

Shefford Church of England Primary School

Wantage Road, Hungerford, RG17 7DB

Inspection dates 23–24 January 2013

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 is improving but it is not consistently good over time, particularly in mathematics and writing.
- Teaching is improving but over recent years it has not been good enough to ensure that pupils make good progress.
- Expectations of what pupils can learn, and the amount of work that they can produce, are not always high enough.
- In some lessons, the work that pupils are set is too easy or too difficult for them.
- Learning does not always move on at a quick enough pace.
- The leadership roles of staff, other than the headteacher and assistant headteacher, are not sufficiently well developed. Most roles and responsibilities currently lie with the two senior leaders.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders and governors are now taking positive action to raise achievement and improve teaching.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school.
- Pupils are courteous, considerate and relate well to others.
- Pupils feel safe and very well cared for.
- Attendance has improved significantly and is now above average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in seven lessons or part-lessons.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, staff, a representative from the local authority, governors and pupils.
- The inspector took account of the four responses to the online survey (Parent View) and the school's own parental survey.
- Four questionnaires from staff were analysed.
- School policies, information about pupils' attainment and progress, teachers' plans, pupils' work and the school's improvement plans were examined.

Inspection team

Carol Warrant, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most of the pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also average.
- An above-average proportion of the pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils in local authority care, those known to be eligible for free school meals and those with a parent in the armed services.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school is federated with the nearby Chaddleworth St Andrew's Church of England Primary School. The schools share the same headteacher, governing body and senior leadership team. Both schools were inspected at the same time. This was a coordinated inspection with the lead inspectors of the two schools working closely together.
- There have been considerable staff changes since the last inspection. A new assistant headteacher joined the school in September 2012.
- Children in Reception and pupils in Years 1 and 2 from both schools are taught on the Chaddleworth site. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 from both schools are taught at Shefford.
- There is no alternative provision linked to the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all teaching is at least good by making sure that:
 - teachers' expectations of what pupils can learn, and the quantity of work they can produce, are always high enough
 - teachers always set tasks which are at the right level of difficulty for individual pupils
 - pupils' learning always moves on at a brisk pace.
- Raise pupils' achievement, particularly in mathematics and writing, by:
 - extending opportunities for pupils to apply their writing skills in subjects other than English
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to apply numeracy skills to solve problems in other subjects.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - extending the leadership roles and responsibilities of staff other than the headteacher and assistant headteacher in raising achievement and improving teaching.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Most year groups enter Reception with knowledge and skills similar to those typically expected for their age. By the end of Year 6, attainment is broadly average and progress has not been consistently good. Achievement in mathematics and writing has been weaker than that in reading.
- Pupils' progress in reading is more consistent across the school and pupils are increasingly confident in their reading skills. Pupils have a wide range of books in school and enjoy opportunities to read extensively. The best readers are fluent and read with good expression. Less confident readers are supported by small group and individual sessions for phonics (the sounds that letters make). Pupils are successfully encouraged to read at home and school and older pupils develop strong opinions on their favourite authors and genres.
- Effective steps are being taken to raise achievement in writing. However, there are some inconsistencies in the amount of writing pupils produce, although there are some good examples of pupils applying their writing skills in subjects other than English. This good practice is not consistent in all classes and pupils' writing skills are sometimes impeded by them being asked to complete too many worksheets.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics is improving. Pupils are now acquiring and using the main methods of calculation competently. They are developing their problem-solving skills by applying their numeracy skills to new situations. However, the application of numeracy skills in other subjects is less well developed.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make the progress typically expected for this group. In a number of lessons seen during the inspection these pupils were taught and supported well.
- Positive action has been taken to raise the achievement of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding. When comparing their average points scores showing how much progress they make as they move through the school, these pupils attain less well than other pupils in the school, but the gap is narrowing.
- The learning of the more able pupils is usually extended in lessons but this is not always the case. On occasions, they are not extended enough because the work set is too easy.
- The progress of children in Reception has been hampered by staffing changes. However, children are now beginning to make good progress in the key areas of learning.
- Pupils often make good progress in speaking and listening because they have well-planned opportunities to discuss their learning and express their ideas in pairs.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Over time, teaching has not been consistently good enough to ensure that pupils make good progress. Teaching is improving but there is not enough outstanding teaching and some weaknesses in practice remain.
- Occasionally, expectations of what pupils can achieve and the amount of work they produce are not high enough. In addition, the pace of learning in some lessons is too slow and consequently pupils make little progress in such lessons.
- Pupils are not always set work at the right level for their abilities and needs. When this happens, pupils do not make the progress that they should.
- Where teaching is best, lessons have a clear purpose and teachers effectively share the learning intentions and success criteria with the class. As a result, pupils know what they are expected to learn and can judge when they have succeeded.
- The quality of teaching in the Reception class has improved recently and children are now

beginning to make good progress. There is an effective blend of adult-led activities and opportunities for children to learn independently.

- The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) is effective and helps pupils to develop secure skills in reading.
- Teaching assistants are well deployed and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, particularly for those who need additional help with literacy and numeracy skills.
- In a successful Years 3/4 lesson, pupils wrote the opening sections to their stories. Using their storyboards from a previous lesson and their 'success ladders', they established setting and characters with imaginative use of adjectives and adverbs. All pupils were totally absorbed by the task throughout and very proud of their completed work. However, this good practice is not yet widespread and the teaching of writing has rightly been identified by the school as a key priority. There are too few opportunities for pupils to write in subjects other than English.
- The marking of pupils' work is generally effective. Teachers identify why pupils' work is good and clearly indicate the next steps for improvement.
- Pupils have clear individual learning plans. The targets set show what they are aiming for and guidance is provided on how to meet them.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The good behaviour and safety reported in the previous inspection have been maintained and built upon. Pupils have positive attitudes to school and behave well. They have a good awareness of how to stay safe.
- Most pupils are enthusiastic and keen learners. They behave well in lessons and around the school. Records of incidents show that behaviour is good over time.
- Pupils are cooperative, considerate and well behaved.
- Relationships between adults and pupils, and among pupils, are a strength of the school.
- Pupils work well in pairs and groups and readily help and support one another.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of what bullying is and the different forms it can take, including name-calling, physical bullying and cyber bullying. They know what to do should bullying occur. Pupils told inspectors that there was very little bullying in the school and that it is dealt with quickly by staff.
- Most pupils at Shefford now attend school regularly and attendance has improved significantly since the last inspection.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management have not yet resulted in good achievement for pupils and consistently good teaching over time. Staffing changes have had an adverse impact on the school's development.
- The headteacher and staff of both schools have created a positive and safe environment in which pupils can learn and develop.
- The headteacher and recently appointed assistant headteacher are working well together with staff in beginning to raise pupils' achievement and improve the quality of teaching. Through careful analysis and checking, they have an accurate overview of the school's strengths and improvement priorities.
- The leadership roles of other staff are not sufficiently well developed so that all can contribute fully to the school's drive for improvement. Most leadership responsibilities currently lie with the two senior leaders which is slowing the school's progress overall, because they are having to focus on things other than the priorities of raising achievement and the quality of teaching.
- Procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching and improving teachers' practice have been

strengthened. The headteacher and personnel from the local authority observe teaching and provide constructive feedback to teachers. There are good systems for checking pupils' progress. However, these strategies have not yet had time to impact on raising the quality of teaching to good and improving pupils' achievement.

- Professional development and training are securely linked to the school's priorities for improvement. Decisions about staff promotion and salary increases are appropriately based on responsibilities and how well staff are performing. Staff across the two schools are working together to share good practice.
 - The local authority provides good support in the school's drive for improvement. It has a clear and realistic overview of how well the school is performing. This good support is planned to continue.
 - Leaders and staff are developing an interesting curriculum with an international dimension. A range of interesting topics is being introduced with good links between subjects intended to add meaning and relevance to pupils' learning.
 - All pupils have complete access to the range of opportunities that the school offers. Discrimination, in any form, is not tolerated in the school. However, not all pupils have received consistently good teaching.
 - Not many parents responded to the online Parent View, but the school's own survey shows that most parents are satisfied with the education and care provided.
 - The pupil premium funding has been properly allocated to provide for the pupils who are eligible to benefit from it. One-to-one support is helping to raise the achievement of these pupils.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Members of the governing body are enthusiastic and supportive. They have a good understanding of the school's performance and its journey of improvement. Governors have a clear overview of pupils' attainment and progress and how these compare to schools nationally. They also have an accurate understanding of the quality of teaching and are aware that improvements need to be made in order to accelerate pupils' progress. They challenge the headteacher in order to hold the school to account. Governors understand requirements relating to the management of staff performance and ensure that pay and promotion are linked to the progress pupils make. They check how the pupil premium funding is spent and the impact the actions have on pupils' achievement. The governors make sure that all safeguarding procedures meet requirements. They have received training and have the knowledge and skills to carry out their roles.
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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	109975
Local authority	West Berkshire
Inspection number	401095

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	28
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mary Harwood
Headteacher	Remus Sawyerr
Date of previous school inspection	14–15 July 2010
Telephone number	01488 648657
Fax number	01488 649562
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