

Longford CofE (VC) Primary School

High Road, Britford, Salisbury, SP5 4DS

Inspection dates 24–25 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires special measures.

- Pupils' achievement is inadequate because the progress of pupils during Key Stage 2 is too slow, particularly in writing.
- Teaching over time is inadequate as teachers do not accurately assess how well pupils are doing and are too optimistic about the levels they have reached.
- During lessons, the tasks teachers have prepared are often not hard enough. Teachers do not expect pupils to work at the highest levels of which they are capable.
- Work in their books and in lessons shows that pupils do not know precisely enough how to improve their work. Marking is not effective in promoting pupils' progress.
- Pupils' behaviour requires improvement. Occasionally, the behaviour of a few pupils is poor and disrupts learning because there is very limited space for them to calm down.
- Some of the issues identified at the previous inspection remain. The new headteacher's accurate view of the school is very recent and, for too long, improvements have been limited and had little impact on standards, especially in writing.
- Teachers who lead on different aspects of the school's work have had limited opportunities to identify issues or improve their areas.
- Until very recently the governing body has not held the school's leaders to account for the performance of pupils.

The school has the following strengths:

- The inspector found that pupils feel safe, and know how to keep themselves safe.
- Pupils from different backgrounds have a strong appreciation for the experiences of others' lives and cultures, and get along very well.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was undertaken by one inspector, who observed teaching and learning in 10 lessons taught by three teachers. He looked at the work pupils were doing, as well as the work they have done in the past. About one third of the observations were carried out with the headteacher.
- The inspector met with senior leaders, members of the governing body and representatives from the local authority to discuss the school's views about how well pupils are learning and the progress they make.
- The inspector reviewed a wide range of documents in the school, looking at the school's self-evaluation about the quality of teaching and learning, the progress pupils are making, how the school makes sure pupils are kept safe, and plans to bring about further improvements. Minutes from meetings, including those of the governing body, as well as external evaluations of the work of the school were considered.
- The inspector spoke to parents and carers informally at the start and end of the school day, and considered the 11 responses to the online survey for Ofsted, Parent View. The views of members of staff were also taken into account through a survey and discussions.
- The oldest pupils were on a school trip for part of the first day of the inspection.

Inspection team

Andrew Saunders, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Information about this school

- This is a much smaller than average sized primary school. It was formed in 2010 when two primary schools, operating in the villages of Britford and Odstock, were combined. In September 2013, the school merged onto one site in Britford. There are three mixed-age classes.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. However, the proportion from a wide range of different backgrounds is increasing. A small number of pupils speak English as an additional language. Some of these pupils joined the school at the early stages of learning English.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is average; the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium is average, although this varies widely depending on the year group. The pupil premium is additional funding provided for children looked after by the local authority, pupils eligible for free school meals and children of service families.
- In 2012, the school did not meet the floor standards. These are the minimum expectations set by the government for the progress and attainment of pupils. In 2013, there were no Year 6 pupils at the school.
- A new headteacher was appointed in September 2013. She is also headteacher of another school and spends about half her time in each school. From November 2013, another headteacher from the local authority has been appointed to fill the other half of the week.
- At the time of the inspection, there was ongoing building work taking place to provide a school hall and other facilities.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Eliminate inadequate teaching and ensure that teaching across all year groups is consistently good, by:
 - developing teachers' knowledge about the topics and subjects they are teaching
 - ensuring teachers plan work which challenges each pupil to move their learning forward quickly in lessons, with deadlines for the quantity and quality of work they are to complete
 - ensuring teachers acquire a clear understanding of how to accurately assess pupils' progress and how to use this information to adapt questioning, explanations and tasks during the lesson, particularly for the most- and least-able pupils.
- Improve the pace and consistency of pupils' progress for all groups and across the key stages in order to raise standards in writing, particularly at Key Stage 2, by:
 - giving pupils more frequent opportunities to write
 - ensuring that pupils know exactly what they need to do to improve their writing and that their targets are readily available and used to focus their efforts
 - ensuring pupils have the time and opportunity to improve their work based on accurate and constructive feedback in teachers' marking

- expecting pupils to work at the highest levels they are capable of in lessons.
 - Seek more effective interim measures to support the few pupils with poor behaviour so learning is not disrupted.
 - Increase the effectiveness of leadership and management, including governance and middle leaders, in taking responsibility for identifying key issues and quickly bringing about improvements, by:
 - evaluating the performance of pupils, including the most- and least-able and those eligible for support through the pupil premium, and identifying any key issues and then implementing solutions rigorously
 - monitoring the quality of teaching to identify good practice that can be shared across the school
 - ensuring the curriculum takes better account of different ages and abilities in each class
 - ensuring teachers provide pupils with opportunities to undertake some learning outside of school time
 - ensuring the governing body develops more effective and accurate ways of checking and comparing the school's performance against other schools nationally to better hold leaders to account.
 - An external review of governance to include a specific focus on the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.
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Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- The progress of pupils across Key Stage 2 is inadequate because the work they are given does not challenge them enough, particularly in writing.
- The standards pupils reach have been too variable. In 2012, standards at the end of Year 6 were below average in writing, although average in reading and above average in mathematics. There were no Year 6 pupils in 2013. Pupils currently in Year 6 are not yet in a position to readily reach the standards they are predicted to achieve. The work they have done in their books over the past year shows that their progress is inadequate, particularly so in their writing. Pupils do not get enough opportunities to write and are not sure how to improve their writing.
- On joining the school, children have typically had skills and knowledge which have been below the levels usually expected for their age. More recently this has improved, with more children arriving with a higher level of skills. Recent improvements in teaching mean that most children in Reception are making expected progress.
- During Key Stage 1, the progress of pupils is variable. In 2013, results show that pupils' attainment in reading and mathematics was above expectations, with attainment in writing broadly average. However, work in their books and seen during the lessons observed shows that pupils currently at the school often work at levels well below those they are capable of in English and mathematics, because teachers do not expect enough of them.
- Most disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make the progress expected, considering their starting points when they join the school and their particular needs. While younger pupils often make up ground, this does not always continue as they get older because teaching in lessons does not meet their needs closely enough.
- While more-able pupils are occasionally given work which is more challenging, this is not frequent enough and they do not make the progress that they should.
- The few pupils who speak English as an additional language often make good progress in developing their understanding and quickly catch up with other pupils in the school.
- The few pupils with behavioural and emotional difficulties are well supported by the adults who know them well. However, the severe constraints over space during the building works mean that there is very limited space for their needs to be met. This constrains the progress they are able to make.
- Pupils for whom the pupil premium provides additional support generally make up some ground because of the extra help they get. However, in 2012, this group of pupils in Year 6 remained behind other pupils of a similar age, by about nine months in their reading and about a year in mathematics. Their standards in writing are closer to those of other pupils in the school.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- Teaching over time is inadequate because it does not help pupils to make enough progress in Key Stage 2, especially in writing. Too much teaching remains inadequate, and there is not enough strong teaching to raise achievement. Too often, the tasks teachers plan for pupils are not challenging enough.
- Too many lessons convey a lack of urgency about learning, so that pupils do not make the progress they should. Many lessons do not take account of how much pupils already know and include too few opportunities for pupils to apply and develop their knowledge, understanding and skills.
- At times, teachers answer their own questions too quickly, before pupils have had the chance to grapple with the concepts being covered.
- Occasionally, teachers' own knowledge of what they are teaching is not well developed. This means that the feedback pupils are given is not always sharply enough focused on the key

things they need to improve.

- The use of assessment information to check how well pupils are doing has been a focus for training recently. However, this is not well established and not always accurate enough. It is not yet used effectively to help teachers plan lessons, which meet the differing needs of pupils. The use of such checks is better in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where adults work well together to make sure that the least- and most-able pupils benefit from support and opportunities to help them learn well.
- While teachers set targets for pupils, these are not readily accessible and are not used well to help pupils know what they should be working on during each lesson. The expectations of teachers are too low, particularly when pupils are writing in other subjects or developing their skills with numbers outside of mathematics. Some pupils who are capable of working at the higher levels are expected to sit through explanations that they do not need, or spend too long doing work which is far too simple for them.
- Recent training has begun to help teachers develop a wider range of strategies to promote good learning in their lessons, but this is at an early stage and has not yet been consistently implemented. Similarly, there has been a focus on improving marking and the comments teachers make about pupils' work, but this is very recent. Too much marking is cursory and pupils have few opportunities and lack the encouragement to make improvements based on the teachers' comments.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

- Behaviour and safety require improvement because the poor behaviour of a few pupils sometimes disrupts the learning of others.
- Pupils generally have positive views about their school and are keen to get on with the work they are given to do. However, they become bored and slightly restless when the tasks do not challenge them enough. They have not been helped to develop or apply their learning skills in deciding how well they have done, or what they need to do next.
- A few pupils have behavioural and emotional issues and their behaviour is very challenging. Adults work hard to minimise the impact this has on the learning of other pupils, but there is very limited space in the school for pupils to calm down. Consequently, some poor behaviour occasionally disrupts learning.
- Around school pupils are polite to adults and kind to one another. They enjoy the opportunities they have to play together and pupils from different backgrounds get along very well; being on one site has helped improve this. They are very accepting of those pupils who find it more difficult to remain well behaved, and do their best to help one another remember the expectations of the school.
- Until recently, attendance has been low. The merger onto one site, along with the school's efforts to make sure all parents and carers understand the importance of regular attendance, has helped to improve pupils' attendance, although it is still below average. The attendance of most pupils is average, but this is still an issue for a few families.
- Pupils say they feel safe, and feel they are helped to know how they can keep themselves safe, for example when using the internet. The inspector found that the school has made sure that pupils are safe during the building works. Pupils say bullying is very rare, because everyone knows one another so well. They are confident it would be dealt with quickly if it happened. The well-planned assemblies contribute particularly effectively towards pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Parents and carers expressed very positive views about the school, particularly appreciating the improvement of having the school on one site. Parents and carers who responded to the survey had positive views about most aspects, although a few who spoke to the inspector had some concerns about the behaviour of a few pupils.

The leadership and management are inadequate

- Leadership and management are inadequate because, until very recently, the school has maintained too optimistic a view about the performance of its pupils, without robust evidence to support this judgement. The issues identified at the previous inspection have not been tackled decisively or in a sustained manner. Efforts to bring about improvements have had only limited impact.
- Wider leadership across the school has been limited, because teachers who have had responsibility for leading different aspects or subjects have had little time or support to know what is expected of them. Teachers have remained too isolated from each other and best practice has not been identified or shared effectively across the school. Until recently, records of checks on the quality of teaching have not provided teachers with enough specific advice about what they need to do to improve.
- The new headteacher has quickly undertaken wide-ranging activities to gather evidence about how well pupils are doing, and has established an accurate view, recognising that pupils' work is too often not at the levels it should be.
- The headteacher has challenged inadequate teaching, provided advice and put in place support to bring about improvements, but there has not yet been enough time for this to show evidence of impact. Recognising the limited amount of time the headteacher has available in the school, alongside the depth of the issues the school faces, additional support from the local authority has been put in place. The headteacher has the full confidence of parents, carers and the governing body. She has already begun to share a clear vision for how to improve the school quickly.
- The framework around which teachers plan their lessons provides some interesting topics for pupils to study. They enjoy opportunities to expand their experience, such as visiting a local supermarket for a cooking session and to find out what happens behind the scenes. However, the curriculum is not sufficiently developed to take account of the different year groups in each class, or the different abilities of pupils. Homework is limited in how well it supports pupils' progress beyond learning spellings and times tables.
- Using the additional sports funding, the school has benefited from external support in developing the teaching of physical education and sports. Teachers have improved their skills and are becoming more confident at planning and delivering lessons, which help pupils better understand the importance of being fit and healthy.
- Senior leaders and members of the governing body have made sure that the required policies and procedures are in place to keep pupils safe, and to check that adults working with pupils are safe to do so. Adults have been trained to understand their role in safeguarding children.
- Pupils from different backgrounds have a strong appreciation for others' experience of life and culture, and get along very well. However, the school does not ensure that all groups of pupils have equal opportunity to make good progress.
- The local authority provides a high level of support and has worked closely with the school, supporting the new headteacher and helping to confirm her views about the issues facing the school. Together, they are establishing a more accurate view about standards and are providing teachers with support to improve their practice.
- The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Until recently, there was little challenge to the school's leadership. Members of the governing body too readily accepted the overly optimistic views of senior leaders. They did not establish their own views and gather evidence for themselves about the school's performance, the quality of teaching or the use and impact of the school's performance management procedures. There have been substantial changes to the makeup of the governing body over the past year and this has helped to bring about a more accurate view of the school's work. As a result of recent training the governing body is now better placed to understand the issues facing the school and to keep a closer check on the impact of recent initiatives. However, this is a recent development and they have not explored sufficiently the link between the pupil

premium spending and its impact on eligible pupils. They have made sure that additional funding to support the development of high-quality physical education and sport is used appropriately. They are supportive of the new headteacher and are working to make sure that any additional pay for teachers is fully justified. They are working with the local authority to return the school to a balanced budget. The merger onto a single site has helped with this. The governing body make sure that the statutory requirements, including keeping pupils safe, are met.

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	126304
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	426768

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	52
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stuart Fowler
Headteacher	Debbie Cockrean
Date of previous school inspection	20–21 September 2011
Telephone number	01722 327292
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Email address	admin@longford.wilts.sch.uk

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