

# St Nicholas and St Laurence C of E VA Primary School

Broadway, Weymouth, Dorset, DT3 5DQ

**Inspection dates** 5–6 June 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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		Requires improvement	3
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

- The attainment of pupils has declined in recent years, particularly in mathematics.
- Progress has been inconsistent across year groups. This means that the achievement of pupils overall requires improvement.
- Until recently there was some teaching which was inadequate, and too much that required improvement. Teachers do not always give pupils work which is hard enough.
- In some classes, pupils do not get enough feedback about how to improve their work, or opportunities to do so.
- Pupils do not get enough opportunities to decide for themselves when they have reached their targets, or what they should do to reach the next level in their learning.
- The behaviour of a few pupils is challenging, and occasionally disrupts learning.
- While leadership across the school is developing, it is still largely dependent on the headteacher.
- Governors have too readily accepted the optimistic views presented to them, until recently. This means that issues have not been tackled robustly until this year.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has a very accurate view of the issues facing the school. Since joining the school in September she has quickly addressed these issues and brought about rapid improvements.
- As a result, inadequate teaching has been eliminated and much teaching is currently good.
- The rate of progress has improved for most pupils. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is a strength of the school; these children make good progress.
- Pupils feel safe at school and say that bullying or other incidents are rare.
- The school has worked hard to tackle the low attendance of a few families; the attendance of most pupils has improved and is now average.

## Information about this inspection

- During the inspection, inspectors observed 16 lessons taught by nine teachers. Learning in small groups of pupils, led by teaching assistants, was also observed. The headteacher participated in a quarter of these observations.
- Inspectors observed the work being done by pupils in their lessons, and reviewed the work they have done over the past year in their books. Inspectors met with pupils and discussed their learning, as well as asking pupils questions about the work they were doing in lessons.
- The headteacher met with inspectors regularly throughout the inspection, and explained the school's records tracking the progress of pupils. Other teachers who lead aspects of the school also met with inspectors to discuss their roles in bringing about improvements. The lead inspector met with a group of governors.
- Inspectors examined a broad range of documents in the school, including those focused on keeping pupils safe, to manage behaviour and the policies about teaching and learning. Inspectors also reviewed the plans that have already been implemented to bring about improvements and the impact these have had.
- Inspectors reviewed the 12 responses to the on-line survey for Ofsted, Parent View, and compared this with the recent survey undertaken by the school. Correspondence sent to the inspectors was also considered. The inspectors reviewed the responses to the questionnaires completed by staff at the school.

## Inspection team

Andrew Saunders, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Fran Ashworth

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is an average sized primary school, with one class in each year group.
- The school is located on a campus along with a secondary school, a special school and a pre-school.
- Most pupils are White British. Other pupils come from a range of different ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, including those supported at school action and school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, is average overall, although above average in some year groups.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for additional support through the pupil premium is below average, although it varies across year groups. This additional funding is allocated by the government for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children looked after by the local authority, or children from services families.
- The current headteacher has been in post since September 2012, following a period of turbulence in leadership. There have been several changes of staff, as well as of governors.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision for learning or behaviour. There is some use of external support for medical needs.
- The school met the floor standards in 2012, the minimum expectations for the progress and attainment of pupils at the end of Year 6, which are set by the government.

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

- Make sure that all teaching is at least good and that more teaching is outstanding, by:
  - increasing the level of challenge in the work pupils are given to do, and increasing the pace at which pupils are expected to work
  - making sure that all teachers follow the agreed format when marking pupils' work, and that pupils are given more opportunities to respond to feedback, both during lessons and in their books.
- Raise standards further, particularly in mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2, by:
  - involving pupils more actively in evaluating their progress towards their targets, and deciding what they need to do next
  - making sure all teachers hold the highest expectations of the level of work pupils are capable of, particularly in Key Stage 1 and Years 3 and 4, so that pupils make consistently good progress.
- Improve the behaviour and attendance of the very few pupils for whom this is a challenge, by:
  - working with families where attendance is low, to help them understand the importance of being at school regularly
  - ensuring that disruptions to learning are not tolerated and that the pupils who do so are helped to make better choices.
- Further develop the role of the teachers who lead aspects of the school so that they have the time and capacity to demonstrate best practice and bring about more rapid improvements within their areas.
- 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

- There has been a decline in attainment in reading and writing in Key Stage 1, and in mathematics in Key Stage 2 and these were below average in 2012. Inconsistent progress means achievement requires improvement.
- When they arrive at the school, children in the past couple of years typically have skills and knowledge which are similar to those expected for their age. They settle into the Early Years Foundation Stage quickly because adults are highly attuned to the needs of each particular child. Children quickly become curious learners and make good progress.
- Progress has been variable during Key Stage 1 and the first half of Key Stage 2 because teachers' expectations of what pupils can do are not always high enough. Although pupils have targets to help them know what they need to learn next, they rely too much on the teachers to decide when they have met these, or what their next targets should be.
- Lesson observations, work in pupils' books and the school's records tracking the performance of pupils show that this inconsistent progress has been typical.
- Greater independence and tasks which are more closely matched to the different needs of pupils in the class mean that progress accelerates in Year 5 and Year 6, although this is not yet as evident in mathematics as in English.
- Improved teaching, a more regular focus on English and mathematics each day and better behaviour in lessons mean that standards of attainment have begun to rise, more quickly in English. Pupils currently in Year 6 are already beyond the previous standards and close to the averages nationally. From their particular starting points they have made good progress, particularly in their reading and writing. Progress in mathematics still requires further improvement.
- There was not previously a consistent approach to teaching the linking of letters and the sounds they make (phonics), which constrained pupils' learning of reading and writing, particularly in Key Stage 1. A new approach has quickly made a difference and these pupils have made good progress this year. Older pupils who need extra help also get accurate support to become confident in reading and spelling.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are well supported. The particular approaches used to help them catch up in their literacy and numeracy skills are carefully chosen, closely monitored, and well delivered by the teaching assistants. As a result, these pupils make good progress and make up ground.
- In 2012, pupils in Year 6 who benefited from support because of the pupil premium were about six months behind other pupils in the school in English, and about three months behind in mathematics. The support for these pupils has improved and the current pupils in Year 6 are about three months behind other pupils in English and mathematics, and making up more ground. Overall, the eligible pupils across the school make good progress because of the additional adult support provided by the pupil premium.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- While inadequate teaching has been eliminated, and much teaching is now good, this is recent. Work in pupils' books, the school's records about checking the quality of teaching, and records about the progress pupils have made show that, over time, teaching requires improvement.
- Some teachers do not give pupils work that is hard enough, and pupils rely too much on the teachers to know what to do next at each stage of their tasks. At times, teachers allow pupils to work at a leisurely pace and some lessons lack a sense of urgency about how much work pupils should get done.
- In the best lessons, teachers involve pupils in deciding how much work they should complete in the time available. This helps pupils to take responsibility for their learning. For example, pupils

in an outstanding Year 5 lesson worked quickly dividing two- or three-digit numbers. However, such motivation is not common enough.

- Targets are used to make sure pupils know what they need to be learning. The teachers indicate when pupils have reached a particular target, and set the next targets. Pupils usually know what their targets are and use them to help them focus on their writing or number skills. However, pupils do not get enough opportunity to decide for themselves when they have achieved their targets or what they need to do next.
- Until recently, the quality of marking of pupils' work was weak and had limited impact on helping pupils improve. During this year, this has improved. In the best examples, teachers use colours to show where pupils have been particularly successful, and where they need to do something to improve. Teachers increasingly expect pupils to respond to the comments they make in the pupils' books, and give pupils time to do so, but this is not yet consistent.
- Teaching assistants work well with the teachers, and provide pupils with good levels of support without doing too much of the work for them.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils

### require improvement

- Where teaching has previously been poor, pupils have not developed the positive attitudes to learning they need. Since the improvements in teaching, and the introduction of a very consistent approach to managing all incidents, behaviour has improved considerably. Overall, the lack of independence of pupils and the low-level disruption in a few classes mean that behaviour requires improvement.
- Most pupils enjoy their learning, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the latter part of Key Stage 2. They say they would like more opportunities to decide for themselves what they should work on next, or what their targets should be. Around the school and during their break times, pupils are polite, cooperative and get along with one another well.
- Pupils say that incidents of poor behaviour have reduced a lot because everyone knows what is expected. They acknowledge that some lessons are still disrupted occasionally because some pupils call out a lot but that it is getting better. The behaviour 'scripts' help pupils think about what they have done.
- Pupils say that bullying is rare, because everyone knows it will be dealt with straight away. If they are worried about anything, they feel they can talk to any of the adults in the school because they know the adults care about them a great deal.
- Good training about a range of different situations means that pupils know how to keep themselves safe. This includes fire safety, staying safe around roads, and when using the internet.
- Attendance has been below average, but has improved recently and, this year, is close to the average, despite low attendance during a bout of severe illness affecting a third of the school. The school has challenged families where attendance has been particularly poor, using all the means available. A very few families remain where attendance is too low.
- Parents say that their children like coming to school and enjoy the topics they study; most indicated they think behaviour is usually good. Pupils agreed with this, and know why it is important to be in school regularly, because of the emphasis on good attendance.

### The leadership and management

### require improvement

- Prior to the appointment of the current headteacher, the school experienced a period of changes in leadership during which the performance of the school declined.
- The headteacher has an accurate view about the recent performance of the school and has established a clear vision to tackle the key issues quickly. She has involved others in developing robust plans to bring this about and her success in doing so demonstrates the school's capacity to continue improvements.

- However, the wider leadership of the school is embryonic and still relies too heavily on the drive of the headteacher. Recent turbulence in the senior leadership team has constrained the amount of time that leaders have to demonstrate the best teaching and ensure this is embedded.
- Parents, pupils and the adults working at the school say that the headteacher has made considerable improvements, particularly in the quality of teaching and behaviour. They say that she is approachable if they have any concerns. Issues are dealt with firmly and quickly.
- Any pupils who are performing less well than they should are quickly and accurately identified, and appropriate support instigated. Plans to support these pupils are discussed and kept under review so that they are effective.
- The '7 Cs' embody the inclusive ethos of the school, and the importance of helping each other learn and develop. The framework of topics around which teachers base their planning are being reviewed. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is developed well through the assemblies, trips, visitors such as an author or story-teller, and links with schools from other countries, including Kenya. The school does not tolerate discrimination or racism and promotes good relationships. Pupils enjoy celebrating the involvement of pupils of all abilities or backgrounds.
- The local authority has recently increased the level of support for the school, recognising the issues indicated by the decline in the data about the performance of pupils. It has helped the school to check the levels of pupils' work, and provided support to improve teaching and tackle inadequate teaching.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Until recently, the governing body did not challenge the school enough and did not hold the school to account for the decline in standards of learning. Changes in the governing body mean that the level of challenge and support for the school has increased, but further improvement is needed. The systems to check the quality of teaching, and to use this to inform the management of performance of teachers, have been improved. Teachers who receive additional pay are increasingly expected to provide appropriate evidence that this represents good value in terms of the quality of their teaching and leading. Together with the headteacher, governors make sure that the statutory requirements for keeping pupils safe are in place and regularly reviewed. Governors have undertaken some training to increase their confidence in holding the school to account, and they use the information provided by the headteacher to ask more challenging questions. The headteacher also provides governors with a clear account of how the pupil premium funding is used, and the impact it has had. Together, they ensure that the equality of pupils, whatever their background or ability, is promoted.

## 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>	113834
<b>Local authority</b>	Dorset
<b>Inspection number</b>	411739

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>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	201
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mike Glanville
<b>Headteacher</b>	Helen Williams
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3–4 March 2010
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