

Church Eaton Endowed (VA) Primary School

Church Eaton, Stafford, ST20 0AG

Inspection dates 21–22 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	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

- Achievement should be better in Years 1 to 6. Some pupils who are capable of reaching high standards fall short of their expected targets in English and mathematics.
- The teaching is improving well but is not ambitious enough. Leaders and governors need to ensure that all lessons provide work or tasks that extend pupils' learning.
- Pupils do not get enough guidance or instructions to help them understand what they have to do next to reach higher levels.
- Pupils are not always given enough opportunities to respond to teachers' marking in workbooks and too many make repeated errors or mistakes.
- Pupils' progress in reading and writing is improving but should still be better. Pupils do not always have enough time to edit their writing and they do not read widely enough.
- Pupils are not always being taught to think logically in mathematics so that they can improve their reasoning skills when solving problems.

The school has the following strengths

- The school is improving well. The headteacher's strong and determined leadership and much improved governance have reversed a decline in pupils' achievement and are improving the teaching.
- Three- and four-year-old children get off to a good start in early literacy.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and are supported well.
- Pupils are courteous and well behaved. They thoroughly enjoy school activities.
- The systems introduced by the headteacher to check pupils' progress and teachers' performance have improved significantly.
- The headteacher, governors and staff have done a great deal to improve the school and now demonstrate good capacity to sustain further improvements.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited nine lessons and all observations were undertaken jointly with the headteacher. All teachers and most teaching assistants were observed teaching.
- The inspector heard a group of pupils read and discussed with them their progress in writing and mathematics. In all classes, pupils' workbooks were checked during lesson observations.
- Meetings were held with four members of the governing body and the inspector spoke to some parents and carers. Discussions were held with pupils and staff throughout the inspection to gauge their views. The lead inspector also spoke with the local authority's district manager for school improvement by telephone.
- The inspection took account of the 32 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), as well as the school's own surveys of parents' views.
- The arrangements and records kept to safeguard pupils were inspected, together with the school's attendance records and child protection procedures.
- The school's action plans and self-evaluation were scrutinised, along with the records that leaders and teachers use to check and assess pupils' learning and progress.
- The school's last full inspection in January 2012 judged that the school required significant improvement and it was given a notice to improve. The school received a further monitoring inspection in October 2012, led by another one of Her Majesty's Inspectors, and this judged that the school was making satisfactory progress at that time.

Inspection team

Charalambos Loizou, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Information about this school

- This is a very small rural primary school.
- Pre-school children (three-year-olds) attend for mornings only and are taught in the same class with Reception-aged children (four-year-olds) and Year 1 pupils (five- and six-year-olds).
- All pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is well below average compared with most schools. In this school, this is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or who are from families in the armed services.
- The percentage of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is well below average for those supported by school action and school action plus. There are currently no pupils in the school with a statement of special educational needs. The main areas of additional need include moderate or specific learning difficulties, such as speech, language or communication.
- The school meets the government's floor standard, which sets the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The headteacher joined the school in April 2012 to replace the previous headteacher who retired.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on the improvements to the teaching so that all lessons offer the right level of challenge for pupils, and particularly those of higher ability, by:
 - making sure that lessons engage pupils in tasks and activities that extend their learning rather than repeating tasks or going through work that has already been learned
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to respond to teachers' marking so they can learn from their mistakes, and ensure that teachers check pupils' understanding more often in lessons
 - providing more ambitious targets for middle and higher ability pupils to aim for, and step-by-step instructions in lessons that show pupils the next stages in their learning to help them reach their targets.
- Sustain the rise in pupils' achievement in English and mathematics in all classes by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to check, correct and improve their work
 - giving pupils in Years 1 to 6 more time to read widely, write independently to extend their use of vocabulary, and tasks to help improve the accuracy of their spelling and punctuation
 - giving pupils more work that requires them to practise and solve a broader range of challenging number calculations, puzzles and problems which help them to think logically and which improve their mathematical understanding and reasoning skills.
- Make sure that teachers, leaders and governors use the information collected about pupils' progress and teachers' performance to check more frequently that all pupils are achieving as well as they should.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Although pupils' achievement is improving and their attainment in English and mathematics is above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils are not all making as much progress as they should.
- Some pupils who are capable of reaching high standards are not always being given sufficiently demanding work to extend their learning in English and mathematics. However, improvements to the teaching are already having a positive effect in reversing this picture as an increasing number of pupils are reaching higher levels in all classes.
- Most three- and four-year-old children start school with skills and abilities that are above those expected for their age, particularly in language and communication. Good teaching and stimulating indoor and outdoor activities enables the children to make good progress.
- By the time children start in Year 1, the majority reach levels in reading, writing and mathematics that are well above those expected of five-year-olds. However, during the course of their time in Year 1 through to Year 6, pupils' progress slows and is uneven.
- This mixed picture reflects teachers' inconsistent expectations across classes and variations in the quality of teaching within each class. Nevertheless, achievement is improving and pupils' attainment in English and mathematics is on course to be higher than in previous years.
- Variations from year-to-year in national test results are partly influenced by the very small numbers that take the tests. For example, there are only three pupils in the current Year 6 compared with last year's cohort which had 12 pupils, making comparisons difficult.
- Although pupils are achieving better in reading and writing compared with last year, this is not yet good enough. This is because pupils are not all reading widely or frequently enough. In addition, lessons do not always provide enough opportunities for pupils to improve or edit the format and structure of their writing. As a result, some pupils make repeated spelling errors or use punctuation inaccurately.
- In mathematics, pupils are making better progress now than last year and standards are rising because teachers are planning tasks that are increasingly matching pupils' different abilities. However, pupils' progress varies too much and should be better, especially for those of average or higher ability. Pupils are not being given enough problems, puzzles or tasks that help them to think deeply or logically so they can apply their knowledge of number calculation to improve their mathematical understanding.
- English and mathematics workbooks, and the results of tests and teachers' assessments, show that the attainment of the small number of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is similar to that of other pupils. Their attainment is in line with those of other pupils in the school and compares favourably with similar pupils nationally.
- Pupils who have special educational needs make good progress and most are reaching age-related levels in reading, writing and mathematics. This is a significant improvement since the school's last inspection.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- The teaching is improving well but is not yet good. Teachers' expectations and the learning targets set for some pupils are not always ambitious enough.
- Although many lessons observed during the inspection were judged to be good and none were inadequate, pupils' work and rates of progress over time show that the teaching requires further improvement to ensure that all pupils make enough progress.
- Lessons are increasingly providing tasks for the full range of ages and abilities in all three mixed-aged classes. Nevertheless, pupils of average or higher abilities are sometimes repeating work already learned or not moving on soon enough to more extended tasks in lessons.
- The large majority of responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and those parents and carers spoken to during the inspection are pleased with the improvements they have seen to the teaching. Inspection findings agree with these views but there are important aspects of teaching that require improvement.
- One relative weakness is teachers' marking and the general lack of time or opportunity given to pupils to self-correct and improve their work. There are often missed opportunities to allow pupils time to reflect on what they have done so they can learn from their mistakes.
- Pupils' independent writing shows some repeated spelling errors or incorrect use of punctuation. Sometimes teachers do not point these out and if they do, pupils are not being reminded often enough during lessons to self-correct while they work so that the teaching points are remembered and fresh in pupils' minds.
- In mathematics, pupils are increasingly given problems to solve that require them to apply their knowledge of numbers and methods of calculation. This was seen to good effect in the mixed Year 4, 5 and 6 class. For example, one group of pupils improved their knowledge of algebra to crack a code. However, opportunities were also missed to extend learning further by allowing pupils opportunities to explain the methods they used in order to establish what they understand and where there remain areas of uncertainty to move their learning on.
- Good teaching is more evident in those lessons where adults check and intervene regularly to make that sure pupils understand what they are doing and can see the next steps they need to take to reach a higher level. This important aspect of teaching, though, is too infrequent so that pupils are not being guided through a step-by-step sequence of learning towards their learning targets.
- Pupils enjoy reading and teachers make good use of guided reading sessions to discuss features such as characterisation, settings and narrative writing. This is one of the strongest aspects of the teaching but many pupils are not reading widely enough to extend their use of vocabulary, accuracy of spelling and reading fluency.
- Important improvements to the teaching since the last inspection have been teachers' planning and use of assessment information, and especially for those pupils who have special educational needs. Most of the money from the pupil premium is spent on additional support for those pupils who find learning difficult or who need a boost in the form of small group support or one-to-one tuition.
- Lessons now have clearer objectives and targets for pupils to aim for because teachers are

increasingly checking pupils' work and progress to measure and record the levels pupils reach. However, for some pupils of average or higher ability the learning targets set are not challenging enough.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils say that they trust the adults who care for them, including those who supervise them at lunchtimes. There are warm and positive relationships amongst pupils and with adults.
- Behaviour is not outstanding because some pupils go off task when they are not expected to do enough. However, pupils' behaviour is usually good and is managed well by teachers.
- The pupils spoken to during lessons and break times said that it is easy to make friends and that everyone treats each other with kindness. The school makes effective use of the pupil premium funding to help pupils from armed services families who join the school other than at the usual times to settle in quickly.
- Pupils know that there are different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying. They say that bullying is very rare and, when it does occur, it involves petty name-calling or minor fall outs; pupils confirm that such incidents are promptly addressed.
- Pupils say that they like their teachers and learning new things, especially, as one pupil put it, 'When lessons are exciting, fun and interesting.' Others have also, rightly, said that, 'The teaching is not always like this, though.'
- The school fosters good relationships and is successful in tackling any form of discrimination in a cohesive and supportive school community. Pupils enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in attendance rates that are similar to those of most schools.
- The only reason attendance rates are not higher than the national average is because some families take unauthorised holidays during term time. The school is doing all it can to address this, with some success.
- Pupils learn a lot about staying safe and healthy through projects and special topics, as well as a good range of physical education activities, sport and performing arts. Pupils are also aware of the precautions they need to take when using online messaging websites.

The leadership and management are good

- Since joining 13 months ago, the headteacher has transformed the school. There have been significant improvements to the quality of teaching and to the school's curriculum. The large majority of parents and carers responding to the online survey agree that the school is improving well. This is directly attributable to the headteacher's strong leadership.
- This transformation has been supported by a much improved and strong governing body. Together with the headteacher, governors have resolved to make some brave and necessary staffing decisions in order to address a significant budget deficit. This has necessitated a reduction in the number of classes from four to three and a restructuring of staff and governor responsibilities.
- These changes are working. Leaders and governors have been successful as the budget is no

longer in deficit. Having started with a school that was previously inadequate and ineffective in raising pupils' achievement consistently, strong leadership is improving the school's effectiveness and reversing this decline. The school is now providing pupils with an education that is improving rapidly, even though it is not yet good. The headteacher, staff and governors now demonstrate good capacity for sustained improvement.

- There is no inadequate teaching and an increasing amount is of good quality because the headteacher has improved teachers' planning and sharpened the way lessons are monitored. Nevertheless, evaluations made by teachers and subject leaders of pupils' progress in lessons are not always as sharp as they should be. There is now scope to train teachers or bring in the necessary expertise to work alongside subject leaders so they can measure pupils' progress in lessons more effectively.
- The management and oversight of special educational needs provision has improved outstandingly well. The headteacher has ensured that the right leader reviews provision and has the time and resources to assess, check and map out a range of interventions and programmes for pupils who need the most effective support, and that this meets their additional learning needs.
- The curriculum is now more expansive and includes a broad range of topics and projects for pupils to study that combine subjects and make learning fun and interesting. Visits and visitors are regular features of activities and programmes. There is a good range of multi-cultural topics so that pupils learn about cultures, faiths and customs beyond their immediate community. These are also enhanced by a good range of sport, music, creative arts and opportunities to learn a modern foreign language which have a positive effect on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The headteacher and governors have made teachers more accountable for their performance and the progress of the pupils they teach. They have also established good working partnerships with other small primary schools in the local authority which provide further opportunities for teachers to see good or outstanding practice.
- The school's improvement plan has clear measures of success from which to monitor how well teachers are teaching, although evaluations of learning and achievement are not yet regular enough. This partly accounts for the variation and inconsistency that exists in some lessons.
- The headteacher and governors have made a good start using more extensive monitoring activities and accurate evaluations of teaching to improve identify clearly what is expected of good teaching. However, teachers and subject leaders are not always using data gathered about pupils' progress and performance regularly enough to judge whether all pupils achieve as well as they should.
- The local authority has provided effective support. guidance and oversight of the school's work through its school improvement and advisory services.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - There have been significant changes of personnel on the governing body since the last inspection. This has strengthened governance and made it much more streamlined and effective. The individual expertise of governors is being used well to enable the governing body as a whole to hold the headteacher and staff to account. Governors now manage the school's budget very well and its committees have sharp and effective terms of reference that enable close scrutiny of teachers' performance. The governing body has ensured that pupil premium funding is used effectively and, alongside the headteacher, it is monitoring the

impact of this funding on the progress of pupils with additional learning needs. There are now well-established and robust procedures for managing the performance of staff, and these are now linked to salary progression and the deployment of additional management responsibilities. Governors, staff and the school's administrator ensure that all safeguarding procedures comply with statutory 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	124334
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	399716

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	70
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dawn Jones
Headteacher	Simon Shaw
Date of previous school inspection	26 January 2012
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