

Littledean Church of England Primary School

Church Street, Littledean, Cinderford, GL14 3NL

Inspection dates 8–9 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils achieve well. All groups of pupils make good progress from low starting points and by the end of Year 6 some pupils have made exceptional progress.
- Teachers have high expectations and know the pupils well. This means that pupils are able to learn well.
- Pupils show excellent attitudes towards their learning and are fully engaged in lessons. Their behaviour in and around the school is outstanding. They feel safe and enjoy coming to school.
- Governors support the co-headteachers well. They are knowledgeable about the school and are clear about what needs to be done next in order to improve further.
- Attendance has improved since the last inspection. It is now above the national average and is continuing to improve.
- Parents and carers are unreservedly positive about the school. They praise the leadership and the quality of teaching, the approachability of staff, the level of care that the school provides and the highly effective way in which concerns are addressed.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A small amount of teaching is not as effective in moving learning on at a faster pace. Marking does not always show the next steps for improvement.
- There has not yet been sufficient time for the improvements introduced by the recently appointed special needs manager to have full impact on standards across the whole school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed nine lessons, all of which were joint observations with the headteacher who will be leading the school fully in September. The inspector listened to pupils read, observed them during break time and conducted an observation of a whole school assembly.
- The inspector looked at a range of documentation, including the school improvement plan, the school's own assessment data, records of lesson observations, reports from the local authority and the school's safeguarding documentation.
- He also held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body and four other governors, staff including one senior leader, a group of pupils and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the 31 responses to the on-line Parent View survey and met with some parents and carers informally at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

Graeme Burgess, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Littledean C of E Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are from White British background with a small percentage from White Eastern European and White Western European backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action or school action plus is much higher than the national average. The proportion supported with a statement of special educational needs is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding, which is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children or children of service families, is above the national average.
- Since the last inspection the governing body has put in place a succession plan to replace the current, long standing headteacher who is due to retire at the end of the academic year. As a result, the school is currently being lead jointly by the existing headteacher and a headteacher who will take over in September.
- The school has recently achieved the Gold Artsmark which celebrates pupils' achievements.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by ensuring that:
 - there is a better balance between the time pupils spend going over what they have already learned and the next stage in their learning
 - the marking of pupils' work supports their next steps in learning.
- Improve the way in which pupils who are at risk of falling behind are supported at an earlier stage across the whole school by:
 - increasing the impact of intervention programmes in Key Stage 1.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils are making good progress from their starting points in all years.
- Some pupils make exceptional progress and the standards that these pupils reach in reading, writing and mathematics are above average when they leave the school. This is because the school has introduced well-planned changes through a range of different programmes.
- Pupils' progress is increasing at a fast rate because of the improvements in teaching. School leaders have focused on the quality of lessons and have set ambitious targets in order to raise standards in school. The good progress made by all groups reflects the school's strong commitment to ensuring that all pupils succeed.
- Pupils in Reception classes are making good progress from their starting points which are generally well below, and sometimes exceptionally below, expectations for their age. As a result, the outcomes of the phonics screening check for pupils in Year 1 in 2012 are in line with those found nationally.
- Pupils in Years 5 and 6 thrive as a result of being given work that is at the right level of challenge and difficulty. This work is presented in a way which completely captures their attention and which contributes to the good, and sometimes exceptional, progress that they are making.
- In some lessons, pupils do not make this same rate of progress and so do not reach the higher levels of attainment. This is because the teachers do not always move the pupils on to the next stage in their learning quickly enough.
- Progress in writing is good because the school provides a range of meaningful opportunities for pupils to write across different subjects. For example, pupils write extended descriptions of mini beasts, which is a topic linked to science.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is a particular strength of the school. They are successfully meeting the challenging targets set for them and are making good progress. The school has high expectations of pupils, regardless of any barriers they have to overcome. For example, the contribution made to pupils' achievement by the school's family support worker is exceptional and has a particularly positive impact on this good progress.
- Pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium funding are also making good progress. The school has used its funding to provide these pupils with extra support in lessons by appointing additional members of staff to work with them individually and in groups. Based on their average point scores, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals are mostly performing at the same level as other pupils in the school and pupils nationally.
- The school has successfully increased provision in reading by adding resources to the school library.

The quality of teaching is good

- The majority of teaching is good and some is outstanding. This is because teachers are aware of the pupils' starting points and plan work which is well matched to their need. As a result, pupils are making good, and sometimes outstanding, progress in lessons and over time.
- Teachers and teaching assistants ask pupils questions which develop their understanding and extend their learning. For example, questions asked by all staff during a science lesson on electricity prompt and encourage the pupils to think carefully about what they need to do with the equipment in order to illuminate a light bulb.
- The newly appointed manager for special needs has organised a precise programme of intervention which involves pupils individually or in small groups on specific areas of need. Teaching assistants responsible for delivering these programmes are highly skilled and these pupils make good progress from their low starting points as a result.
- Teachers' management of behaviour is extremely effective and this creates a very positive

climate for learning in lessons. It is a real strength of the school. As a result, pupils enjoy their lessons, focus carefully on the teacher and make good progress.

- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' abilities to reach the highest levels of attainment possible and set challenging tasks linked to ambitious targets. They provide them with opportunities to assess their own work and the work of their classmates.
- Occasionally, however, in some lessons, teachers spend too much time going over the work that the pupils have done. They do not always move the pupils on to the next stage of their learning quickly enough to allow them to make more rapid progress.
- In addition, the quality of teachers' marking varies across the school. The best examples give clear feedback and pupils then have the chance to respond and improve their work; however, some marking does not help pupils to improve as much as it should.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Behaviour in this school is outstanding.
- Parents' views of the school are overwhelmingly positive. Parents feel that their children are happy and safe in school and that any issues raised are dealt with quickly and highly effectively. Parents who responded to the Parent View questionnaire and all parents who spoke with the inspector agree.
- Pupils feel particularly well supported and staff are unreservedly positive about both behaviour and safety.
- Incidents of bullying or poor behaviour are very rare. Pupils are aware of the different types of bullying and they feel that any issues are dealt with very quickly by staff.
- Improvements in behaviour over a period of time for individuals and groups are excellent.
- A particular feature of the school is the fully inclusive and supportive environment. For example, pupils and staff use sign language on a daily basis to ensure that no pupils are left out.
- The emotional and social development of some pupils requires support, and yet pupils' attitudes towards learning are almost always impeccable. This is because all staff manage behaviour effectively through a whole school approach linked to a positive reward system.
- Pupils' outstanding attitudes towards learning contribute exceptionally well to the good progress that pupils are making.
- Attendance has improved since the last report and is now above average. This reflects the pupils' commitment to their own learning.
- Pupils move around the school sensibly, holding doors open for adults and each other. During playtimes, they involve each other in team games and show kindness and concern for the well-being of their peers.

The leadership and management are good

- The co-headteachers are strong leaders. The newly appointed headteacher has worked effectively with the existing headteacher to bring about change that has had a considerable impact on pupils' progress across the whole school. Staff judge that they provide clear leadership and this helps them to know how to improve their teaching.
- The headteachers, together with the newly appointed special needs manager, look in books, carry out lesson observations and carefully analyse the results of assessments. This is beginning to help them to have a clear understanding of where further improvements need to be made. However, the new special needs manager has not been in post long enough to impact on the outcomes of different groups of pupils across the whole school.
- The headteachers acts promptly if they identify practice that requires improvement. Any weaknesses, particularly if they relate to achievement or teaching, are followed up with close monitoring and are quickly resolved.
- The school has worked closely with the local authority to good effect. Training has been undertaken which is linked to areas identified for school improvement. This good support, when

required, has helped to improve teaching. There is a clear sense of purpose in the school and staff work well as a team.

- The arrangements to ensure the effectiveness of teaching staff, including teaching assistants, are effective. Teachers have performance targets linked to the progress of pupils they teach. Ambitious targets for pupil progress have been set and teachers have risen to the challenge. Decisions about pay are closely linked to how successfully teachers meet their targets.
- Pupil premium funding is helping pupils at risk of underachieving to succeed. Pupils who need additional support have benefited from the appointment of additional staff. Small-group work and individual tuition are carefully planned and targeted to improve pupils' progress in specific areas of need. These actions are helping pupils who were behind in their learning to catch up rapidly.
- The school promotes the pupils' personal development exceptionally well. This is because all pupils are known as individuals, and emotional and social support, as well as support for their progress, are tailored to match their needs. This contributes to their outstanding behaviour and allows them to make good progress. In addition, a range of before- and after-school clubs and activities meets the interests of the pupils.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - A number of new members has recently joined the governing body, including a new Chair. However, these governors have attended governor training and have rapidly achieved a good level of expertise and a sharp awareness of the school's performance data. They recognised the need to appoint a new headteacher, prior to the retirement of the current headteacher, in order to make sure that the good progress already made might continue. Their actions have had a direct impact on the progress the pupils are now making. They work closely with the senior leaders to analyse data regularly and prioritise the allocation of school funds effectively to improve pupils' outcomes. They know about the quality of teaching and what is being done to tackle any areas of underperformance and are fully aware of their responsibilities regarding teachers' pay and the systems for setting targets for teachers. Governors ensure that all the school's funds, including the pupil premium, are spent wisely to help all pupils to achieve well. They ensure that the procedures for keeping pupils safe meet requirements.

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	115631
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	413001
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	96
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Barnsley
Headteacher	Valerie Huggett and Hayley McGoldrick
Date of previous school inspection	11–12 May 2010
Telephone number	01594 822171
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