

Lea and Garsdon Church of England Primary School

The Street, Lea, Malmesbury, SN16 9PG

Inspection dates

27–28 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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

- The quality of teaching requires improvement. It is not yet consistently good enough to help pupils make up ground they have lost in previous years, particularly in mathematics in Key Stage 2.
- In mathematics, teachers sometimes just talk about key things rather than writing them down to help pupils understand.
- The activities pupils are given to do are occasionally too hard for a few pupils who have special educational needs.
- Pupils do not always take enough notice of the good advice they are given in teachers' marking.
- The school has some good ways of providing extra help to those who need it, but it does not always check in detail how well these things are speeding up learning.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has led the school very well through a difficult period of many staff changes. She is well supported by the staff, and teaching and achievement are improving.
- Children in the Reception class learn well in all areas, because of good and sometimes outstanding teaching. Much teaching is now good in other parts of the school.
- Pupils make rapid progress in learning to read, and they are now catching up in writing.
- Pupils are happy, behave well and feel safe in school. Some show exceptional understanding and kindness to others.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed six lessons and made a number of other shorter visits to classes.
- She listened to some Year 2 pupils reading and had discussions with a group of pupils from Year 6. She also talked informally to pupils of all ages.
- She discussed the school with the headteacher and other staff, with four governors including the Chair, and by telephone with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector gained the views of parents and carers through some informal discussions after school and the 39 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. She also analysed 16 returns made by staff to an Ofsted questionnaire.
- She looked at a range of documentation including safeguarding checks, records of behaviour and progress, and development planning. She studied a sample of pupils' work in English and mathematics.

Inspection team

Deborah Zachary, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than most primary schools.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported by school action is above average, as is the proportion supported by school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs.
- The large majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is below average. This is extra funding provided to the school by the government for some groups of pupils. There are no children at the school in the care of the local authority, so those who are funded are either known to be eligible for free school meals or children from families with a parent in the armed forces. However, there are only one or two in each year group.
- More pupils than usual join or leave partway through their primary school education.
- Since the last inspection all the teachers have changed. Most of the current teachers have been at the school less than five terms, and some have only just joined. Some are temporary. The current headteacher joined in September 2011.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, by making sure that:
 - staff have the training they need to teach mathematics confidently and effectively
 - when teachers give explanations or introduce new words in mathematics, they write words or examples down as well as talk about them
 - lesson activities are fine-tuned to the right level of difficulty for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs
 - pupils have to respond to marking in a way that moves their learning on.
- Ensure that when class teachers review how well their plans for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are working, they take into account data such as results of tests.
- Evaluate the impact the specific actions funded by the pupil premium are having on pupils' progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement in mathematics. After a period of good progress by pupils that led to above-average Year 6 results, standards and progress fell significantly in 2012 in both English and mathematics. The school's data show that current pupils are now doing well in English, particularly in reading, but progress in mathematics has not yet recovered to its previous good levels.
- The 2012 results were particularly affected by the slow progress made by a group of boys who had special educational needs. Similar groups now in Year 6 have not made enough progress in writing and mathematics since Year 2. Their progress is speeding up but they have ground to make up because of slower progress in earlier years.
- Support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs has particularly focused on literacy. As a result these Year 6 pupils have made good progress in writing for the last few terms. They are catching up in writing and making excellent progress in reading, but although they are no longer losing ground in mathematics, they are not catching up quickly enough.
- Progress in reading is a real strength in Key Stage 1 and Reception as well as Key Stage 2. Progress is good in mathematics and writing, though progress in mathematics is the slowest of these three basic skills. The links between sounds and letters (phonics) are taught very well. A high proportion of pupils in Year 1 did well in last summer's phonics tests.
- There are no significant differences in the achievement of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds.
- The school uses its pupil premium funding to provide academic help and guidance for eligible pupils, for example through one-to-one support or working with others in small groups. It also funds work to develop pupils' personal skills. The school is now evaluating the impact of the support and can show it is making a difference in terms of the overall progress of pupils involved over the last two years. They have made at least as good progress as others.
- This report does not evaluate the standards pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or pupils from service families reach by the end of Year 6, because the numbers of pupils are so small that individuals would be identified.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it has not been good enough to ensure that the pupils currently in the school have made good progress. The teaching of mathematics particularly requires improvement.
- In mathematics, teachers sometimes lack confidence or occasionally subject expertise. This can lead to confusion for pupils, or can mean that pupils are not challenged at the right level in discussions. Sometimes teachers present ideas or vocabulary by talking rather than writing examples or words on the board, so some pupils forget them.
- Teachers plan work at different levels, aimed at meeting the needs of groups of pupils of different abilities. The work is usually well chosen and successful. However, occasionally work is too hard for individual pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs. As a result they complete too little work, or rely too much on adult help.
- Teachers work with the special needs coordinator to identify particular strategies to help disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. These are carefully thought through but are not always evaluated with precision to see whether the actions have accelerated the pupils' progress. They have plenty of data, for example from reading and spelling tests, but do not yet routinely use these results to evaluate the success of things they have tried and help them to decide if the strategies should be changed.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and are following the helpful new school system. They

praise positives and identify something to improve using the colour green (called 'green for growth'). Pupils say that this makes it clear – they like the system.

- Much of the teaching that is happening in the school now is good. Most of the classrooms are exciting environments. Year 1 has a 'toy museum', the Years 2 and 3 class has 'Brunel's office', celebrating the achievements of the famous engineer, and the Years 4 and 5 class has a 'time machine'. Teachers and pupils have put much effort into creating these and the displays of work that abound. The rooms are exciting and stimulating places to work and, as one pupil put it, this makes school 'really, really fun'.
- In Reception children learn very rapidly, both through good direct teaching from the teacher and through activities put out for them to choose from. These activities are carefully planned so that they reinforce the learning the teacher is aiming for. For example, when they were learning the 'ur' sound, the letters were available to copy outside in a mark-making area, and the teaching assistant prompted children to make sure they were getting the letters the right way round. The children love the work on dinosaurs and the 'dinosaur museum' where they measure and read. During the inspection they were enthralled to find a 'dinosaur egg' had 'hatched' overnight.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Almost all parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire said behaviour was good. In lessons, pupils' behaviour was at least good and their attitudes sometimes outstanding; they are quiet and attentive, keen and ready to learn. They are starting to be able to evaluate their own work and many use their personal targets to speed up their learning. They do not always respond to advice given in marking, so are not yet taking maximum responsibility for their learning.
- In assembly pupils show they can reflect well and think about others. They are keen to answer questions and offer prayers. They make a good contribution to the school, for example through the school council, and through the collective worship team. They show a particularly high level of empathy for others and real kindness. Even quite young ones are quick to help if they sense someone else is unhappy. They support each other and promote each other's self-esteem with maturity.
- All of the parents and carers who responded said their child felt safe, and this was also the view of pupils. They are confident that adults will look after them. They understand that bullying may take a variety of forms, but say it is not an issue in the school. Parents and carers, too, were confident that the school deals well with the very little bullying that might occur.
- One or two pupils find good behaviour more challenging out of lessons. School records show the occasional argument escalating but incidents are few and are well dealt with by staff. The school has very good strategies to support pupils who need help to deal with challenging situations, and records show excellent improvements to their behaviour.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has led the school particularly well in difficult circumstances. Repeated staff changes have made it difficult to build on successes, but despite this she and senior leaders have secured considerable improvements to pupils' progress in English. Questionnaires returned show the headteacher has the complete support of the staff, and they are highly committed to improvement.
- Development plans are well judged and clear. Deadlines are being met and strategies followed through. The school has acted on the right priorities by improving writing and is now focusing on mathematics. The local authority has supported the school appropriately through the challenges it has faced, and continues to work with the school as it requests. It rightly recognises the strengths of the school's leadership.

- The leadership of teaching is good. Areas for improvement are followed up well with individuals. Records of the monitoring of teaching show significant improvements to the work of staff who have remained in the school. Targets set for teachers to improve their performance appropriately include areas identified for the whole school, but also impose challenging requirements for the progress of pupils in teachers' classes.
 - The school ensures there is no discrimination, and actively and very successfully promotes the key values of inclusion, respect and tolerance. However, its drive to ensure that all pupils have an equal chance to succeed is not yet fully successful, as progress still requires improvement for some pupils who have special educational needs.
 - The leadership of special educational needs has changed, but much good work has been done by both the previous and present leaders. The decision to give class teachers more responsibility for helping disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs was the right one, even though reviews need fine-tuning.
 - Pupil premium funds are low compared to other schools, and the school keeps a check on the general improvement of the pupils involved. However, it does not check with precision on the immediate impact of the things the money has been used for. This makes it harder to identify the very best use of the funds.
 - The topics pupils study are stimulating and clearly planned. Staff give very good attention to developing pupils' understanding of relationships and their social skills, as well as the academic aspects. After-school activities, trips out and visitors enhance the pupils' experiences and pupils practise their literacy, numeracy and computer skills in a range of contexts.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is effective. Though many are comparatively new, training is effective and governors have a good understanding of data and a good system for reviewing what is going on in the school. They ask the right questions and challenge the headteacher about what is happening. They are clear that promotions and salary rises should only be given to staff if they have had a good impact on pupils' performance. They know how good teaching is, and understand the challenges the school has faced. They keep a close eye on the budget.
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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	126335
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	403598

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	112
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David English
Headteacher	Kay Vousden
Date of previous school inspection	29 November 2007
Telephone number	01666 823534
Fax number	N/a
Email address	admin@leagarsdon.wilts.sch.uk

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