

West Witney Primary School

Edington Road, Witney, Oxfordshire, OX28 5FZ

Inspection dates 20–21 February 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

- The progress made by pupils in the recent past has not been fast enough and attainment has not been high enough by the end of Year 6.
- The progress of pupils currently in Years 4 and 5 is not fast enough.
- The standard of writing produced by some older pupils is not as good as it should be.
- Some more-able pupils are not achieving results that match their ability.
- Outcomes in the most recent Year 1 reading check were below the national average and the arrangements for checking and improving the teaching of the sounds that letters make (phonics) are not effective enough.
- Teaching requires improvement because work is not always set at the right level for pupils, marking is not helping pupils to improve sufficiently, and because some introductions to lessons are too long.
- Recent improvements introduced by the headteacher have not had enough time to ensure consistently good teaching and progress for all pupils.
- The school improvement plan is not focused enough on the school's key priorities.
- Governors have not been effective in driving improvement and do not know enough about the impact the pupil premium is having on eligible pupils' progress.

The school has the following strengths

- The teaching of children in Nursery and Reception is good.
- The actions of leaders have increased attendance and improved the quality of teaching leading to faster progress for pupils.
- Pupils in Year 2 are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Targets for teachers to improve their practice are robust and linked well to the progress made by pupils.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors held meetings with senior staff, groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and one other governor.
- A meeting was held with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors looked at a range of evidence including the school's improvement plan, the information collected by the school and local authority on pupils' progress, work in pupils' books, and documentation relating to safeguarding.
- The inspectors observed teaching and heard pupils read in 16 lessons. Four lesson observations were carried out with the headteacher.
- The inspectors met some parents informally at the start of the school day and considered the 37 responses made through the online Parent View website.
- The inspectors considered the views of the 37 staff who completed a questionnaire.

Inspection team

David Bray, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Heidi Boreham

Additional Inspector

Trevor Neat

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average primary school.
- Children start school in the Nursery in two mixed-age classes with children in Reception.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, additional government funding for looked-after children, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils from service families, is below average.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage and there are a small number of minority ethnic groups. A very small number of pupils are at the early stages of learning English.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is low.
- The headteacher and Chair of Governors were appointed in September 2012. The school has had three headteachers in a relatively short period of time and there have been other recent changes in leadership and staffing roles.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, especially in Years 4 and 5, so that it is good or better by making sure that:
 - teachers plan work that is set at the right level for pupils so that more-able pupils in particular consistently make enough progress
 - teachers do not talk for too long when introducing learning
 - the quality of marking is better so that pupils receive good feedback on how to improve their work and act upon the advice
 - writing improves through providing training and support where teaching is less effective.
- Improve the teaching and leadership of phonics by:
 - reviewing the current leadership arrangements so that they are clearer to all staff
 - checking the teaching of phonics more systematically
 - using the good practice in the Nursery and Reception to support the less effective teaching of phonics in Year 1.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by making sure that:
 - governors are more actively involved in driving improvement and have more specific information about the progress of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding
 - the school development plan is more sharply focused on the school's improvement priorities and leads to rapid improvement.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- The most recent results in the phonics check for Year 1 pupils were below the national average. Pupils who did not reach the expected level in this check have received extra support and are now making sufficient progress. The phonics skills of current Year 1 pupils are still not secure enough in all classes.
- Achievement in Key Stage 2 has not been high enough in the last few years and pupils have not made enough progress. In 2012, progress in writing was a particular issue. The school has introduced a programme of activities to develop writing which has started to bring about improvements. The current Year 6 pupils are making sufficient progress in reading and writing. Writing is still a priority for development because of some inconsistencies and lack of expectation, especially in Years 4 and 5.
- Achievement in mathematics has been too slow over the last few years, especially for pupils in Key Stage 2. The school has made this a priority and there have been improvements in the progress of pupils, especially in mental mathematics. This still remains a priority for further improvement so that progress is good in all year groups.
- More-able pupils have not achieved well enough in recent tests. The targets set for these pupils are now high enough and the progress of this group is improving but too many of them are still not making sufficient progress.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception class begin school with skills and abilities that match expectations for their age. They enjoy coming to school and receive good care and support which helps them to develop good behaviour. Children enjoy a range of engaging activities and make good progress in acquiring skills.
- In Year 2 pupils build upon this good start and make good progress in literacy and mathematics so that by the end of Year 2 their achievement is above the national average for their age group.
- Pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium are making progress that matches other pupils in the school. In the 2012 tests, Year 2 pupils did better than other pupils. The majority of current pupils are making good progress and gaps in attainment are closing.
- The majority of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are currently making progress that is in line with other pupils in the school. This is because the targets for these pupils are now high enough, teaching assistants provide effective support and arrangements to monitor the progress of this group have improved.
- The progress of pupils from minority ethnic groups or who are at the early stages of learning English is the same as other pupils. This is because their needs are met and learning is adapted to suit them.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity adequately. There are no significant differences in the achievement of different groups of pupils.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Occasionally in Year 1 the teaching of phonics is not effective enough because the assessment of individual pupils is not rigorous and some are allowed to continue pronouncing sounds incorrectly.
- At times, especially in Years 4 and 5, activities are not matched well enough to the abilities of pupils so that more-able pupils in particular do not make sufficient progress. Teachers spend too long introducing topics and the quality of marking is not good enough to provide enough feedback on how pupils can improve their work. Pupils are rarely encouraged to respond to marking by improving their work.
- The teaching of writing is still not strong enough, especially in Key Stage 2. Evidence from lessons and pupils' work shows that writing is starting to improve and that many pupils are

currently on track to make better progress. This is because pupils are practising their literacy skills and applying them at the end of the week in an extended writing task. Some pupils are not using ideas well enough yet to produce writing that is consistently effective.

- Teaching in Nursery and Reception is good. Teachers and teaching assistants set a good example of how to behave. Praise is used effectively to develop positive attitudes to school. Skilful questioning and teaching of phonics mean that children make good progress.
- Teaching in Year 2 is good. This helps pupils to build upon the good start they make in the Nursery and Reception so that by the end of Year 2 pupils are achieving standards that are above average. The use of questioning is mostly effective and activities are planned well to see that pupils of different abilities make enough progress. However, some teaching of phonics in Year 1 is not effective enough.
- The teaching of mathematics has been a priority for development and pupils are now making better progress because of more effective teaching. Teachers have higher expectations and planning helps pupils to develop skills more securely. Pupils' use of mental mathematics has improved.
- Teaching in Key Stage 2 is often good. In the best lessons activities are paced well and mean that all pupils make rapid progress.
- Teaching assistants are effective because they make sure that pupils are making progress when providing support in lessons and when taking smaller groups for specific activities. For example, a teaching assistant ran a very effective session for younger children which involved them developing their phonics skills outside. This helped them to develop very positive attitudes to learning because they enjoyed the practical nature of the activity.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are keen to learn. They enjoy school and are eager to do well. They are respectful and work well together in pairs and small groups. The school fosters good relationships effectively.
- Pupils behave well around the school and during breaks. At lunchtime pupils eat together in an orderly way and play well with equipment provided in the playground.
- The school has developed a new behaviour policy and this is being carried out well. There is a good focus on rewards which promotes positive behaviour, and sanctions are clear.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and do not experience bullying or racist comments. A few parents completing the Parent View survey said that there was some bullying at school. Parents and pupils spoken to during the inspection said that bullying was not an issue. The school does not tolerate discrimination of any kind.
- The large majority of parents were positive about behaviour in school. The large number of staff who completed a survey stated that behaviour was good.
- Attendance has improved significantly this year, because staff follow-up absence rigorously, and attendance is now above average. There are, however, still a few pupils that are persistently absent.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The leadership of phonics across the school has not been clear enough and as a result some teaching, especially in Year 1, is not good enough.
- The teaching of literacy, especially of writing, is not secure enough across the school. In 2012 Year 6 pupils did not make sufficient progress in writing and although the school has introduced a specific focus on writing this is not being carried out effectively enough across all year groups. The way leaders check the teaching of writing is not strong enough for pupils to make good progress.
- The recently appointed headteacher is improving important aspects of the school following a

period where achievement has not been high enough. Despite this there are still too many areas where learning needs to be better and where a faster pace of improvement is required.

- Actions taken since September have led to the introduction of robust targets for teachers to improve their practice. The headteacher has made sure there is better progress for most current pupils, improved the teaching of mathematics and increased attendance. These changes are relatively recent.
- The recently appointed special educational needs coordinator has developed a good support plan for pupils with special educational needs and expectations for these pupils are high.
- The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and makes sure that good tracking and assessment are used to check children's progress rigorously.
- The school makes effective arrangements to see that pupils are safe and that adults appointed to work in the school are appropriately qualified and experienced.
- The local authority has provided support which has contributed to improvements in mathematics.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governors have a realistic understanding of the performance of the school and how this compares with all schools nationally. They are keen to improve it further but their actions are not focused enough to achieve this aim quickly and the school development plan does not include enough information about the priorities that require improvement. Governors have training but are not linking this closely enough to the school's priorities for development. Governors have made sure that targets set for teachers to improve their practice are robust and this has had a positive impact on improving teaching. Governors know about the quality of teaching and what the school is doing to reward good teaching and to tackle any underperformance. Governors have summary information about the pupil premium funding but do not have detailed enough information about its impact on the learning of these pupils.
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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	123084
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	406137

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	301
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ruth Swift
Headteacher	Nancy Darby
Date of previous school inspection	20–21 January 2011
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