

The CofE School of St Edmund and St John

Beechwood Road, Dudley, DY2 7QA

Inspection dates

9–10 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	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

- Pupils' achievement, although improving, is not yet consistently good across the school. Too many variations in the rate of progress between subjects and classes remain.
- Too few pupils are working above the expectations for their age, particularly in mathematics. Standards in mathematics are lower than in reading and writing.
- Although teaching has improved recently, it is still not as good as it should be. It has not been good enough for sufficient time to result in good achievement in all subjects.
- There is too much variability in managing low-level disruptive behaviour from class to class.
- Teachers do not always make the best use of the school's information on each pupil's progress to plan work at a suitable level for their varying ages and abilities; including setting work that is sufficiently demanding for more-able pupils.
- A small number of pupils repeatedly arrive late in the mornings and miss some of their lessons. These pupils make slower progress than their classmates.
- The work of the governing body requires improvement because it has not held the school to account for the school's performance sufficiently well and has not tackled underperformance soon enough.

The school has the following strengths

- Senior leaders use performance management to challenge weaknesses in teaching and promote improvement. This is leading to an increase in the proportion of good teaching and faster progress for some pupils.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress.
- Good systems that are well implemented ensure that pupils are kept safe. Pupils feel safe in school because staff provide a good level of care and support.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 16 lessons, of which five were observed jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Meetings and discussions were held with governors, members of staff, a representative of the local authority, a representative of the diocese and groups of pupils.
- There were insufficient responses to the online questionnaire for parents and carers (Parent View) to allow analysis. A number of parents spoke to the inspectors during the inspection and their comments were taken into account.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own records of pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Clive Lewis, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Shahnaz Maqsood	Additional Inspector
Pamela Hemphill	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is slightly larger than the average-sized primary school.
- With the exception of the two Reception Year classes, pupils are taught in nine mixed-age classes.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional funding for those known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority, makes up over half of the school roll and is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils from a minority ethnic background is well above average and the proportion of these pupils for whom English is a second language is very high.
- The proportions of pupils supported by school action, and by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are both well above average.
- An above-average proportion of pupils join the school at other than the normal time, mid-year and mid-key stage, and this mobility is particularly high in some year groups.
- The school meets the current floor standards, which set the government's minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher joined the school in January 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality and effectiveness of teaching and pupils' achievement, so that they are consistently at least good, by ensuring that:
 - teachers make better use of the school's information on pupils' attainment to match tasks more precisely to individual needs in the mixed-age classes and sets, with particular emphasis on challenging the more-able pupils
 - teachers develop a wider range of strategies to deal effectively with the low-level misbehaviour that sometimes occurs in lessons and which can slow down the pace of learning.
- Improve standards in mathematics by providing pupils with more opportunities to practise their mental mathematics skills and apply their numeracy skills across the curriculum.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring the governing body evaluates the performance of the school more rigorously and challenges the school more critically. An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.
- Devise ways to encourage persistent latecomers to come to school more promptly and regularly.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Although there have been small improvements in attainment and progress since the last inspection, standards in mathematics are not yet good enough. The proportion of pupils achieving higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics remains below average. Pupils' mental arithmetic skills, particularly their knowledge and recall of times tables, are weak. They are not provided with enough opportunities to use their numeracy skills in other subject areas to be able to use and apply them well.
- The improvements in achievement, particularly in reading, have not yet made enough difference to standards in Year 6. By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6, standards are broadly in line with national averages in reading and writing but are not as high as they should be in mathematics.
- Most children enter the Reception classes with skills that are well below those expected for their age. They make good progress in all areas of learning during their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Nevertheless, their skills are below average when they enter the Year 1 classes, particularly in communication and language and number skills.
- Regular, daily phonics (the links between letters and sounds) and guided reading activities help pupils to make good progress in reading from their starting points when they enter the school.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make similar progress to their peers, as do those eligible for the pupil premium. These pupils' needs are carefully identified and the school uses the pupil premium funding well to provide additional support, for example, through frequent small-group or one-to-one activities. This helps them to learn effectively.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to their peers. The support provided by class teachers, teaching assistants and outside agencies ensures that work is set at the right level for them, enabling them to make small but progressive steps in their learning.
- Pupils who join the school mid-year and mid key-stage settle in quickly and make progress equivalent to that made by their peers.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Despite the recent improvements in teaching, its quality across the school still varies too much and requires improvement. Even where teaching has improved, there has not yet been enough time for it to help pupils to make up for previously slow progress and enable them to reach higher standards.
- In a few lessons where teachers' behaviour management skills are less well-developed, the pace of learning is repeatedly slowed by low-level disruption from a few pupils. This has a negative effect on the pace and quality of other pupils' learning in the class. Where this behaviour is managed well, all pupils work hard in a calm atmosphere without the need for constant adult intervention.
- Improvements to the school's assessment and tracking systems and the greater involvement of class teachers in the analysis of this information has meant that teachers have a better

understanding of the achievement and progress of the pupils in their care. However, teachers do not always make full use of this information to plan work at an appropriate level for the wide range of ability in each class. In some lessons, for example, tasks provided for more-able pupils are too easy, with pupils initially completing the same work as their peers. This means that they lose concentration, mark time and do not make as much progress as they could.

- A number of good lessons were observed during the inspection. In these lessons, teaching was well-paced throughout. Teachers displayed good subject knowledge and used a wide range of teaching methods and resources effectively to engage and maintain pupils' interest. They ensured pupils concentrated and that time was not wasted by any inappropriate behaviour. Activities were changed frequently in order to maintain pupils' interest, good links were made to previous learning and teachers ensured that pupils had a good understanding of what they needed to do to improve.
- In the best lessons, good use is made of resources, including information and communication technology, to motivate pupils and support their learning. Marking of pupils' work is up to date and, at best, gives pupils clear guidance about how well they have met their learning objectives and how they can further improve their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- The school's efforts to improve attendance and punctuality have resulted in a higher proportion of pupils attending school regularly than at the time of the previous inspection. Although nearly all pupils now arrive at school on time, a small but persistent group regularly come after the start of the school day, missing some valuable learning time as a result. Records of progress show clearly that these pupils make slower progress than their peers.
- Under the leadership of the new headteacher, a strong emphasis on promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has been introduced. The setting of clear boundaries for behaviour and the implementation of an effective system of rewards and sanctions have had a positive effect on improving pupils' behaviour.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school. Instances of bullying in its various guises are increasingly rare. Pupils have an appropriate understanding of the potential hazards posed by misuse of the internet and mobile telephones.
- The majority of pupils behave well and behaviour is good in most lessons, at lunchtimes and in assemblies. Pupils are keen to do their best and answer questions readily. They usually display high levels of concentration and, when working in pairs or groups, organise themselves swiftly and with the minimum of fuss. However, in some lessons the inappropriate behaviour of a few pupils is insufficiently challenged by the teacher and disrupts the learning of other pupils.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- While the headteacher has, in a very short time, improved many aspects of leadership and management, there has not yet been sufficient time for these initiatives and improvements to have had a positive impact on the consistency of pupils' progress. Additionally, the governing body has not been sufficiently rigorous in challenging the school about its underperformance and supporting it to do better.
- The school received strong support from the local authority during the period of instability and uncertainty caused by significant changes in leadership and staffing. Since stability has been

re-established, though, this support has largely been withdrawn.

- Under the guidance of the headteacher, staff have become a well-motivated team, demonstrating a shared sense of responsibility and commitment to improving the school. Good leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage ensure that children make a strong start to their learning.
- The headteacher, with the support of the governing body, has identified the school's weaknesses and has implemented many new systems and initiatives to strengthen its effectiveness. Teachers' performance is now closely checked and supported, and has begun to improve. The leaders' responsibilities have been redistributed and strengthened, and the rigour of assessment and tracking systems have improved. However, these have not yet become custom and practice in the school or had a sustained effect on pupils' attainment and progress.
- Pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics is now checked rigorously. Regular meetings are held between the headteacher and individual class teachers about pupils' progress to discuss the information gained. These meetings ensure that teachers have a good understanding of how well pupils in their charge are doing, and the action they should take to support them and help them to reach their challenging targets.
- The school provides a broad range of subjects for pupils to study. Some improvements have been made in planning for the use of key skills across subjects. However, not enough has yet been done to ensure pupils are provided with enough opportunities to use and develop their mathematics skills across other subjects. The headteacher works well with the other schools in the locality in sharing ideas on leadership and in order to widen the range of extra activities provided for the pupils.
- The headteacher has introduced a stronger emphasis on promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils. Together with changes to lesson planning, such as regular opportunities for collaborative work, this focus has been successful in increasing pupils' ability to work and learn independently. It has contributed well to improvements in pupils' self-esteem. The school is effective in ensuring that pupils of different heritages have equal opportunities. There are good relationships between all groups of pupils and discrimination is not tolerated.
- Fully supported and monitored by the governing body, the school makes effective use of the money derived from the pupil premium to employ additional teaching and support staff to provide small group and one-to-one work. This helps to ensure that eligible pupils achieve as well as their friends.
- At the time of inspection, the school had yet to receive its allocation of additional government funding to improve the provision for physical education in primary schools. However, it has already made plans for its use and for evaluation of the enhanced provision.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is supportive but does not offer the leadership enough well-informed challenge, particularly in relation to pupils' achievement. Governors have had effective training and support and now have a better understanding of the quality of teaching. They understand what is being done to tackle any underperformance, what is being done to improve it and to recognise and reward good teachers. The governing body ensures that safeguarding arrangements are secure. It has overseen the arrangements for the effective use of the pupil premium funding and those for relating teachers' performance to their pay.

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	103852
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	429955

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	276
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Andrew Wickens
Headteacher	Ms Caroline Phipps
Date of previous school inspection	28 May 2012
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