

St Peter's Church of England Primary School

The Green, Cassington, Oxfordshire, OX29 4DN

Inspection dates 13–14 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

- While the school is improving steadily, teaching is not consistently good, especially in Years 2 and 3.
- Pupils do not learn quickly enough during class discussions because teachers do not always involve them fully. In addition, there are times when pupils' learning slows as teachers do not move them promptly onto the next step in their learning when the pupils have successfully finished their work early. As a result, pupils' achievement requires improvement.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage do not always make good progress when they are working independently, especially outside, because not all activities are sufficiently interesting or help them to extend their knowledge and skills.
- Leadership and management require improvement because, while the headteacher and governing body provide clear guidance and support to help improve teaching and pupils' progress, the impact has not been consistently effective across the school.
- Teachers who look after subjects have not had sufficient opportunity to monitor teaching and learning so that they can help to remove remaining inconsistencies in teaching.

The school has the following strengths

- There is good support for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and as a result pupils get along together well.
- Good teaching in Years 4 to 6 enables these pupils to learn quickly.
- Pupils understand and appreciate the positive behaviour policy and consequently they behave well. They feel safe and are enthusiastic about their work.
- Parents and carers are pleased with the school and would recommend it to others.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed nine lessons jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders and teachers, pupils, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection took into account 18 responses to the on-line Parent View questionnaire and held informal discussions with a sample of parents and carers.
- The inspector considered the views expressed in six staff questionnaires.
- A range of information supplied by the school was scrutinised, including the school's own pupil progress data, planning and monitoring documents, the school development plan, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and safeguarding documents.

Inspection team

Alison Cartlidge, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is a much smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action (needing extra help in school) is broadly average and those at school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs (needing extra help from outside the school) is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for extra funding through the pupil premium (including those eligible for free school meals) is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The pre-school in the school grounds is privately run and was not part of this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of good or better teaching, especially in Years 2 and 3, by:
 - ensuring that pupils are fully engaged and involved in whole class discussions
 - extending learning during lessons when pupils have successfully completed their activities early.
- Ensure that children in the Early Years Foundation Stage always make good progress when working independently, especially outside, by:
 - providing interesting activities that attract the children and move their learning forward
 - increasing resources outside so that they reflect the good range of activities provided indoors.
- Develop the responsibilities of teachers who look after subjects so that they play a greater part in checking teaching and pupils' progress and helping to remove weaknesses as soon as they arise.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' progress is not yet consistently good, especially in some lessons in Years 2 and 3 and in the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, it is improving across the school and is good in Years 4 to 6.
- Progress in the Reception class requires improvement because children do not always work purposefully on tasks they have chosen for themselves, especially when working outside. Children make the best progress in reading and when working in groups with members of staff. Attainment on entry to the Reception class varies considerably from year to year. The large majority of children were working within the levels expected for their age when they started school this year. Children make the expected progress in most areas of learning, and their attainment is broadly average in most years when they enter Year 1.
- Attainment is broadly average by the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are starting to use their knowledge of phonics (sounds that letters make) confidently to help with their reading and spelling and, consequently, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level in the national Year 1 phonics test was above average. Pupils told the inspector that you improve your reading by 'sounding out the words' and, in Year 1, enjoyed sorting out real and imaginary words on the computer that included the sound 'oi'. Pupils in Years 4 to 6 make good progress because they have a good understanding of how they can improve their work. For example, they explained clearly how they would make their newspaper reports more interesting for readers.
- The school promotes equal opportunities and is tackling social discrimination effectively. While most disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make the expected progress, a few have made slower progress than they should. However, provision for these pupils is improving, with recent changes leading to the school making better use of information on pupils' progress enabling members of staff to focus special help more sharply on what these pupils need to learn next.
- Most pupils who are supported through the pupil premium improve their learning because funding is used to augment staffing and to support extra activities as required. Consequently, the gap between their attainment and that of others is closing steadily. For example, this year improved reading resources have been beneficial for these pupils.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- There are some weaknesses in teaching that mean pupils are not making consistently good progress, especially in Years 2 and 3 and the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where teaching is stronger this is reflected in pupils making good progress.
- In Years 2 and 3, during whole class discussions, not all pupils are sufficiently involved so that their interest is maintained and opportunities are missed to extend their learning when it is clear that they are ready to move on to more difficult work. When this happens, the pace of learning slows.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, some activities, particularly outside, are under resourced and, consequently, they do not hold the children's interest for long enough or promote good learning. In contrast, when members of staff are working with small groups they provide clear guidance and children learn quickly.
- In all classes, teachers and teaching assistants work together well, have good subject knowledge and are good at promoting new vocabulary. For example, in Years 4 to 6, the teacher worked well with a less-able group discussing words relating to place value, while the teaching assistant helped more-able pupils to describe the methods they were using in their money problems. Good relationships with the pupils enable members of staff to manage behaviour well and lessons have a clear and well-understood structure.

- Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved since the last inspection. Teachers are confident about using ICT to help with their teaching and pupils make use of it to support learning across the curriculum. For example, pupils in Years 2 to 4 were filled with awe at the photographs of various wild animals and were motivated to carry out their own research using the netbooks.
- Teachers are making better use of information about how well pupils are doing to plan lessons and their marking is improving rapidly, especially in literacy. Most work includes comments that help pupils understand what they need to do next to improve. Older pupils are positive about sheets of information provided to help with their writing. As one pupil said, 'They helped bring me up a level.' This level of effective marking has yet to be replicated in numeracy where opportunities are missed to link comments to the pupils' specific next steps.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are right to be proud when they say that behaviour is good at the school. They feel safe, and their parents and carers are also positive about behaviour and safety. Pupils are pleased that they helped devise the positive rules for behaviour and they say that behaviour is 'a lot better' and 'more calm' than in the past.
- Pupils have good attitudes towards learning in most lessons and are keen to take part in the various activities the school offers. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Years 2 to 4, pupils were keen to programme their mini robots and, in Years 4 to 6, pupils enjoyed writing fictitious newspaper reports about when the teacher accidentally set the school on fire. Occasionally pupils become quietly inattentive if they finish their work early or are not sufficiently involved in discussions.
- Pupils work well with each other in lessons and at play. For example, younger pupils help each other when they are the 'leaders of learning' and older pupils discuss their ideas sensibly and carry out various responsibilities well when they are 'personal assistants'.
- Pupils know how to stay safe, understand there are different types of bullying and what to do if it happens. They are confident that any concerns they may have will be dealt with straight away by members of staff. As pupils commented, 'We feel very comfortable at our school,' and, 'You're safe inside school.'
- While pupils say that they like coming to school and enjoy lessons and their friends, attendance is broadly average because a very few families do not ensure that their children attend regularly. The school has recently improved punctuality and monitors attendance rigorously resulting in a rise in attendance so far this year.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because the subject leaders have not had sufficient opportunity to ensure that policies for their subjects are followed by all members of staff, and that the quality of teaching and pupils' learning is consistently good across the school. Leaders have clear plans for improving the school based on an accurate self-evaluation and members of staff are keen to move the school forward. Improvements have been made in the way pupils' progress is measured and how this relates to the performance of teachers and any increase in pay.
- Performance management identifies next steps for staff development and appropriate training opportunities are provided. The local authority has provided the appropriate level of support and guidance for the school since the last inspection, enabling it to continue to improve.
- Parents and carers are pleased with the work of the school and typically make comments such as 'a nice small school with a good atmosphere'. A few would appreciate further guidance on how they can help their children with their reading. For example, while pupils have home/school

reading records, these do not always include suggestions for reading homework.

- The curriculum enables pupils to make the expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics and provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, pupils joined in enthusiastically during a lively assembly when learning about the importance of forgiveness and were keen to suggest other pupils who had been helpful. Whole school topics are helping to make learning relevant and interesting.
 - Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements and training is up to date so that members of staff are clear about how to care for the pupils.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is improving rapidly. Recent training has enabled governors to increase their understanding of what works well at the school and how it needs to improve. They understand how performance management is being used to improve teaching, and where teaching is good and where and how it requires improvement. There is a good understanding of how well the pupils are doing compared with other similar schools. The budget is being used appropriately to support areas requiring improvement. For example, funding has been set aside to improve the classroom for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, including the outdoor area. Governors know how funding for pupils in receipt of the pupil premium is being used to close the gap in their learning and enable them to take a full part in school life.
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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	123194
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	406145

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	86
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Hannah Farncombe
Headteacher	Jeanette Millward
Date of previous school inspection	10–11 November 2010
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