

John Blandy (VC) Primary School

Laurel Drive, Southmoor, Oxfordshire, OX13 5DJ

Inspection dates 22–23 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

- Achievement requires improvement because too many pupils do not make good enough progress, particularly in writing.
- Teachers do not always have high enough expectations of pupils and so work given to them is not consistently at the right level.
- Teaching assistants are not always used well enough to ensure that pupils are supported or challenged further.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise their writing skills in other subjects.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons requires improvement because pupils sometimes lose focus when teaching is not demanding enough.
- The responsibility for leading and managing the school and for ensuring pupils achieve well is not shared widely enough.
- Information about the progress of pupils is not used well enough to provide extra support and challenge so that all pupils make good progress.
- Checks made by the governing body are not focused enough on specific areas for improvement.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher, assisted by the new deputy headteacher, has correctly identified where the school needs to improve and this is beginning to have a positive impact on teaching.
- The effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is rapidly improving.
- Pupils' behaviour outside of the classroom is much improved because it is now more effectively managed.
- There is now a clear vision for improvement that is seen through the positive attitudes shown by staff and pupils and the effective plans for further development.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 12 lessons taught by six different teachers, and held meetings with members of the governing body, staff, groups of pupils and a representative of the local authority. Five joint lesson observations were conducted, four with the headteacher and one with the deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at planning documents, monitoring records, assessment data and pupils' work.
- Inspectors took account of 64 responses to Parent View (the online questionnaire), together with the school's own survey of parents' and carers' views, and 11 responses to the staff questionnaire, in reaching their judgements about the school.

Inspection team

David Shears, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Shahnaz Maqsood

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- John Blandy (VC) Primary is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils in receipt of the pupil premium, which is extra government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and other groups, is well below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported by school action is broadly average, and the proportion of pupils who are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has had a large turnover of staff in the last year. Both the headteacher and the deputy headteacher started in September 2013.
- The school is due to become part of an academy with effect from 1 November 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and the progress made by pupils so that both are at least consistently good by ensuring that:
 - assessments are used effectively to plan work that always matches the ability of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs
 - teachers have high expectations of the progress that pupils can make in lessons
 - teaching assistants are used more effectively to provide good-quality support and challenge for pupils
 - pupils have regularly planned opportunities to practise their writing skills in a range of subjects.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership, management and governance by ensuring that:
 - more leaders are developed to share the responsibility and accountability for the effectiveness of the school
 - accurate information about the progress and attainment of pupils is used effectively to ensure that all pupils make good progress
 - checks by the governing body are clearly focused on specific areas for development.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because not enough pupils make good progress across the school.
- Children start school with skills and knowledge that are typical of those for their age group. This is still the case at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the end of Year 2, and their progress requires improvement. Progress in Years 3 to 6 has been inconsistent and this is reflected in their attainment at the end of Year 6 ranging from being broadly average to being significantly above average. This is because the level of work they receive is not always accurate. For example, in one lesson, more-able pupils were being challenged to find a way to measure the speed of a toy car on different surfaces, while in another lesson, more-able pupils were practising mental arithmetic strategies that were too easy for them.
- The progress of pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium is variable, due to the small numbers involved. Consequently, individual pupils sometimes achieve better than their peers and sometimes less well in both English and mathematics.
- The progress of pupils in writing is not as good as it is in reading and mathematics. One reason for this is the quality of teaching in phonics (the sounds that letters make). While this is improving, there is still more to be done to ensure that all pupils are accurate in sounding out letters and building up words.
- The school checks to see that any discrimination is quickly tackled and eliminated. However, its drive to ensure that all pupils have an equal chance to succeed is not yet fully successful, as progress is too inconsistent through the school.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils in school, although this, too, is variable across different year groups. The progress of more-able pupils requires improvement in line with other pupils.
- The quality of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage is rapidly improving and children are now beginning to make good progress. For example, children were making good progress in practising their letter formation, particularly when writing their name.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is too variable across the school. This is because teachers do not always use assessments carefully enough to ensure that the work given to all pupils is at the right level. Sometimes, work is too difficult for pupils, but more often, the work is not challenging enough.
- Teachers do not always have high enough expectations about the amount of progress that pupils are able to make in lessons and this slows their learning. For example, in one lesson, pupils had to practise too many sums that were too easy and so missed the opportunity to move their learning on more quickly by tackling more difficult work.
- Teaching assistants are not consistently used effectively in giving both focused support and challenge to pupils. In particular, the support given to disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is not always sufficiently tailored to their individual needs and this limits the progress they make. Higher-ability pupils are sometimes challenged well in lessons, although this is not consistent.
- The quality of work that pupils produce in writing is less good than in reading and mathematics. This is because pupils are not given enough planned opportunities for them to practise what they have learnt in their English lessons in other subjects. As a result, pupils do not always remember to apply these skills when they write.
- In all lessons, pupils have positive relationships with staff. Pupils are told what they are going to learn in lessons, and regular marking gives both positive feedback and tells pupils what they need to do to improve their work further.

- The quality of teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is strongly improving. Clear plans ensure that there are different expectations of pupils of all abilities and the teacher carefully records how well each child is learning during lessons.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement because in lessons, when teaching is not good, a minority of pupils lose concentration and they either sit quietly, are relatively uninvolved in learning or develop 'off-task' behaviour. Therefore, they do not learn as well as they should. While many pupils are able to work together well in groups, a few find it difficult to listen to the views of their fellow pupils.
- Both parents and carers, and pupils, say that the behaviour of pupils in the playground and around the school has improved this year. This is because there are new systems in place to reward good behaviour, such as recording and celebrating good behaviour and work in the 'golden book'. Pupils are aware of the consequences of poor behaviour. Parents and carers receive a weekly report about their child's behaviour, which they appreciate. Pupils say how they enjoy their lunchtimes more and the behaviour at the beginning of the day is much improved by allowing pupils to come straight into school to be given a 'morning task'.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the various types of bullying and assert that this is very rare in school. While they know that there are a few pupils who find good behaviour difficult to achieve, they say that this is managed well by adults and so they feel safe. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. For example, younger pupils are very clear about why they need to wear high visibility jackets when using the 'walking bus' on the way to school and know how to cross the road safely.
- Attendance is above the national average, although the proportion of persistent absence is above the national average. Although a few pupils are persistently absent, their absences are now being robustly followed up by the headteacher.

The leadership and management

require improvement

- The leadership and management of the school require improvement because the system for recording and using accurate assessment to check the progress of pupils on a termly basis has only been established this year. Consequently, those at risk of falling behind have not been identified and given further support. Nevertheless, the new headteacher has lost no time in ensuring that teachers have accurate information about the attainment of pupils and they are beginning to use this more effectively to inform their teaching.
- Not enough school leaders are being held accountable for their various roles, and so the responsibility for the leadership and management of the school is not shared widely enough. The new headteacher is strengthening the performance management of staff to improve this and there are plans for this information to be used more closely when determining teachers' pay. Staff report that they are looking forward to more opportunities for their professional development.
- The extra money to support those eligible for pupil premium funding has not been totally successful in ensuring that all these pupils have made good progress. The extra funding to support physical education is being used to fund specialist coaches to develop further the skills and knowledge of pupils. This is beginning to show some early signs of success. For example, pupils are becoming more confident in learning to play 'tag rugby', and a team have already competed and won a local school's competition.
- The new headteacher and deputy headteacher have already made a big impact. The learning environment in classes and around the school has improved, making it more inviting, and creating a positive climate for learning. The focus on improving the standard of behaviour outside has been successful and all stakeholders talk about the positive ethos of the school. In particular, the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is being promoted well

through the introduction of seven 'core values'.

- Safeguarding arrangements meet current government requirements.
- The local authority has provided a good level of support this year in brokering interim leadership and enabling the school to make rapid improvements through the moderation of the assessments in the Early Years Foundation Stage. There is a positive relationship with the local partnership of schools.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has a keen interest in the school. It has a clear understanding of how well the school is performing compared to other schools nationally and an accurate view of the overall effectiveness of the school. Members know the main areas for improvement. They have been involved in checking how well the school is performing, although these checks have not been focused enough on specific areas. The governing body is increasingly aware of pupil premium funding and the performance management of teachers. Members are working hard to develop a high profile with parents and carers.

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	123150
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	426611

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	156
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jonathan Shorter
Headteacher	Clare Silvester
Date of previous school inspection	10 September 2008
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