

The Gedney Hill Church of England VC Primary School

North Road, Gedney Hill, Spalding, PE12 0NL

Inspection dates 16–17 October 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		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 do not make consistently good progress across the school and standards are not high enough.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop writing and problem solving in mathematics. Basic skills in mathematics are not taught in a progressive way.
- Teaching requires improvement. Lessons do not always proceed at a brisk pace so pupils lose interest. Sometime activities are not at precisely the right level and are too hard or too easy.
- Teachers’ questioning does not extend pupils’ thinking and pupils are not clear about how to improve their work.
- Teachers do not check on pupils’ learning regularly enough in lessons to make sure that they make rapid progress.
- Leaders, managers and governors have not ensured that teaching and achievement have remained good.

The school has the following strengths

- The executive headteacher has a clear vision for improvement in the school and actions so far have been successful in improving behaviour, teaching and pupils’ achievement.
- Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved and children make faster progress.
- Pupils feel safe in school and say there is very little bullying. Behaviour has improved and pupils now behave well around the school.
- The federation has supported improvements in the school. Governors know the school well and challenge the executive headteacher effectively.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons or part-lessons, most jointly with the executive headteacher.
- The inspector spoke to pupils about their views of the school, listened to them read, examined their work in books and attended an assembly.
- Meetings took place with the Chair of the Governing Body and another governor as well as with staff. A telephone conversation was held with a local authority representative.
- The inspector met parents in the playground when they brought their children to school and discussed their views of the school. There were not enough responses to the online Parent View survey for these to be seen.
- The inspector reviewed records of pupils' recent attainment and progress, the school's evaluation of its work and plans for the future, minutes of meetings of the governing body, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance records.

Inspection team

Susan Williams, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The vast majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is well-below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and other groups) is below average.
- It is not possible to make a valid judgement against current government floor standards, the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress, as there were not enough pupils in Year 6.
- The school became part of a hard federation with Shepeaustow Primary School in April 2012. The two schools share the same executive headteacher and governing body. An assistant headteacher was appointed to work across the federation from September 2012 and a new senior teacher was appointed in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so it is consistently good or better by ensuring that:
 - lessons proceed at a brisk pace and pupils get involved with activities more quickly so they are more focused in their learning
 - activities are at precisely the right level for all pupils so they are not too hard or too easy
 - teachers develop their use of questioning to involve more pupils and to probe pupils' thinking
 - pupils know how to improve their work
 - teachers check on learning more regularly in lessons and adapt activities when necessary so pupils make faster progress.
- Accelerate progress and raise standards further by:
 - giving pupils more opportunities to write in lessons and in longer pieces of work
 - ensuring basic skills in mathematics are taught more progressively across the school
 - increasing the opportunities pupils have to apply their mathematics skills to problem solving so that they can use the skills they have learnt.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by developing the roles of senior and middle leaders in leading improvements across the school and in improving teaching.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because pupils do not make consistently good progress across the school and standards are not high enough. The more-able pupils do not always have work which helps them achieve the highest grades. Pupils do not always have enough opportunities in lessons to develop their writing and to write longer pieces in a range of styles.
- The basic skills in mathematics including addition, subtraction, multiplication and division are not taught in a progressive way across the school so some pupils have gaps in their knowledge and have needed individual help to catch up. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply their mathematical skills to problem solving activities to help their understanding and to achieve the higher levels.
- Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 and 2 dropped in 2012. Improvements in teaching and a range of group sessions and individual support for pupils led to improved progress across the school last year, particularly in Key Stage 2. Standards rose at both key stages in reading, writing and mathematics in 2013.
- Results in the Year 1 phonics (letters and their sounds) check in 2012 were below national levels. The school has focused on improving reading and promoting a joy of reading. Pupils are proud of their new reading passports and the 'Rooted in Reading' promotion encourages them to read different types of books. They enjoy reading fiction books as they enjoy stories and equally enjoy non-fiction and finding out about new things such as dinosaurs. The results of the phonics check improved in 2013 and were above the previous year's national levels.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge which are typically below those expected for their age. The school has focused on improving this area and now teaches all areas of learning with links through science. Adults work effectively with children supporting them in developing their language skills and reading and writing through a wide range of activities. For example, children enjoyed copying their names into their brightly coloured paintings. Standards rose in 2012 to be above average. In 2013 the majority of children reached a good level of development to prepare them for entering Key Stage 1.
- Pupils who received support from pupil premium funding have had individual support to help them catch up. This was very effective and their progress last year across the school was rapid. It is not possible to comment on the attainment of these pupils compared with others in national tests as numbers are too small.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive particularly effective help from support staff who use their excellent subject knowledge to support pupils in their learning and adapt activities so these pupils make good progress across the school. The extra help given to pupils to help them catch up shows how effective the school is in promoting equality of opportunity and ensuring there is no discrimination.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is not consistently good across the school in reading, writing and mathematics. Lessons do not always proceed at a brisk pace and pupils sometimes lose a little concentration for their learning as they do not get onto activities quickly where they can learn at their own rate or in groups.

- Activities are not always at the right level so on occasions they are too hard for less-able pupils and too easy for more-able pupils and this limits pupils' progress. Teachers use questioning for whole classes but this commonly does not involve many pupils and opportunities to ask follow-up questions to check more pupils' understanding and to take learning on further are missed.
- Pupils know what level they are working on but they do not know how to improve their work so they cannot take ownership in making improvements themselves. When pupils work on tasks by themselves or in groups, teachers do not always check on them regularly to make sure they remain focused, change activities or ask questions to support learning so that the rate of progress remains high.
- Support staff are particularly effective across the school helping pupils understand work and supporting them in making better progress. In the best teaching, for example in a Year 3 to 6 mathematics lesson, pupils were engaged in interesting activities in groups which helped them develop their mathematical vocabulary. The teacher checked on learning throughout the lesson giving pupils additional work so they made good progress and support staff worked effectively with their groups.

The behaviour and safety of pupils requires improvement

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are not always positive enough to help them make the best progress in lessons. They occasionally become a little distracted if the pace of learning is slow and they do not take responsibility for improving their work.
- Behaviour around the school has improved. Pupils and parents commented about how much better behaviour is and school records confirm this is the case and the number of incidents of poor behaviour has reduced. Exclusions are also drastically reduced with only one fixed-term exclusion last academic year.
- There are higher expectations for behaviour and the use of praise and rewards are used to focus on good behaviour. Pupils are rewarded with stickers, use of golden time, merits and house points shared with the federated school which are celebrated weekly. The school is effective in promoting good relationships. Behaviour in the playground, around the school and in assembly is good. Pupils are polite and respectful to each other, staff and visitors.
- Pupils feel safe in school and say bullying is rare. They are confident that staff will help them if they have a problem. They know about different types of bullying including cyber-bullying, physical and verbal bullying.
- Attendance is broadly average and pupils are routinely punctual to school and their lessons.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement as, despite recent improvements, teaching and achievement are not yet good. Senior and middle leaders are new to their posts and do not yet have a role in developing teaching and other areas across the school.
- The executive headteacher has an excellent understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the school. The school's own evaluation of its work is honest and accurate and the development plan focuses on appropriate priorities. Since the school federated there have been improvements in teaching, pupils' behaviour and achievement. This demonstrates the

capacity for further improvement.

- The school has reviewed how it manages staff performance and sets targets linked to the national teaching standards (national expectations for teachers). Teaching has improved and inadequate teaching has been eradicated.
- The executive headteacher has gained the trust of parents who all said that the school had improved. Parents are particularly positive about the increased opportunities which pupils can benefit from as part of the federation and the local partnership of schools. One of the most positive aspects was the joint events where pupils have the opportunity to mix with each other, for example, the multi-cultural festival and the 'mad science' day.
- The curriculum is now more topic based with appropriate priority given to English and mathematics although there are not enough opportunities for developing writing and problem solving in mathematics. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is developed well in assemblies and with opportunities to reflect on issues in 'circle time' in classes. This is supporting improving attitudes across the school. The recent multi-cultural partnership event where pupils learnt about India, Africa and Chinese with pupils from the group of schools supported pupils' cultural development well.
- The new sports funding is being used effectively to increase participation in sports with a specialist sports coach delivering gymnastics sessions, helping staff to develop their skills as well as identifying pupils' talents and signposting them to local clubs. There are plans to increase participation in sport with archery, gymnastics and football clubs as well as opportunities for partnership events including one at the local gymnastics club.
- The local authority has provided support for governors for a long-term leadership solution for the school. They have supported the development of the provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage and the development of teaching throughout the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors support and challenge the executive headteacher. They understand the published data on the school and know that assessment in the school is now more accurate. They receive regular updates about pupils' progress and know what difference additional support is making for pupils receiving support from pupil premium funding and for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. They use the expertise of a governor with education experience to support new governors making school visits for the first time. They have a thorough understanding of the quality of teaching in the school and know where underperformance has been tackled and what support is being provided to improve teaching further. An external adviser works with them on the performance management of the headteacher, they receive updates on the process for other staff and sign off pay awards for staff who teach well. Governors ensure statutory duties are met including safeguarding.

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	120548
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	425116

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	37
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Goose
Headteacher	Alison Buddle
Date of previous school inspection	4 November 2010
Telephone number	01406 330258
Fax number	01406 331079
Email address	alison.buddle@gedney-hill.lincs.sch.uk

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