

# Church Preen Primary School

Church Preen, Church Stretton, SY6 7LH

**Inspection dates** 16–17 October 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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		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

- Pupils' rates of progress in writing and mathematics are not consistently good throughout the school.
- Although standards in English and mathematics are beginning to rise, too few pupils achieve the levels of which they are capable in writing and mathematics.
- Too much teaching requires improvement for it to produce good achievement overall.
- Teachers do not consistently ensure that learning activities are sufficiently challenging for pupils of different abilities.
- The pace of lessons is quite variable and time and resources, including teaching assistants, are not always used effectively.
- In some lessons, there are too few opportunities for pupils to find things out by themselves or to develop independent learning skills.
- Marking does not always provide pupils with meaningful feedback to help them improve.
- Though the quality of teaching is checked regularly by senior staff judgements are sometimes too generous and not sufficiently focused on pupils' learning.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils' achievement in reading is consistently good across the school.
- Pupils' good attitudes and behaviour help classrooms to be calm and orderly places in which to learn.
- Pupils' attendance is consistently high.
- Special events, themed topics and visits bring added vibrancy to the range of subjects experienced at school.
- The headteacher, supported by the governing body, has been effective in addressing underperformance in teaching, so achievement is improving.
- The overwhelming majority of parents and carers hold the school in high regard. They agree with their children that the school keeps them safe.

## Information about this inspection

- Ten lessons or parts of lessons were observed. All classroom teachers present during the inspection were observed teaching. The inspector undertook two joint lesson observations with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, staff, members of the governing body and different groups of pupils.
- The inspector observed the teaching of reading skills and observed pupils reading in lessons.
- The inspector sampled pupils' work, scrutinised the school's tracking records of pupils' progress and took account of the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans.
- The inspector held a discussion with a member of the local authority's advisory staff.
- The views of parents and carers were sought and 19 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were examined. The inspector spoke with parents and carers, at various times, during the inspection. He also took account of the school's own survey of the views of older pupils in December 2012.
- The views of staff were sought through a questionnaire. In total, 12 questionnaires were studied.

## Inspection team

Gordon Ewing, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school.
- Pupils come from a range of different heritage groups. The largest group, about nine tenths, is of White British heritage. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- Only a very small number of pupils are eligible for support from the pupil premium, which provides additional government funding for children who are looked after by the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and other groups.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is close to the average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Over recent times, there has been significant turbulence in staffing.
- There are three classes within this very small school. Class 1 caters for children in Reception and Year 1. Class 2 caters for pupils in Years 2 and 3, whilst Class 3 caters for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better, by making sure leaders and teachers:
  - always have high expectations and accurately judge pupils' ability levels in order that work is closely matched to pupils' needs
  - have a clear understanding of the components of good teaching and learning and use this to accurately gauge the quality of teaching over time
  - set consistently good levels of pace in lessons in order to build on pupils' good attitudes to learning and to make more effective use of time
  - plan carefully how best to use teaching assistants so that they play a more defined role in supporting teaching and learning in lessons
  - regularly provide learning opportunities that challenge pupils and develop their reasoning and thinking in open-ended problem solving tasks
  - share the existing good practice in marking and provide pupils with more time to reflect and respond to teachers' feedback.
- Raise pupils' attainment and accelerate their progress across the school to at least good levels, especially in writing and mathematics, by:
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to develop and apply their writing skills for different purposes and across all curriculum areas
  - increasing the range of activities in mathematics that help pupils develop independent strategies to check the accuracy of their calculations and to strengthen their knowledge of key number facts and multiplication tables
  - providing lesson activities that help pupils to improve their independent learning skills so that they are more proficient in finding things out for themselves and become less reliant on adults to take the next step
  - equipping pupils with the skills to check on their own progress and that of their peers, so that they take on more responsibility for their learning.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Pupils' progress since the last inspection has not been consistently good. Though Year 6 pupils in 2013 achieved well in reading, writing and mathematics, pupils' achievement over time has been too variable, especially in writing and mathematics.
- Current pupils are making better progress because teaching is improving, and support to specific pupils is paying dividends. That said, rates of progress across the school in writing and mathematics lag behind those seen in reading.
- When children join Class 1, most are displaying knowledge, skills and understanding typical for their age. Pupils make expected progress in Reception and in Key Stage 1 and attain broadly average levels by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. Rates of progress for current pupils in Key Stage 1 are strengthening because teaching is increasingly effective in meeting their different needs.
- Pupils' attainment and progress in reading are consistently stronger than in writing and mathematics. This reflects the successful drive to teach reading skills systematically across the school. Pupils' attainment and progress are much more variable in writing and mathematics and, though there are pockets of better progress now, not enough has been done to secure higher attainment levels.
- Pupils' writing is beginning to improve but there are too few opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their writing skills in different contexts and across subjects. In mathematics, pupils are too reliant on learning prompts, such as tables grids, and are not taught consistently to check the accuracy of their calculations through estimating the likely answer or by using alternative methods.
- Very small numbers of pupils in all year groups mean that comparisons, between different year groups or groups of pupils, against national results, are tricky. Even so, inspection evidence shows that, overall, there are no significant variations in the achievement of different groups over time.
- Pupils, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding, make similar rates of progress to their peers so that their attainment in English and mathematics is similar and, sometimes, better. Indeed, it is clear that the staff go more than the extra mile in supporting pupils whose circumstances might make them vulnerable to overcome the social and academic barriers, which they face. The additional funding is well used to provide one-to-one support in literacy, numeracy and social development, as well as in increasing participation in school visits and after school activities.
- Pupils' positive attitudes to learning boost the impact of the teaching because they come to lessons ready to learn and show good levels of resilience and perseverance, even when the challenge in some lessons is not as high as it could be.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Although teaching is improving, it still requires improvement because not all pupils are making the rates of progress of which they are capable, especially in writing and mathematics. During the inspection, though no teaching was inadequate, in too few lessons was the teaching good.

Furthermore, pupils' work over time shows that the overall quality of teaching requires improvement.

- Teaching of children in the Reception class is improving because activities are now stimulating and better tuned to children's needs. Furthermore, teaching assistants are used to good effect as their work is more carefully planned. As a result, they check on children's learning with care and accuracy.
- The pace of learning and the match of activities to meet pupils' needs were key weaknesses in those lessons where teaching required improvement. Teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable are not always sufficiently high.
- Levels of progress in writing are beginning to rise but further improvements are held back by the lack of opportunity for pupils to use, apply and develop their writing skills more widely.
- Opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills in open-ended problem-solving tasks are too few. Furthermore, pupils are too reliant on adult support and learning aids, which reduces their ability and proficiency in solving number problems. Pupils are not consistently taught how to break a problem down into simpler steps or to check the reasonableness of their answers. As a result, unnecessary errors go unchecked.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge, are enthusiastic and keen to improve. The sense of teamwork is palpable and increased opportunities for training are being taken up. However, the deployment of teaching assistants is not always managed to best effect and, consequently, opportunities are sometimes missed to provide individual or small group support to some pupils.
- In a lesson where the teaching was judged as good, pupils were exploring the characteristics of nocturnal animals and spoke confidently about how these animals had special features to help them at night. They were able to sort different animals into particular groups and thoroughly enjoyed opportunities to discuss and share their ideas. The teaching assistants questioned and prompted pupils astutely and made sure that everyone was fully involved. The skilful choice of a short video clip of nocturnal animals and how they are physically adapted to life at night brought added depth to the pupils' learning.
- Teachers' marking is positive and timely. Whilst there are good examples where marking provides pupils with positive feedback on their learning and guidance on how to improve, this is not consistent across the school. In addition, pupils are not given enough time to think about their learning, respond to teachers' marking or to assess their progress, or that of their peers, against their targets.
- Throughout the school relationships are excellent between adults and pupils. Every pupil is known as an individual and pupils clearly enjoy lessons.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Pupils are proud of their school and the part they play in making it a friendly and welcoming place to learn. One pupil described it as, 'A small school with big ideas.'
- Behaviour in and around school is good and, sometimes, outstanding. High levels of attendance, over several years, reflect pupils' regard for what the school offers and their positive attitudes to learning. Even when the quality of teaching is not good, pupils show perseverance in tackling tasks and rarely lose concentration.

- Pupils are polite, courteous and respectful at all times.
- Pupils clearly feel safe and report that bullying of any kind is extremely rare. They know how to keep themselves safe and are aware of the dangers associated with the internet and in the outside world.
- Responsibilities such as school councillor, eco-councillor and play leader are taken on with vigour and enthusiasm. Pupils are rightly proud of the significant contribution they make to this cohesive and harmonious community.

## The leadership and management

## requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, turbulence in staffing, alongside changes in roles and responsibilities have limited the impact of endeavours to improve the school to a good level. That said, now that staffing is more stable the pace of improvement is increasing and mediocre levels of attainment and progress are being addressed rigorously.
- The headteacher and governing body have a sound grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses, though judgements on the quality of teaching and its impact on learning are generous, at times. Even so, the school has the capacity to improve further.
- The headteacher has set out his vision for the school and this is strongly supported by parents, carers and governors. The school's evaluation of its work is comprehensive. However, school improvement plans do not give sufficient attention to providing clear objectives in order to check on the school's progress over time. For example, whilst governors are thorough at tracking attainment and progress at the end both Key Stages, they have been less astute in checking on the progress of pupils in other year groups.
- The broad and balanced curriculum is enhanced well with school wide themed topics, visits and after school clubs. Parents, carers and pupils expressed great appreciation of the 'exciting and fun' activities to which pupils are exposed. These strengthen pupils' attitudes to learning and ensure that the school engages well with the wider community. That said, in writing and mathematics, not enough is done to apply and develop pupils' key skills in wider contexts.
- The school has received effective, low level support from the local authority and has been actively improving teaching through personalised support and training linked to clear performance management objectives.
- Weekly physical education activities, some led by external coaches, alongside the broad range of sporting clubs and tournaments attended by many pupils, make sure that pupils know how to lead healthy and active lives. New government funding for physical education and sport is already beginning to boost further the school's good provision and plans are in place to build a partnership across other schools locally in order to sustain the already high participation rates. Governors are currently developing strategies to evaluate the impact of this new funding over time.
- Provision for pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good. A key strength is the number of cross-age activities that develop pupils' social and moral responsibilities and increase their thirst to find out more about the wider world.
- Views of parents and carers demonstrate high levels of support for the school, the headteacher and staff. One parent commented, 'I'm ecstatic. It is a lovely school.'

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Members of the governing body are regular visitors and have been pro-active in supporting the headteacher in improving teaching. Governors are now tracking pupils' progress more frequently, though not enough has been done to check on the attainment and progress of all pupils in all classes.
- Governors are increasingly astute in using performance management procedures so that the headteacher and staff are set targets linked to whole school priorities and pupils' progress. Consequently, they make sure that salary progression is fair and based on merit.
- Governors carefully monitor the school's finances, including pupil premium funding and the new grant for physical education and sport. They have a good knowledge of how this funding is used and carefully check on its impact on outcomes for pupils.
- Safeguarding procedures fully meet statutory requirements and governors are active in ensuring equal opportunities are promoted effectively and that discrimination is not tolerated.

## 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>	123359
<b>Local authority</b>	Shropshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	426972

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	69
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Steve Hall
<b>Headteacher</b>	Dave Tinker
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 February 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01694 771359
<b>Fax number</b>	01694 771807
<b>Email address</b>	admin.churchpreen@shropshirelg.net

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