priorities for improvement.
- Staff morale is high and teamwork good. Staff and governors are ambitious to improve the school.
- Changes made to the teaching of reading are improving progress. Pupils enjoy reading and they read a wide range of books. Younger pupils use their good knowledge of sounds and letters to tackle new words.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out with a half day's notice.
- The inspector observed seven lessons taught by three members of staff. Of these, five were joint observations undertaken with either the executive headteacher or head of teaching and learning.
- The inspector held meetings with members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and with groups of pupils. In addition to a number of meetings with members of staff, the questionnaires completed by all the staff were taken into account.
- As well as informal discussions with parents and carers at the beginning of the school day, a meeting was held with five parents. Account was also taken of the views of the 10 parents and carers who completed the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- The inspector reviewed a wide range of documentation including the school's analysis of pupils' progress, teachers' lesson plans, the school's improvement plan, the school's self-evaluation, leaders' monitoring of teaching reports and pupils' work.

Inspection team

Keith Sadler, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Ampfield is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and there are a few from minority ethnic groups. Very few pupils are at an early stage of learning English.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. These pupils are entitled to extra support funded by the pupil premium.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above average.
- The school meets the current floor standards set by the government, which determines the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- The school has gone through a period of uncertainty regarding senior leadership. The school has had three acting headteachers and one permanent headteacher since the previous inspection. Since the beginning of this school year, an informal partnership has been established with a local primary school. Ampfield has an executive headteacher who has responsibility for both schools. There is also a head of teaching and learning who is based at Ampfield.
- The school has two classes. Reception and Year 1 and 2 pupils are taught in one class. The second class provides for pupils in Years 3 to 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Lift the quality of teaching so that it is more consistently good or better by ensuring that:
 - teachers do not spend too long introducing lessons and so reduce the pace of learning
 - teachers' questioning consistently provides opportunities for pupils to provide extended answers
 - clear guidance is provided for pupils so that they know what they need to do to reach the next steps in their learning
 - work is set at the right level for all pupils so that it is sufficiently demanding.
- Accelerate pupils' progress in writing by ensuring that:
 - pupils make better use of grammar and punctuation
 - more opportunities are provided for writing longer pieces of work
 - pupils spell more accurately.
- Improve the school's leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - teaching staff with responsibilities are suitably skilled in checking how well pupils are doing
 - members of the governing body are less reliant on staff for finding out about teaching and learning and more active in finding things out for themselves.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because progress is inconsistent. The proportion of pupils making expected progress from their various starting points is average. This is particularly the case for the current Year 6 pupils whose progress is in line with national expectations in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the school's data and inspection findings also indicate that there has been underachievement in writing in other year groups.
- Currently, the skills and abilities of children in the Reception Year are above those expected on entry. However, they vary from year to year because cohorts are small. Children enjoy the wide range of activities that are provided for them both indoors and outdoors. They are confident and secure and have already made good progress in their personal and social skills.
- Progress in reading has improved recently because early evaluations by senior leaders indicated the need to strengthen pupils' use of letters and sounds. An effective programme has been established that now enables pupils to be more confident in tackling unknown words. Even the lower ability Year 2 pupils persevere well and use their knowledge to build words. This results in them being accurate in their reading.
- Pupils' spelling, although improving, remains weak. Achievement in reading has been accelerated in the Key Stage 2 class because a wider range of books has been purchased that captures the interest of the pupils, particularly boys.
- Achievement in writing is variable across the school. In the Key Stage 2 class, progress is hampered because grammar and punctuation are relatively weak. Furthermore, there are too few opportunities provided for pupils to write longer pieces of work. This is being tackled, but it is too early to assess the overall impact of the changes.
- Pupils make steady progress in their mathematical skills and, by the end of Year 6, most pupils achieve satisfactorily. They are competent in their mental and oral skills. Pupils say they enjoy the many opportunities made available for them to apply their knowledge in practical mathematics such as when using computers to formulate graphs about habitats.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress in their learning. This is because they benefit from well-planned programmes of individual support. Teaching assistants play an important role in these pupils' good progress due to the help they give both in the classrooms and when taking out individuals or small groups.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium are also given individual support to help with literacy and numeracy skills. The school's records show that this has led to improvement in pupils' progress in both key stages in mathematics and reading.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Over time, teaching has not been strong enough to promote good achievement. Inspection findings confirm the new leadership team's view that work is not matched well enough to the pupils' learning needs. In particular, the work set is sometimes too hard for pupils and hence their progress is hampered. In addition, staff sometimes spend too long introducing lessons and this slows the pace of learning.
- In both classes relationships are good, staff manage the pupils' behaviour very well and learning is purposeful. Staff have clear routines and explicit expectations for pupils' behaviour which foster good relationships and tackle discrimination.
- There are signs of improvement. Some teaching is good. The executive head teacher has set clear targets for teachers' improvement and the head of teaching and learning has coached and supported staff well to ensure that these are being met. For example, there are more opportunities for pupils to work together in pairs or groups and these are benefiting learning.
- The new arrangements for teaching letters and sounds and guiding pupils in their reading are of good quality. This consistent and school-wide approach to the teaching of reading is paying

dividends particularly for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. These pupils are making good progress in their learning.

- Teachers use a good range of different approaches to interest pupils in their learning. The use of discussion to help pupils to share ideas with each other is good. Good examples observed include the pupils discussing the water cycle and helping each other in their understanding. Even so, teachers' questioning is not always strong enough because sometimes it does not give pupils the opportunity to provide extended answers.
- Marking has strengthened and is comprehensive and supportive. However, next steps in learning are not always made clear to pupils particularly in their writing. This lack of guidance means that sometimes pupils are not clear about what they need to do to improve.
- Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution particularly for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. This is the case when they give support in the class, such as when pupils were learning about time connectives, and also when they take pupils out for specific help, such as when younger children were being taught letters and sounds.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and this is seen in the way that they generally concentrate well. Just occasionally, when the work is not matched sufficiently to their abilities, their concentration wanders.
- Pupils' enjoyment of school is also reflected in their above average attendance. They enjoy working together in groups and during break times the youngest and oldest pupils mix happily together.
- Pupils who have joined the school this term, and their parents and carers, are fulsome in their praise about how well they have been helped to settle into school. This is reflected by parents and carers of children who started school in the Reception class. They are pleased with the good induction arrangements that have enabled their children to settle quickly and well.
- Parents and carers and staff expressed positive views about behaviour. Pupils confirmed that lessons are hardly ever disrupted by any poor behaviour. Pupils are well mannered and sensible. By the time that they reach Year 6, they are confident and have high self-esteem. This is because staff treat the pupils well and the good personal and social programme effectively promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They have a good understanding of different forms of bullying, including cyber bullying. They also say that they enjoy the annual visit of the local police for their safety talks.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Since the last inspection, leadership and management have not been sufficiently effective in lifting the school's overall effectiveness to good. Subject leaders in particular have not been sufficiently robust in checking how well pupils are doing and in bringing about improvement.
- However, the executive headteacher and head of teaching and learning have made an excellent start to improving provision and raising standards. Self-evaluation is thorough and accurate and has given rise to a high quality improvement plan. Changes made are having a positive impact, particularly in reading. Senior leaders have brought rigour and accountability to the staff. The staff have responded very positively to this and, together with the governing body, are determined and committed to the school's improvement.
- The head of teaching and learning's coaching is also addressing weaknesses in the staff's skills in monitoring and evaluation in their areas of responsibility. This is beginning to pay dividends. For example, the teacher with responsibility for English has carried out an accurate review of pupils' work.

- Revised performance management systems work alongside leaders' regular checks on the quality of teaching. These show that strengths and weaknesses are assessed and shared with staff. Salary increases are linked to teachers' performance.
- The local authority has provided support for the school, particularly in addressing the turbulence in senior staffing. The authority has played an important role in securing the services of both the executive headteacher and the head of teaching and learning.
- Senior staff ensure that the pupil premium is spent effectively. This includes one-to-one support, the purchase of tablet computers and additional learning resources. In addition, funding also enables entitled pupils to attend school visits including residential trips. The impact of this has been positive in raising these pupils' progress in learning and also in their personal and social skills.
- There has been a good focus on building key skills in literacy and numeracy. Pupils say that they enjoy writing and the focus on linking writing to topic work, such as in the work on the environment and habitat, shows improvement. However, pupils do not always have the opportunity to write at length. Staff ensure that all pupils have equality of opportunity when they plan topics for them.

■ **The governance of the school:**

Members of the governing body have successfully established the new senior leadership arrangements. Governors receive regular reports regarding the quality of the school's provision, particularly teaching, and pupils' progress. This puts them in a good position to evaluate the school's strengths and weaknesses. They know what is being done to eliminate any teaching that requires improvement and what is being done on salary progression and promotion issues within the school. They also know how well the school is doing compared with other schools. Governors, particularly those newly appointed, have taken advantage of the local authority's training scheme. For example, a majority of governors have attended training in child protection. They do not always challenge the school suitably well because currently systems for members to find out information for themselves are inconsistent. However, there are things that the governors do well. Governors successfully ensure that regulatory requirements for safeguarding and staff vetting procedures are fully in place and are effective. They hold the school to account well for financial matters. They are also aware of how the pupil premium funding is spent and the impact this has on pupils' progress. Governors have a clear understanding of performance management arrangements.

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	116268
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	405634

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	29
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bryan Vint
Headteacher	Julie Carrington
Date of previous school inspection	11–12 October 2010
Telephone number	01794 368219
Fax number	01794 367115
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