

Callowell Primary School

Burrowfield Road, Farm Hil, Stroud, GL5 4DG

Inspection dates 23–24 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- In recent years, pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics has rapidly improved throughout the school. In particular, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are very well supported and make good progress as a result.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good, and some is outstanding. Teachers and support staff know the pupils very well and make sure that teaching meets their wide range of learning needs. Consequently, lessons effectively capture the interest of all the pupils.
- The school has a very positive ethos, which is reflected in pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes towards each other and their learning.
- The provision of a wide range of enriched learning opportunities, especially in physical education and drama, means that pupils thoroughly enjoy their learning and have good opportunities for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Leadership and management are good because leaders at all levels, including governors and in particular the headteacher and deputy headteacher, have successfully improved the quality of teaching since the last inspection, which has had a correspondingly positive impact on raising pupils' achievement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Standards of presentation are not high enough. In Key Stage 1 and the Early Years Foundation Stage, teachers' assessment of pupils' writing has sometimes been too cautious.
- In mathematics, improvements in teaching number skills across Key Stage 2 are recent and so are not fully secure.
- Improvement plans do not always make it sufficiently clear how leaders will know that their actions have had a positive and measurable impact on pupils' outcomes.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors evaluated the quality of teaching in every class. They observed 16 lessons taught by nine teachers. Some lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Discussions were held with pupils, governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body, the headteacher, deputy headteacher and staff.
- Inspectors observed many aspects of the school’s work. They heard pupils read and scrutinised their work in exercise books, folders and on classroom wall displays.
- Inspectors looked at a number of documents, including the minutes of governors’ meetings, plans for what pupils learn in each subject, plans for the school’s future development, the school’s arrangements for keeping pupils safe, pupils’ attendance records, records of how pupils’ progress and attainment are checked and tracked and records of how the school checks on the quality of teaching.
- The views of parents and carers were taken into account through the scrutiny of the 29 responses to the online Parent View survey and a discussion with a representative group of parents and carers.
- Staff views were taken into consideration by looking at questionnaires completed by 16 staff members.

Inspection team

Chris Nye, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Helen Owen

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Callowell is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school receives pupil premium funding for around 10% of the pupils. This proportion is below average. The pupil premium is additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those with a parent or carer on active service in the armed forces.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs that are supported through school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- Almost all pupils have a White British heritage and very few speak English as an additional language.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There is a separate nursery, breakfast and after-school provision on the school site. These are managed privately so are not part of this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen improvements in pupils' achievement by:
 - securing recently reviewed strategies for teaching the four rules of number in mathematics, especially in Key Stage 2
 - improving the quality of the presentation of pupils' written work
 - sharing teachers' expertise in assessing writing in Key Stage 1 and the Early Years Foundation Stage so that pupils' good progress is more consistently recognised and celebrated.
- Sharpen the school's improvement plans by making sure that the success of actions can be consistently measured against specific outcomes for pupils.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The school has shown considerable success in reversing a history of underachievement. Throughout the school, pupils are making accelerated progress in reading, writing and mathematics, and inspection evidence confirms the school's own tracking data that pupils achieve well. Achievement is not yet outstanding because although standards are close to or above national averages, they are not yet consistently above average.
- Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills below expected levels, especially in communication and language. They make good progress, and the proportion entering Key Stage 1 with skills better than the expected levels in mathematics and reading is well above average. In writing, their skills are in line with expected levels but inspection evidence and external moderation confirm that some judgements have, in the past, been too cautious and below children's actual level.
- This good progress continues into Key Stage 1. The proportion of pupils attaining the expected levels in reading and mathematics at the end of Year 2 is rapidly improving and in the most recent assessments this was above average. In writing, inspection evidence shows that pupils are achieving well, especially the more-able pupils. However, in last year's Year 2 assessments this was not clearly evident as internal school judgements were overly cautious. The school is addressing this through staff training, increased moderation and the use of exemplars of pupils' writing to make assessments more accurate.
- Pupils are enthusiastic readers. They are encouraged to read widely and often. Phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) is taught well and the proportion of Year 1 pupils reaching the required standard is above average in the phonics screening checks.
- Throughout Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Last year the average amount of progress made by pupils across the key stage in these subjects was above expected levels, and the more-able pupils made particularly good progress. This improvement was reflected in the most recent end of Year 6 national tests in which the percentage attaining or exceeding the expected levels in reading, writing and in the spelling, grammar and punctuation test was well above the national average.
- In mathematics, attainment has been in line with expected levels. To improve this further, the school has recently reviewed how the four rules of number are taught and, although changes are still new and are not fully secure, there is evidence that attainment in mathematics is now rapidly improving as a result.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and the few who speak English as an additional language make at least good progress relative to their starting points. This is because their needs are rapidly and accurately identified and good quality teaching ensures that these are met.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium achieve well because appropriate additional support has been provided to ensure that they catch up quickly. This means that there is little difference between their attainment and that of other pupils in the school.
- Although the content of pupils' written work, including its spelling, punctuation and grammar, is good, the quality of their presentation is not good enough.
- All the parents and carers who spoke to inspectors, and most who responded to Parent View, said that they feel that their children make good progress. The pupils who met inspectors also expressed very positive views about their learning and progress.

The quality of teaching is good

- The teaching observed during the inspection was never less than good and some was outstanding. Rigorous monitoring of teaching is the main reason for the improvement in pupils' achievement, especially of the more-able pupils and disabled pupils and those who have special

educational needs.

- Teachers have high expectations and plan imaginative lessons that meet pupils' individual needs and encourage an enthusiasm for learning. Lesson aims are routinely shared with, and understood by, pupils and link clearly to the outcomes of previous lessons. A strong emphasis is placed on pupils assessing their own work against very clear and challenging individual targets and this is helping them to develop a love of learning and an understanding about what they need to do to improve their work.
- Teachers effectively check pupils' progress during lessons to assess pupils' understanding and then adjust their teaching to tackle any misconceptions. For example, in one lesson the teacher was skilfully providing answers and asking the pupils to devise the questions about graphs that they had drawn so that she could be certain that the pupils had fully understood the concept that she was teaching.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and make effective use of resources to motivate pupils. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very well supported and all, including the more able, make good progress and learn well. As a result, pupils are keen to do well. As one pupil commented to an inspector, 'We learn a lot and have fun while we are doing it!'
- Teaching assistants are trained well and skilful in supporting teaching and learning. They work closely with teachers to provide exceptional support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs through well-planned interventions. Consequently, very few pupils now leave the school without attaining the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The teaching of reading is good throughout the school because teachers are passionate about it and make sure that pupils develop reading skills, for example in phonics, and positive attitudes towards reading and literature.
- Homework is well planned to support and enhance the learning in class and encourages parents and carers to become more involved in their child's learning. It is accurately marked.
- Although some assessment of pupils' writing does not always acknowledge and celebrate success sufficiently well, marking is accurate and the school's policies are consistently applied. Teachers' comments are evaluative, helpful and provide clear indications as to how pupils' work can be improved further.
- Teaching is not yet outstanding because, while achievement is rapidly improving, standards in writing and mathematics are not yet high enough.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning and each other. Effective behaviour policies are applied fairly and consistently throughout the school. As a result, behaviour in lessons and during break times is good.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe, well cared for and enjoy coming to school. This is reflected in their attendance, which has improved over recent years from below to above the national average. They have a clear understanding of how to keep themselves safe, for example when accessing the internet.
- Pupils say that incidents of bullying are very rare. They know about different forms of bullying, including racism and cyber bullying, and know what to do if they encounter it. There is a strong sense of trust between adults and pupils and the few concerns raised by parents and carers about behaviour or safety are swiftly and effectively resolved.
- Parents and carers who met with an inspector and the large majority of those who completed Parent View were positive about pupils' behaviour and how it is managed.
- Pupils make good contributions to the school and wider community. The school council takes its role seriously and pupils frequently take part in community events such as producing plays and concerts for the local community.
- Behaviour is not outstanding because although the impact of behaviour on their achievement is

good, it is not yet outstanding. This is because standards of attainment are not yet high enough.

The leadership and management are good

- The drive and ambition of the headteacher and the deputy headteacher are the key reasons for the school's rapid improvement since the previous inspection. They have successfully created a united staff team which is wholeheartedly committed to improving standards and successfully overcoming past weaknesses. As a result, the quality of teaching has rapidly and securely improved.
- Leaders are fully aware of where residual weaknesses remain and have effective strategies and training to address these. Consequently, the school demonstrates a strong capacity to improve further.
- The management of teachers' performance is rigorous, links appropriately to salary progression and is helping to drive improvement. Where weaknesses are identified, immediate and well-focused training and support are given. The impact of these is closely analysed and follow-up work is undertaken if the pace of improvement is not swift enough.
- The school evaluates its own performance well. Clear and detailed strategic plans are effective because they are well informed by accurate data and identify suitable actions to tackle weaknesses. However, not all the objectives have a clear enough indication of how the success of such actions will be measured against improvements in pupils' outcomes.
- The skills of other leaders have improved significantly since the last inspection. They accurately check their areas of responsibility and have a good understanding of where strengths and weaknesses lie. Their effective leadership is having a positive impact on raising standards, for example in the provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- The school has developed subject plans which enliven teaching and match the needs of all pupils. This means that they develop the skills that they need to make good progress in creativity, literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. As a result, pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Provision for sport and physical education is a strength, both in lessons and through out-of-school clubs. Secure plans are in place to ensure that, when it is allocated, the use of its primary school sports funding will further enhance the physical health and well-being of all the pupils. The impact of sports and physical education is closely checked and almost all pupils participate in at least one sporting activity. A range of other enrichment activities, such as in art, music and drama, effectively promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The local authority provides effective and proportionate support to the school. Regular monitoring and specific training, for example in improving the quality of teaching, have been planned carefully to support the school's drive to improve, but have reduced recently to reflect the growing ability of the school to operate without external help.
- The school works well with parents and carers and the local community. A particular strength is the effective way in which parents and carers have been encouraged to become more interested in their children's education. Strategies such as homework projects, guidance on how they can support their child's learning and the development of a parents' and carers' forum have successfully encouraged closer home-school links.
- All safeguarding procedures are securely in place, meet statutory requirements and are rigorously applied. Leaders effectively promote equality of opportunity for all members of the school community and are active in tackling discrimination.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is knowledgeable, well led and organised. Leaders keep them well informed about the school's development so they have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. For example, governors have a rapidly developing understanding of how to analyse performance data, how these link to the quality of teaching

and how the school's performance compares with schools nationally. Leaders keep governors well informed about the quality of teaching. They have undertaken a detailed audit of their wide-ranging skills and have a clear understanding of the school's future plans and how they will support these. As a result, governors confidently hold the school to account and ensure that good teaching and leadership are rewarded and underperformance is rigorously tackled. They make sure that resources are used efficiently to support the school's drive to improve outcomes for pupils. For example, they have approved the use of the pupil premium to make sure that individual pupils who need more help are supported in lessons and they have closely checked the impact of this on pupils' achievement. Governors have set suitable performance targets for the headteacher which link clearly to the school's improvement plans.

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	115570
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	426756

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	176
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Emma Howell
Headteacher	Linda Wall
Date of previous school inspection	22–23 February 2012
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