

Priors Field Primary School

Clinton Lane, Kenilworth, CV8 1BA

Inspection dates 27–28 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	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

- Not enough pupils at Key Stage 2 make good progress and some more-able pupils do not reach the levels of which they are capable.
- Middle-ability pupils are not given consistent levels of challenge and support to ensure they all make good progress.
- The quality of teaching varies too much to support good achievement. Some is good, some outstanding, but some, especially in Key Stage 2, requires improvement.
- Marking of pupils' work is not consistently helpful to pupils. It does not always tell them how to improve and is often not linked to the main weaknesses in their work.
- In some lessons pupils are not given enough opportunity to work independently, and they sometimes have to listen to teachers talking for too long.
- Teachers do not check how well pupils are learning in lessons, in order to adjust their planning so that all pupils learn equally well.
- Leadership at Key Stage 2 does not play a full role in improving the quality of teaching and learning..
- Governors are aware of what the school is doing well and which aspects need to improve. However, they have not been quick enough to hold school leaders to account for pupils' performance, and their contribution to long-term planning for school improvement has not been effective.

The school has the following strengths

- Children make good progress in Reception and this is sustained in Key Stage 1.
- Although it is not yet good, previously inadequate progress at Key Stage 2 has improved..
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They enjoy school and have good attitudes to learning.
- Pupils know how to stay safe, and feel safe in school.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well, and this makes a good contribution to their positive attitudes.
- Pupils benefit from interesting opportunities in art and music to develop their creative talents.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed nine lessons taught by seven teachers. Three of these lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and looked at the work in their books.
- Meetings were held with governors, senior leaders and pupils. An inspector held a meeting with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation, including the school’s improvement plans and its own judgements on its strengths and weaknesses, and the data it collects on pupils’ progress. Documents detailing the school’s arrangements for safeguarding were reviewed.
- The inspection team took account of the 70 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). They also noted the responses to the school’s recent questionnaire to parents and took account of letters from parents.
- Questionnaire responses from 17 members of staff were analysed.

Inspection team

David Speakman, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Mary Le Breuilly

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British. A well-below-average proportion of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average. No pupils are at an early stage of learning English.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is very low. In this school, this extra government funding applies only to the very small number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported through school action plus or a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- There is before- and after-school care on the school site. These facilities are run independently and were not included in this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the quality of teaching is at least good in all classes in order to improve pupils' achievement, particularly in Key Stage 2, by:
 - making sure that teachers continuously monitor the progress of all groups of pupils in lessons, and particularly that of middle-ability pupils, and adjust their lessons so that all pupils learn equally well at a brisk pace
 - regularly providing demanding work for more-able pupils
 - making better use of marking so that pupils know what they need to do to improve their work
 - giving pupils sufficient time to practise new learning skills, and more opportunities to develop their skills through learning independently
 - making sure teachers take more responsibility for the learning of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - making the assistant headteachers more accountable for the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement in their respective key stages
 - increasing governors' direct involvement in strategic planning and identifying the school's strengths and areas for development, so they can hold leaders more sharply to account.
- An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Pupils' progress over time is not good, and pupils at Key Stage 2 have not been achieving the standards of which they are capable. Overall, attainment has not kept pace with the national trend of improvement since the last inspection, especially in English, where it has been broadly average for the last two years. Although above average in mathematics, attainment in this subject is not as high as it was at the time of the previous inspection.
- In 2012, the proportion of Year 6 pupils who had made the nationally expected progress was below average in reading and writing, while the proportion exceeding expected progress was well below average. Percentages for mathematics were similar to national figures, but too few pupils made accelerated progress.
- The few pupils who speak English as an additional language did as well as other groups in English, but did exceptionally well in mathematics. Middle-ability pupils did not do as well, especially in English. Because they did not make good progress, some who were capable of reaching the higher levels failed to do so.
- The proportion of pupils who joined Key Stage 2 at the higher National Curriculum Level 3 was above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. No pupil reached the very highest Level 6 in reading or writing by the end of Year 6. This means that the large proportion of pupils capable of the very highest attainment made, at best, expected progress in reading and writing. A good proportion reached this very high level in mathematics.
- Last year, the small number of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs did not achieve as well as others due to the specific nature of their needs. Their progress was carefully monitored by the special educational needs coordinator and teaching assistants supported them. as directed.
- In 2012, there were no pupils in Year 6 supported through pupil premium funding, so it is not possible to comment on their attainment and progress. However, pupils in other year groups for whom the school receives this funding make similar progress to others in the school.
- Attainment in Key Stage 2 is now rising. Pupils' progress is improving in most classes and the high levels of attainment reached at Key Stage 1 are now being better sustained. Closer checking of pupils' progress this year is helping to identify pupils in danger of falling behind so they can receive suitable help.
- By the end of the Reception Year, an above-average proportion of children have made good progress.
- Results of the national screening in 2012 for Year 1 pupils to check their knowledge and understanding of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) show that the percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard was well above average.
- Pupils have good problem-solving skills in mathematics but there are some weakness in accurate mental recall of number bonds and in mental calculation. Pupils are not fully recording their solutions to longer problems, so it is difficult to see where they have made any mistakes.

- In other subjects, pupils show good progress. In 'linked learning', where pupils study topics covering a range of different subjects, they use their writing skills well and build a broad base of general knowledge. There is much high-quality artwork on display, including from Year 1, where there are some impressive paintings in the style of famous artists. Singing in assemblies is of a very good quality. Many pupils learn to play instruments to a high standard.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it has not been good enough over time to secure good achievement for pupils currently in the school, particularly in Key Stage 2.
- Teachers do not always ensure that all pupils are equally supported and challenged. They do not keep a careful enough watch on the quality of learning of different groups at appropriate points in lessons. Adults often focus mainly on the less-able pupils, those with special educational needs or the more-able pupils. Middle-ability pupils are too often overlooked and struggle with new work. Tasks are not always demanding enough for pupils capable of doing harder work.
- Pupils sometimes sit for too long listening to the teacher talking. This means that they do not have enough time to practise new learning, to develop new skills or to learn through working in groups or independently. Moreover, pupils' independence is stifled when they receive too much support from adults. Pupils confirmed this in their comments to inspectors.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly. However, marking does not provide pupils with detailed feedback through comments on how to improve their work, and the comments are not sufficiently linked to pupils' targets.
- The special educational needs coordinator provides guidance to teachers on the learning of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs in their classes. Class teachers and teaching assistants support these pupils through education plans prepared and reviewed in consultation with the coordinator.
- Teaching of reading is good. Guided reading sessions are effective and pupils improve their reading skills steadily. Early teaching of letters and the sounds they make (phonics), beginning in the Reception Year, gives pupils a good start to reading.
- Teaching seen during the inspection was often good and some had outstanding features. Where teaching is good or better, teachers ask searching questions to set pupils thinking and give them the opportunity to develop good enquiry skills to enable them to work things out for themselves. Interesting activities and high levels of challenge promote pupils' good engagement in learning.
- Some outstanding teaching was seen in a 'linked learning' session in Year 1. Activities focused around Robin Hood, with a pupil playing the role of Robin. Pupils were very busy building a shelter, framing questions to ask Robin and writing descriptions. There were excellent opportunities for independent learning and for pupils to make rapid progress in developing speaking and listening, reading and writing skills.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They are proud when they achieve good results. They work well in groups and when given the opportunity, listen to others' ideas respectfully and are keen to learn from each other. They mostly find their schoolwork interesting but sometimes find

it easy and would like more opportunities to work independently.

- Pupils say behaviour is good. Staff questionnaires agree with this view, which was confirmed by inspectors' observations in lessons. When pupils are allowed to take responsibility for their own learning, as was seen in Year 1, behaviour can be outstanding.
- Pupils report that occasional minor disturbances in lessons do not disrupt learning, and only a very few instances of this were seen during the inspection.
- Pupils are safe in school. They say bullying is rare and, if it ever happens, it is usually only name-calling and is dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils know about bullying, how to avoid it and the different forms it can take. Sensitive support is provided for pupils who have additional needs and those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, so that they can fit into school life well.
- Pupils take on responsibility, for example through membership of the school council, and help make some important decisions that directly affect their lives in school.
- Attendance has been above the national average for the last three years. The percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from school is below average. Pupils come to school on time so the school day can start smoothly.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because the school's leaders have not yet made sure that the quality of teaching, particularly in Key Stage 2, is consistently strong enough to promote good achievement.
- The assistant headteachers who lead each of the key stages do not play a big enough role in monitoring the school's performance or raising pupils' attainment. This is particularly evident in Key Stage 2, where falling standards have only recently been effectively tackled. New strategies have been introduced to improve the assistant headteachers' impact, but action plans to improve the effectiveness of their leadership have not yet been fully effective in addressing whole-school issues, particularly pupils' progress.
- The curriculum is effective in engaging pupils' interest and enthusiasm for school. It is rich in creative subjects such as art and music, and there is a good level of enrichment through visits, visitors and themed days. However, support for pupils in danger of falling behind has, until recently, been focused largely on the older pupils. Equality of opportunity is, therefore, not yet good.
- The local authority has provided little support in recent years. Consequently, it has not challenged the school effectively about the decline in pupils' achievement in Key Stage 2.
- The headteacher has an accurate picture of the progress of different groups of pupils across the school. She uses this information appropriately as part of her checks on how well teachers are doing their jobs. This has started to improve teaching and, in turn, pupils' progress is beginning to accelerate.
- The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good. Assemblies provide clear messages, for example on sportsmanship, and provide good opportunities for pupils to reflect on

their own achievements and those of others. Pupils are given opportunities to develop social skills in class. Pupils develop a good awareness of other cultures and ways of life. Art and music are strongly promoted.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governors are fully committed to the school’s success and have questioned leaders about pupil performance. Nonetheless, they have not held leaders sufficiently to account to ensure pupils achieve well in Key Stage 2, and are not involved in strategic planning for school improvement at an early enough stage.
- Governors’ training is up to date. Through headteacher’s reports and their own understanding of assessment data, some governors are clear about the effectiveness of the school, although others think the school’s effectiveness is better than it actually is.
- Governors make sure that national requirements are met, including those for safeguarding and procedures for vetting staff and visitors. They ensure the school site is safe and secure.
- Governors set suitable targets for managing the performance of the headteacher and staff. They know how well staff are carrying out their responsibilities through this process. There are long-term issues still to be dealt with linking teachers’ pay increases to the progress of their pupils.
- Governors manage finances very well. They are familiar with how the pupil premium funding is used and the impact it should have on the very small number of pupils who qualify.

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	125609
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	413234

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Adell Pulham
Headteacher	Margot Brown
Date of previous school inspection	29 June 2009
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