

# Aloeric Primary School

St Michael's Road, Melksham, Wiltshire, SN12 6HN

**Inspection dates** 5–6 March 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
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 do not make consistently good progress, particularly in mathematics, and consequently their achievement requires improvement.
- Teachers do not always check during lessons that all pupils are making good progress.
- Teaching assistants are not always used well enough during the first part of lessons.
- There are not enough planned opportunities for pupils to practise their numeracy skills in other subjects.
- Pupils are not always given enough time in lessons to respond to marking and feedback.
- Not all pupils at risk of underachievement are clearly identified and given extra support.
- Observations of teachers are sometimes not focused enough on improving learning.
- Checks by governors are not focused well enough on the school's main areas for improvement.

### The school has the following strengths

- Children make a positive start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make good progress, particularly in their writing and calculation skills.
- The provision and progress for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are good.
- Pupils behave well, have good attitudes to their learning and feel safe.
- Senior leaders have a clear drive for school improvement and have high expectations of staff and pupils.
- The positive ethos of care and support for pupils and their families is a strength.
- Good relationships between adults and pupils encourage pupils to do their best and consequently they enjoy their learning.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 17 lessons taught by 12 different teachers, and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and a representative of the local authority. One lesson observation was conducted with the headteacher.
- They observed the school’s work and looked at planning documents, monitoring records, assessment data and pupils’ work.
- Inspectors took account of 37 responses to Parent View (the online questionnaire) and 30 responses to the staff questionnaire in reaching their judgements about the school.

## Inspection team

David Shears, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jennifer Cutler

Additional Inspector

Nigel Ash

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Aloeric Primary is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language are both below national averages.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium, which is extra government funding for particular groups, including pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and those from service families, is below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school provides a breakfast club for pupils.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that the rate of progress, particularly in mathematics, is at least good or better by making sure that:
  - teachers check during lessons that all pupils are making at least good progress, enabling further support or challenge where needed
  - teaching assistants are used more effectively during the first part of lessons to maximise learning
  - pupils are given enough time in lessons to respond to marking and feedback
  - there are consistently planned opportunities for pupils to practise their mathematical skills in other subjects.
- Further develop the effectiveness of leadership and management by making sure that:
  - checks to see if any pupils are at risk of underachievement are more rigorous so that all are identified more quickly and given effective support
  - observations of lessons give a clear indication of the progress of different groups of pupils and consistently give teachers guidance that is focused on pupils' learning
  - 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 achievement of pupils requires improvement because not enough make good progress. This is because teaching is not consistently good through the school and so the progress varies between year groups. In particular it is less strong in mathematics.
- Children start school with skills and knowledge that are broadly in line with age-related expectations although there are weaknesses in their writing and calculation skills. They make good progress in many areas so that they leave with attainment that is at least average in all areas.
- In Years 1 to 6 pupils make progress that requires improvement overall. Attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is broadly in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics, although there are early signs that this is beginning to improve, for example in reading at Year 2. This is because there has been a good focus on teaching phonics (the sounds that letters make). For example, pupils were well supported in learning the difference in pronouncing 'th' and 'f', enabling them to make better progress in their spelling.
- The progress of most groups of pupils requires improvement. However, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. This is because they receive tailored support both in class and through working together in small groups. Those who receive extra funding through the pupil premium are also well supported by specialist teaching assistants, particularly in English. As a result the average point score gaps at the end of Year 6 have closed in English, although this is not the case in mathematics.
- While there are some pupils who clearly make good progress, others have fallen behind due to poorer teaching in the past. Some of these have been clearly identified and given effective support but there are a minority of pupils who are still underachieving, particularly in mathematics.

### The quality of teaching requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is inconsistent across the school. This is because teachers do not always check during lessons whether pupils are making good progress and this sometimes means that some pupils, including the higher attaining pupils, do not always receive appropriately challenging work early enough in lessons. There are signs that this is improving this year.
- Pupils know the level at which they are working in English and mathematics and have a good understanding of their targets. Teachers use assessment information well to plan lessons and ensure that pupils receive work that will enable them to improve. During these activities teaching assistants make a good contribution to learning through supporting those in need of further help such as disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. However, in the first part of lessons they are not always used well enough and so opportunities are missed to accelerate pupils' learning.
- In all lessons there are good relationships between staff and adults, leading to a positive climate for learning. Pupils enjoy their lessons and are not afraid to 'have a go', knowing that they can learn equally as well through their mistakes. Good use is made of technology such as interactive whiteboards to enhance teaching. At the end of lessons pupils are often given the opportunity to assess for themselves how well they think they have achieved. Marking and feedback are always

completed with positive comments to encourage pupils and in most books there are clearly identified areas for improvement. However, while there are good examples of pupils responding to the marking and feedback, this is not yet consistent across the school because they are not always given enough time in lessons to do so.

- Teachers ensure that there are planned opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy skills in other subjects, although the standard of presentation in their writing in these subjects is sometimes less good than in their English books. While there are examples of pupils using their mathematical skills in other subjects, such as in science, these are not strategically planned to maximise the opportunity for reinforcing the teaching of these skills.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Pupils behave well in lessons because they enjoy learning, one pupil saying they 'would like to encourage more people to think learning is fun'. They have positive attitudes and are able to work well together. They are equally able to be independent in their learning.
- Pupils know the school's rules for behaviour and are keen to uphold these. They behave well in the playground although they do recognise that for a small number of pupils this is not easy to maintain. However, they recognise that these pupils receive good support from adults to help them improve their behaviour. Older pupils act as 'peer mediators' in resolving differences of opinion. Pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes bullying and say that this is a rare occurrence in school. If any should happen, they are confident that it will be dealt with swiftly. Consequently, all pupils say that they feel safe in school. The vast majority of parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire, and most staff, agree that behaviour is good and well managed. Inspectors agree.
- The school puts much emphasis on the well-being of pupils and gives opportunities for pupils to share their feelings, both positive and negative. For example, in some classes pupils use a 'feelings board' to indicate to adults how they feel. In others there are 'worry boxes' that pupils use to share their concerns with staff and these are followed up. The school makes use of counsellors to give appropriate support to those with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.
- The attendance of pupils is above the national average and the proportion that is persistently absent is below average. The vast majority of pupils are punctual and look forward to the school day. The school runs a breakfast club each morning where there are activities for them to enjoy, making it a positive start to their day. They are well supervised by staff.

### **The leadership and management** require improvement

- The quality of teaching in a few classes has been a cause for concern in recent years leading to too many pupils underachieving, particularly in mathematics. While a system for identifying these pupils has been established it is not rigorous enough and so some underachievement still remains. Nevertheless, those that have been identified are being given appropriate support and are improving as a result.
- Senior leaders have tackled and successfully addressed the weakest teaching in the school and consequently the quality of teaching is rising. However, it is still not strong enough to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress across the school. The quality of teaching is regularly checked by senior leaders and teachers have a clear understanding of their strengths

and areas for development. However, in observations of lessons there is not enough emphasis on the progress that groups of pupils make and so these development areas tend to focus on improving the quality of teaching rather than learning.

- The headteacher, ably assisted by senior leaders, has a strong drive for school improvement. There are clear plans to raise the progress and attainment of pupils. Changes have been made to staffing and the organisation of classes in Years 1 and 2 and this is already having a positive impact on the progress of pupils. The quality of teaching is improving and the rate of progress is beginning to rise.
  - The care of pupils and their families is a core value of the school. Parents and carers are warmly welcomed when their children start and are very positive in their views about the school with nearly all saying that they would recommend it to others. Leaders ensure that safeguarding policies and procedures meet current national requirements.
  - The school ensures there is no discrimination and 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 varies between groups of pupils and between English and mathematics.
  - Information about the quality of teaching is used to make decisions about teachers' pay. Teachers feel well supported and have good opportunities to further develop their teaching skills.
  - The local authority provides appropriate support for the school through regular visits from a school improvement advisor.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - Governors know how well the school is performing compared to schools nationally, through examining data, and challenge the school about making improvements. Although they are involved in some monitoring themselves it is not focused enough on the school's main areas for development and so it is difficult for them to demonstrate their impact on school improvement. Governors manage finance well, including checking how well staff are performing and, in particular, the effectiveness of the headteacher. They have a clear understanding of how pupil premium money is used and have recently been informed about the impact that this has had on the progress these pupils make. The governing body has recently conducted an audit of its skills and ensures that appropriate training is given such as a course about 'holding the school to account'. The governing body recognises the need to promote a higher profile with parents and carers.
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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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	126474
<b>Local authority</b>	Wiltshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	406368

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	327
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jon Woodger
<b>Headteacher</b>	Matthew Nightingale
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20–21 June 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01225 702563
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