

Richard Hill Church of England Primary School

Anstey Lane, Thurcaston, Leicester, LE7 7JA

Inspection dates 25–26 September 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
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

- There is too much variation in the quality of teaching and, as a result, pupils' progress is uneven.
- Behaviour requires improvement. In a few lessons, pupils spend too long listening to lengthy explanations and, when this occurs, they lose interest.
- The work teachers set in some lessons is not sufficiently well matched to pupils' abilities. More-able pupils are not always given tasks that make them think or work hard enough.
- The marking of pupils' work does not always provide clear guidance on their next steps in learning.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunity to write at length when working in English lessons and in other subjects.
- Not all staff with specific roles and responsibilities have the skills needed to play their part in checking on and improving teaching.
- The objectives set to improve teachers' performance are not related closely enough to pupils' rates of progress.
- Many governors are new to their roles and do not have the knowledge necessary to hold leaders and managers to account for the quality of teaching and the progress made by pupils.
- The curriculum does not provide enough opportunities to learn about cultural diversity in modern Britain.

The school has the following strengths

- The interim headteachers provide determined leadership and have identified and begun to tackle weaknesses in teaching and learning.
- Good leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures that children progress well in the Reception class.
- Teaching assistants work well with teachers, and provide good support for any pupils who need additional help.
- Pupils feel safe in school.
- Pupils are provided with a good range of sporting and other activities outside lessons.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in eight lessons. Most lessons were observed jointly with one or other of the interim headteachers. The inspector also observed the breakfast club, an assembly and made a number of short visits to classrooms.
- Pupils were observed at break and lunchtimes.
- The inspector held discussions with the interim headteachers, staff, pupils and the Chair and of the Governing Body. He met with the Diocesan Education Officer and some parents and carers at the start of the school day.
- Groups of pupils of different ages were heard reading.
- The inspector took account of 28 responses to the online questionnaire Parent View.
- He looked at the school's policies, teachers' plans, samples of pupils' work, school improvement planning and records on behaviour and safety. He also looked at information on individual pupils' progress and teachers' performance, and records of meetings held by the governing body.

Inspection team

Kenneth Thomas, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a below average sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is below average. This is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care and others.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is low as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school provides a breakfast club that is managed by the governing body.
- Following the partner school being placed in special measures in November 2012, the school went through an extended de-federation process which was completed on 18 June 2013, and a new Governing Body established.
- The headteacher retired in July 2013 and, pending the appointment of a new substantive headteacher, two interim headteachers took responsibility for the leadership and management of the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is good or better by making sure that:
 - teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are raised and that the pupils are given work with the right level of challenge, particularly those capable of reaching higher levels
 - teachers' explanations are not too long so that pupils remain motivated and have more time for independent work
 - teachers' marking gives pupils clear guidance on how their work can be improved and that teachers provide opportunities for them to respond to the advice.
- Improve pupils' progress and raise their achievement in writing by increasing opportunities for pupils to write at length across a wide range of subjects.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - all staff with subject leadership roles are provided with the training or support they need to be able to identify and tackle weaknesses in their areas of responsibility
 - the setting of targets for teachers to improve their practice, together with related training opportunities, are clearly linked to the raising of pupils' achievement
 - the curriculum provides pupils with more opportunities to develop their understanding of cultural diversity in modern Britain
 - all governors have the knowledge and understanding necessary to find out how well the school is doing and hold its leaders to account for its performance.

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

- Because of inconsistencies in teaching and learning, the good progress made in the Reception class is not built on in later years. Pupils make good progress in some lessons, but slower progress in others. As a result achievement requires improvement.
- Children start school with skills and knowledge that are generally typical for their age. Because teaching is consistently good children make good progress across all areas of learning and many exceed the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1.
- Although attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 has risen over the last two years, analyses of the results of tests and assessments, and scrutiny of pupils' work show that the progress most pupils made through Key Stage 2 was only what was expected from their attainment at the end of Year 2: not enough pupils made more than the expected progress.
- Work in pupils' books, in both English and mathematics, shows that in some classes progress is slowed because pupils are not given the right level of work, particularly pupils capable of reaching higher attainment levels.
- In some classes pupils do not have enough opportunity to develop their extended writing skills because there is too much use of worksheets that only require single word or short sentence responses.
- Phonics (letters and sounds) are taught systematically. As a result, pupils become fluent and confident readers. Younger pupils sound out letters and blend them successfully to read unfamiliar words. Older pupils demonstrate enjoyment in reading and develop good reading habits.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress, because support from teachers and teaching assistants either in lessons or in small withdrawal groups is well matched to their individual needs.
- There are not enough pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium to comment on their attainment without identifying them. However, the pupil premium money is used to fund additional staff to provide individual support where necessary. This is securing good progress in both English and mathematics.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- While there are a number of strengths in teaching, its quality across year groups is too variable. As a result, most pupils make expected rather than good progress overall. Although teachers plan work for differing ability groups, planning does not always take enough account of what pupils can do already.
- Where teaching requires improvement, the same work tends to be given to all pupils without regard for different ability levels. This is because teachers do not make enough use of their knowledge of pupils' attainment levels in lesson planning. Consequently, the level of challenge is not always appropriate with some tasks being either too easy or too hard.

- In a few lessons, pupils of all abilities are required to sit and listen to the same lengthy explanations of learning when higher ability pupils, in particular, are capable of moving on more quickly. When this occurs, pupils lose interest and display less positive attitudes to learning.
- While teachers mark pupils' work regularly, the expectations communicated through the marking of pupils' work are not high enough. Pupils are not given enough guidance on the level of their work and their next steps in learning.
- Where teachers set work that actively involves the pupils and makes clear exactly what they are expected to learn, good progress is made. For example, in an outstanding English lesson with Year 5 pupils, the teacher made excellent use of brisk questioning to challenge and probe pupils' understanding of the rules of speech. The fast pace of the lesson captured pupils' enthusiasm and rapid progress was made because mistakes in their learning were picked up and corrected quickly.
- Good use is made of new technology and other resources to help learning, especially in the much improved teaching seen in the Reception class. Adults make good use of the indoor and outdoor areas to develop children's language, numeracy and social skills, and to promote their physical development.
- Teaching assistants provide good support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and others who need additional support, because they are well informed about pupils' needs and what pupils will be expected to do. They also contribute well to the successful teaching of phonics.
- Pupil premium funding is used appropriately to supplement teaching support and resources for pupils for whom the funding is intended. This helps to make sure that these pupils progress at least as well as the others.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are closely linked to the quality of teaching. In lessons where the work is stimulating and engaging they are keen to learn. In lessons where learning is not made appealing enough, many lose interest and motivation to learn.
- Pupils report that they feel safe in school and that behaviour is mostly good. Most parents and carers agree, although a few do not. The behaviour observed at play and break times was good and school records show that pupils' social behaviour is generally good. There have been no exclusions from school over recent years.
- Most pupils have a good understanding of different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying, and none could recall any incidents, apart from some teasing. They say adults listen to their concerns and deal with any incidents quickly if and when they occasionally occur.
- Pupils are confident that adults will look after them well if they have any concerns. Pupils are well cared for in the breakfast club and say, 'We have lots to do and enjoy coming here.'
- Attendance is above average and pupils are punctual at the start of the day.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- The interim headteachers are providing effective leadership based on an accurate evaluation of the school's performance. The positive tackling of weaknesses in the Early Years Foundation Stage, identified in the previous inspection, and the improvement seen in pupils' attainment demonstrate the school has the capacity to go on improving.
- The priorities identified in the school improvement plan match inspection findings. While there are still inconsistencies in teaching, management action to tackle weaknesses is beginning to secure improvement.
- Procedures for managing the performance of teachers and setting targets to improve their work are in place. However, the targets are too general and do not relate directly enough to the impact of teaching on pupils' achievement.
- The curriculum is sufficiently matched to pupils' abilities and interests to ensure that all groups of pupils make at least the expected progress and have equal opportunities to develop their learning and personal qualities. While many aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are promoted well, the curriculum does not provide enough opportunities to deepen pupils' understanding of cultural diversity in modern Britain.
- The curriculum is enhanced by a good range of after-school clubs and sports activities. The school plans to use the additional primary sports funding to further enhance provision through, for example, the employment of specialist sports coaches. It has plans to measure the impact of this provision.
- The school website has some useful information for parents, especially about the curriculum, but does not provide all the required details about policies and pupils' achievements.
- Good leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage has a positive impact on the development of children's academic and social skills. Following de-federation, it has been necessary to reassign responsibilities for subject leadership. Several staff have only recently taken over these roles and do not yet have the skills needed to lead improvement in their areas of responsibility.
- The school does not receive support from the local authority, but receives good support in the monitoring and evaluation of its performance and the drive for improvement from the Diocesan Education Officer.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Following de-federation, the governing body has been re-constituted. New governors have been appointed and others, including the Chair, are new to their roles. Under the guidance of the interim headteachers, governors are gaining a fuller understanding of the link between progress and achievement and how the variation in achievement between classes is linked to strengths and weaknesses in teaching. This is helping governors to become better informed about how to reward good teaching and challenge underperformance. The governing body manages funding conscientiously and seeks assurances that the income received through the pupil premium is spent for the purposes intended. However, it is less secure in its understanding of the impact the extra funding is having on pupils' attainment. The governing body makes sure that current national guidelines for safeguarding children are followed and that the necessary checks are carried out to ensure pupils' safety.

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	120205
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	424996

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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	135
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Marian Driver
Headteacher	Wendy Wakefield & Rachel Hames (interim headteachers)
Date of previous school inspection	26 October 2011
Telephone number	0116 2340212
Fax number	0116 2340226
Email address	office@richardhill.leics.sch.uk

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