

Weston-under-Penyard CofE Primary School

School Lane, Weston-under-Penyard, Ross-on-Wye, HR9 7PA

Inspection dates 5–6 June 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		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Teaching has not been good enough over time to make sure all pupils, including those who need extra help, make consistently good progress.
- Standards are not as high as they should be. Not enough pupils have made good progress over time.
- Some of the work set for more-able pupils is insufficiently demanding.
- At times, teachers' introductions to lessons and their explanations are too long, and this restricts the time pupils have to learn and think for themselves.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' work does not always help them to understand how their work may be improved. Pupils are rarely given enough time to respond to teachers' comments in lessons.
- Checks made by leaders on the quality of teaching do not provide teachers with clear areas for development because observations do not focus sufficiently on how well different groups of pupils are learning.
- Current systems used by leaders to check the impact of their school improvement strategies on pupils' achievement are not rigorous enough.

The school has the following strengths

- Teaching and achievement are improving as a result of the good professional training.
- Pupils say they feel safe and cared for. They enjoy their lessons and the range of clubs the school offers. Parents and carers agree that their children are safe and well looked after.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- Pupils' behaviour in and around school is good. They show positive attitudes to learning in lessons.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons or parts of lessons taught by five teachers, and one assembly. Three lessons were jointly observed with the headteacher. The inspector undertook two learning walks, which comprised a number of short visits to lessons to look at the teaching of reading and learning across the curriculum.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, subject leaders, staff and members of the governing body. In addition, the inspector talked with representatives from the local authority.
- The inspector met with pupils, listened to them read and observed them at play during break and lunch times.
- The school's safeguarding policies, improvement plans, notes from meetings of the governing body and records of pupils' behaviour were reviewed. Pupils' work and records of their progress were also looked at.
- The inspector took account of the 17 responses to the online parent questionnaire (Parent View) as well as the seven replies to the staff questionnaire. The inspector also spoke to parents and carers at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

Sarah Warboys, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Weston-under-Penyard Church of England Primary School is much smaller than most primary schools.
- Almost all pupils are White British. A well-below-average number of pupils come from minority ethnic groups and of these, very few speak English as an additional language.
- A below-average proportion of the pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding to the school. The funding is based on the number of children at the school in local authority care, from forces families and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The percentage of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported by school action is above average.
- An average proportion of pupils is supported at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs.
- The number of pupils joining and leaving the school at different times of the year is above that normally found.
- Currently, children in the Reception class are taught in their year group or alongside the Year 1 and 2 pupils. Access to outside areas is currently limited. Arrangements are being made for the Early Years Foundation Stage to relocate in September 2013 to enable children to move safely and freely between inside and outside areas.
- A breakfast club, managed by the governing body, operates on the school site.
- The school's most recent results cannot be compared to the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum standards for pupils' attainment and progress, because there were not enough pupils to make such comparisons meaningful.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that all lessons are good or better, and thus raise pupils' achievement, by ensuring that all staff:
 - use time more effectively by reducing the length of teachers' introductions and explanations and allowing pupils to start work promptly
 - provide regular opportunities for pupils to work on their own and find things out for themselves
 - set more demanding work in all lessons for those who are more able
 - give pupils clear and precise guidance when marking their work so that they know how to improve it, and also provide time for them to respond to this guidance.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - focusing lesson observations more closely on the depth of learning and progress shown by all groups of pupils
 - providing teachers with precise guidance about the quality and effectiveness of their professional practice so they are better informed about how to improve their skills and accelerate pupils' learning
 - using more rigorous systems to check the effectiveness of actions taken to improve teaching.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Attainment at the end of Year 6 is typically in line with the national average. However, in 2012, while results in English remained broadly similar to the previous year, in mathematics they fell sharply. This is because not enough pupils made the progress expected of them during Key Stage 2.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs have not made good enough progress in the last two years. Recently, these pupils have made better progress because of the extra help they receive in lessons and through the one-to-one tuition given to individual pupils.
- Although varying from year-to-year, children's skills and abilities, when they join the Reception class, are generally similar to those expected for their age. By the time they enter Year 1 most children's skills are again at the levels expected in most areas of learning. Too few, however, make rapid progress.
- A recent whole-school focus on writing and mathematics is leading to better achievement, although it is too early to judge how well this will be sustained. In Key Stages 1 and 2, most pupils currently in the school are now making faster progress and more pupils are now working at higher levels. Some more-able pupils, however, still do not make the progress that they are capable of in lessons.
- Pupils do best in reading. Attainment in reading is improving because young children are systematically taught early reading skills, including phonics (the link between letters and the sounds they make). The teaching of specific reading skills continues through the school. Last year, a higher than average proportion of pupils met the required standards in the national phonics screening check at the end of Year 1.
- Extra funding in the form of the pupil premium has been used to provide one-to-one tuition, personalised learning programmes and enrichment activities designed to develop pupils' self-esteem and well-being. There were not enough pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium support in 2012 to comment on their attainment without identifying them.
- Newly arrived pupils are welcomed into the school and settle quickly into school life. Pupils are invited to 'taster sessions' and paired up with a 'buddy'. This helps them to make friends and learn new routines. At an early stage, assessments of pupils' skills are made to ensure they get the support they need.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching over time has not ensured that all pupils make consistently good progress. However, improvements are leading to most pupils now in the school making better progress.
- In some lessons, teachers' explanations are too long, and this restricts the time pupils have to work independently and find things out for themselves. In the main, teachers plan activities that are matched to pupils' different needs and abilities. On occasion, the work that is set for more-able pupils is insufficiently challenging and they do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Teachers mark pupils work regularly and offer encouraging comments to motivate them.

Although marking informs pupils about what they have done well, teachers do not always provide pupils with clear and precise guidance about what they need to do to improve. Nor are they given opportunities to respond to teachers' comments before the next lesson. Consequently, there are too few opportunities for pupils to learn from their mistakes or practise particular skills.

- In the most effective lessons, teachers have high expectations and learning proceeds at a good rate. Their use of computer technology engages pupils and helps to sustain their interest. Teachers ask searching questions to encourage pupils' thinking skills. The best learning happens when pupils are actively involved in tasks. In the Year 5 and 6 class, for example, pupils made good gains in understanding the concept of 'volume' by making a series of different size cubes from paper and were able to spot patterns and relationships between them.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children's interests are exploited to turn play into learning opportunities. Their achievements are often acknowledged and celebrated. During the inspection, children enthusiastically searched outdoors for different paper shapes to create a picture of a house. As they did so, the class teacher reinforced their knowledge of shape and children learned to use new words and phrases such as, 'next to', 'on top of' and 'above'.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils say that they feel safe in all areas of the school. They report rare occurrences of bullying, such as name-calling, but are confident they can seek help from adults if necessary. Lessons help pupils to adopt safe practices, such as road and fire safety, keeping visible at night and undertaking cycling proficiency. They have a well-developed understanding of keeping safe when using information and communication technology.
- As they move in and around the school, pupils are friendly, polite and helpful to adults and to each other. They are proud of their school and are keen to share their views. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is good. They demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. Occasionally, when lesson introductions are too long, or when they sit on the carpet areas for extended periods, a few pupils become restless and lose concentration, limiting their learning.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the school's systems for promoting good behaviour and think that they help them to behave well. From a young age, pupils show good levels of cooperation. Pupils enjoy coming to school and arrive punctually for lessons. A few families taking term-time holidays reduce the overall rate of attendance in this very small school.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Systems used to check school improvement strategies are not precise enough to measure the effectiveness of actions taken to raise pupils' achievement. Plans lack the kinds of specific and measurable criteria needed to identify fluctuations in pupils' rates of progress or to establish whether individual pupils and groups could do better.
- Observations of the quality of teaching and learning are overgenerous. Insufficient attention is paid to the progress made by different groups of pupils. As a result, teachers are not provided with clear and precise guidance about how to improve their professional practice.
- Leaders, including the governing body, have now identified the right priorities for improving the school. Procedures to manage teacher's performance are in place and linked to their leadership roles and responsibilities. Those teachers who lead subjects have successfully led developments

and staff training to improve teaching. For example, the mathematics subject leader has established a whole-school approach to teaching calculations. Teachers have received training in how to help pupils tackle problem-solving tasks. As a result, rates of progress in English and mathematics have improved this year.

- The headteacher leads a dedicated team of staff, supported by the governing body. All contribute significantly to the school's caring ethos. Leaders take appropriate action to promote equality of opportunity and to tackle any form of discrimination. They meet regularly with teachers to discuss pupils' progress and to identify those who are in danger of falling behind. The school works well with outside agencies to ensure pupils with very specific and often complex needs are supported well.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage provision is appropriately led and managed and ensures children get off to a sound start.
- The vast majority of parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire and who spoke to the inspector are positive about the school, particularly about its caring ethos. As one parent commented that the school was 'like an extended family'.
- In discussions, pupils expressed their appreciation for the range of clubs and activities the school offers. For example, on one afternoon of the inspection, pupils took part in a 'Swimathon' to raise funds for a partnership school in Uganda. The recently established Breakfast Club gives pupils the chance to eat, chat and play together, which they clearly enjoy.
- Pupils are given a broad range of opportunities to use their reading, writing and communication skills in learning about other subjects. Partnerships with a local cluster of schools enable them to mix with pupils from other schools, which broadens their horizons. These experiences allow pupils to participate in sport, music and to appreciate and learn about art and different cultures. Such activities make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The local authority has provided effective support in the past, particularly in terms of developing the skills of subject leaders.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is well-organised. Governors make regular visits to see how well pupils are doing and are supportive of the school's work. They have ensured the school has responded positively as soon as it became evident that there was a need to raise standards. Staff regularly share with them information on pupils' progress, teaching and performance management. As a result, governors are aware that recent literacy and numeracy training is improving teaching and raising pupils' achievement. They set and check targets for the headteacher in managing his performance. Governors have managed the school's finances effectively, including the use of the pupil premium, to ensure that resources are spent wisely and in the best interests of the children.

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	116918
Local authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	411843

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	56
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Neil Patterson
Headteacher	Brian Bird
Date of previous school inspection	3 March 2009
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