

Cold Harbour Church of England School

Highland Close, Bletchley, Milton Keynes MK3 7PD

Inspection dates 28–29 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		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Not enough pupils are making consistently good progress through the school.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics across Key Stage 2 is not good because there are not enough opportunities across different subjects for pupils to practise their mathematical skills.
- Teaching is not consistently good. Teachers' expectations, especially of what the most able can achieve, are not high enough.
- In some lessons, pace is too slow. Planned activities do not challenge the most able enough, nor do they sufficiently encourage independent learning.
- Improvement planning is not always sharp enough to ensure that intended actions will result in consistently good or better achievement for all pupils.

The school has the following strengths

- Good leadership and management, including governance, have led to marked improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' attainment in the past year. All areas for improvement from the previous inspection have been dealt with effectively.
- Good teaching in Year 6 last year ensured that attainment in English and mathematics exceeded the government's minimum expectations. Standards in writing were above average.
- Training for staff is proving effective in raising standards.
- Children entering Reception settle in very quickly because of the welcoming and secure environment so that they make good progress.
- Pupils are well behaved, friendly, polite and courteous to all and feel safe in school. They have very positive attitudes to their learning and their attendance is above average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 lessons taught by 11 teachers. In addition, inspectors observed the teaching of phonics (letter patterns and the sounds they represent). Many of these observations were made jointly with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher of the school.
- Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body and another governor, parents and carers, staff, including senior and middle leaders, groups of pupils and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at school documentation, including teachers' planning, the school's self-evaluation and development plans, assessment information, monitoring files, governing body minutes, safeguarding documentation and samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and talked with them about their enjoyment of books.
- Inspectors considered the 17 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).

Inspection team

David Radomsky, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Amanda Simpson	Additional Inspector
Clive Reynolds	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- An average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for additional funding (the pupil premium).
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is average. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- Most pupils come from White British backgrounds, with the remainder coming from a number of minority ethnic groups.
- Few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school's governing body manages a daily breakfast club.
- Since the previous inspection, there has been a large turnover of staff. Most members of the leadership team and current governing body are new to their roles.
- The school has no alternative provision for pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by:
 - ensuring that teachers always have high expectations of what all pupils can achieve
 - planning activities that meet the needs of all pupils, especially the most able
 - maintaining a brisk pace in lessons and increasing opportunities for pupils to learn independently.
- Plan for additional opportunities across different subjects for pupils to practise their mathematical skills throughout Key Stage 2
- Ensure that all school improvement planning makes clear how intended actions will lead to at least good achievement for all pupils.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils make inconsistent progress as they move through Key Stages 1 and 2 and do not always reach the standards of which they are capable. However, achievement is improving. Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is broadly average. All 2012 results improved on the previous year, markedly so in mathematics in Year 2 and in writing in Year 6, where standards reached were above average. Evidence from pupils' work, lesson observations and the school's own data all show that this trend of improving rates of progress and attainment is being sustained and is set to continue.
- Children enter the school with skills that are expected for their age. They make good progress in Reception in their personal development and in all areas of learning.
- The introduction last year of many opportunities for pupils across Key Stage 2 to write for extended periods on a range of topics that interest them helped most pupils to make good progress. There are few planned activities across other subjects to extend pupils' mathematical skills. As a result, the proportion making expected progress in mathematics across Key Stage 2 was lower than that found nationally.
- With the pupil premium funding, the school employed an additional adult to provide support for pupils who were falling behind in their reading and to train all staff on the teaching of phonics. As a result, standards of reading improved for all and pupils who received the extra support made even faster progress than their peers.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to reading. They make good use of the school library to frequently change books that they enjoy reading at home.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs have their needs promptly identified and respond well to the effective support which they receive. As a result, they make similar progress to their peers.
- The few pupils who are learning to speak English communicate well and make progress similar to other pupils.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement but during the past year it has improved considerably. Much good and a little outstanding teaching was seen during the inspection. There is still work to be done to make it consistently good or outstanding.
- Although teachers generally plan work for a range of abilities, in some cases there is insufficient challenge in the activities, especially for the most able pupils, because teachers' expectations of what all pupils are capable of are not always high enough.
- In some lessons, teachers spend too long explaining what pupils have already learned and do not always ensure pupils work at a fast enough pace. This slows the rate of progress.
- Opportunities for developing independent learning skills are sometimes missed. For example, during a writing activity observed, the teacher did not encourage pupils to use a thesaurus or dictionary to extend their vocabulary. In a science lesson about how candles of different widths burn, pupils were shown a video of what happens rather than being encouraged to plan the experiment and explore the differences for themselves.
- Teaching in Reception is good. Teachers and other adults ensure that children learn in a vibrant and well-resourced environment. Adults encourage children to try a variety of new things, both for themselves and in collaboration with other children. As a result, children learn and socialise well.
- Positive relationships between staff and pupils ensure that pupils are confident to respond to questioning knowing they will be helped, should they make a mistake.
- Teachers generally ensure that pupils understand what they are going to learn about and the

steps they need to take to ensure success. In the best lessons, which account for the majority seen during the inspection, no time is wasted and all pupils get on with well-planned learning activities at a brisk pace. Any pupil experiencing difficulties is quickly identified and helped by the teacher or teaching assistant.

- The quality of pupils' writing has improved because teachers plan exciting writing activities linked to subject areas other than literacy. This captures pupils' imagination and motivates them to write. For instance, pupils in Years 5 and 6 reinforced their learning about natural disasters in an activity they much enjoyed, writing poems about volcanoes.
- Teachers provide good written and oral feedback on what pupils have done well and what needs to be improved, which enables pupils to respond well to this feedback, taking note of how to improve their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils enjoy school a great deal and feel secure in its welcoming environment. One pupil summed it up perfectly, echoing others, when he told an inspector, 'Everyone gets on well together as this is a friendly family school.'
- Pupils are proud of the contribution that they make to the school and the way that they support each other. For example, during lunchtime, each table has two Year 6 pupils sitting at either end and they ensure that the younger pupils at their table behave well and eat with good manners.
- Pupils are eager to learn. They try their best and work well together in pairs and in groups. They do, however, get restless when teachers talk for too long.
- Pupils are aware of all forms of bullying, including name-calling, fighting and prejudiced behaviours such as racism. They say that when, occasionally, a bullying incident occurs, the adults in the school deal with it efficiently. The school's records confirm that behaviour is good over time.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and are well aware of unsafe situations. They know, for instance, how to keep themselves safe when using digital devices, riding their bicycles on the road and from harmful substances.
- The school works effectively with external agencies to support pupils and their families experiencing difficulties with learning, behaviour or regular attendance.

The leadership and management are good

- In the past year, school leaders and the governing body have increased the rate of improvement markedly. All members of staff are committed to building on these recent successes to improve further the quality of teaching so that pupils leave the school with higher levels of attainment. They demonstrate an equally committed approach to promoting an equality of opportunity for all pupils and tackling any form of discrimination.
- Good self-evaluation processes ensure that leaders know the school well. The school development plan is a thorough document focusing on well-chosen priorities. It does not, however, always identify clearly enough how proposed actions will build on recent successes to make an even greater positive impact on pupils' achievement.
- The local authority provides good support for school leaders and teachers and this has contributed positively to improvements in the quality of leadership and teaching.
- The partnership with other local schools and a good programme of staff training has considerably helped the school to be more successful.
- All leaders fulfil an essential role in checking pupils' progress and the effectiveness of teaching. Appraisal systems are well planned and rigorously followed. Leaders have successfully tackled poor performance and this has been an important contributory factor in ensuring better quality teaching. They have correctly identified the next areas for improvement in teaching to secure

consistently high quality learning. Leaders pay close attention to pupils' progress information when taking decisions about teachers' pay.

- The range of subjects taught meets statutory requirements. An annual visiting theatre group, visits to places of interest such as local museums, and activities available in the breakfast club, for example, enrich pupils' experiences. With these and other opportunities, the school ensures that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well promoted.
- Partnerships with parents are good. The school helps parents to support their children's learning at home, and keeps them well informed of events and how well their children are progressing in their learning and personal development.

■ **The governance of the school:**

–The effectiveness of the governing body has improved significantly as new members have brought considerable expertise to the school. Governors monitor the work of the school regularly and have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement and how this compares to similar schools. Their programme of training has included topics relating to school visits and the analysis and understanding of progress data. Governors therefore have the tools and ambition to challenge and support the school's leaders with rigour to bring about rapid improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement. They ensure good value for money, including checking the impact of spending pupil premium funding and expanding the school's leadership team to ensure that recent improvements will be built upon. Governors are aware of the outcomes of the school's annual appraisal procedures to check staff performance, and make sure that only the most successful teachers are rewarded. All statutory duties are met, including arrangements for safeguarding.

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	110404
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	401124

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	280
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Amanda Nicholas
Headteacher	Louise Aird
Date of previous school inspection	14 October 2009
Telephone number	01908 270377
Fax number	01908 375562
Email address	office@coldharbourschool.org.uk

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