

Lacock Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

High Street, Lacock, Chippenham, Wiltshire, SN15 2LQ

Inspection dates

5–6 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Require 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 as standards have been too inconsistent and pupils do not always attain as highly as they should.
- The progress that pupils make is inconsistent between subject areas.
- Teachers do not always have high enough expectations of what lower ability and more able pupils can achieve, so sometimes the work is too hard or too easy.
- Not all teachers make sure pupils know what their targets are for improving their work.
- Pupils do not always make the corrections to their work that are highlighted in their teachers' marking, so improvements are not always made.
- Leaders, managers and governors have not ensured the school has improved enough for teaching and achievement to be good.
- Middle leaders are not fully involved in monitoring and assessing the quality of teaching and learning.
- Not all of the governing body is skilled in reviewing the progress pupils make against national achievement information and the school's own targets.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils enjoy their lessons and take an active part in their own learning. Their behaviour is good and contributes well to their learning.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Safeguarding arrangements are effective.
- Pupils enjoy reading and develop good skills, so by the end of Year 6 they read fluently and with confidence.
- The headteacher has quickly identified what is needed to improve the school and has already acted to address these areas of development with the eradication of weaker teaching.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed parts of five lessons of which two were jointly observed with the headteacher. The inspector made shorter visits to the Reception class and to observe pupils from the Years 3 and 4 class moving to another setting in the village for a physical education (PE) lesson.
- The inspector watched a whole-school assembly led by the headteacher and a member of the clergy who is on the governing body.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, and a shorter meeting with the Vice-Chair and another governor. The inspector met with members of the senior and middle leadership teams and with a representative from the local authority who is providing support to the school to help it improve.
- The inspector listened to pupils read and scrutinised samples of pupils' workbooks.
- A wide range of documents was examined, including the school's information on pupils' recent progress, as well as planning and documentation about checks on teaching, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding arrangements.
- The inspector also took account of the 21 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). A number of parents gave their views to the inspector when they dropped their children off at school. The views of staff were also considered through the seven questionnaires that were returned.

Inspection team

David Hogg, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Lacock Church of England Primary School is situated in the middle of the village of Lacock in Wiltshire, three miles from the town of Chippenham. The village is unique by being owned almost in its entirety by the National Trust, and still looks largely as it did two hundred years ago. From the outside the school looks very much as it was when it was built in 1824.
- Children at the school come from the village and surrounding area; but, in recent years more pupils have come from further afield.
- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- There are very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds attending the school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and those from service families) is well below the national average. There are no children from service families currently attending the school.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is below the national average. The proportion of pupils who are supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also lower than the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher joined the school in January 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that all teaching is good or better by ensuring that:
 - pupils are given specific guidance linked closely to the tasks they are currently working on that shows what they are expected to achieve and how to improve and extend their work
 - teachers' expectations of what pupils of all abilities can achieve are raised, particularly for the less able and more able pupils, by using their information about pupils to make sure learning activities are not too easy or too difficult
 - pupils quickly make the improvements to their work that teachers have pointed out in their marking, especially in their written work.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - developing the skills of the middle leadership team so that these staff can effectively evaluate the quality of teaching to support the efforts of the senior leaders to improve and develop the school
 - making sure that all governors develop their skills in reviewing the information on the progress pupils make so they are better able to hold the school to account.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' attainment over a number of years has been inconsistent. Pupils' attainment in writing, as seen in national assessments across both key stages, has not been as high as that in reading and mathematics.
- The progress made by disabled pupils and those with special educational needs does show some variation between year groups and subject areas. On occasions, work in lessons is a little too difficult for these pupils and this slows their progress. The numbers of pupils with additional needs are always low, so identifying firm patterns over a number of years is difficult.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 has shown some variation around national averages in reading, writing and mathematics, but with an upward trend. In the most recent national assessments, pupils' attainment overall was above the national average.
- Children join the Reception class with skills that are generally typical for their age; but in different years the groups can show a wide range of abilities. The children make good progress in most of the individual learning areas.
- Reading is taught well and pupils have opportunities to read regularly at school. By the end of Year 6, pupils read fluently and enjoy a wide range of current children's authors. Younger pupils use their knowledge of the sounds letters make (phonics) very effectively when reading unfamiliar or longer words. The results from the national phonics screening check over the last two years have been inconsistent, but the school has taken steps to enable pupils to distinguish between the real and the nonsense words in the check. All pupils who were checked in 2012 reached the expected standard in Year 1 or at the re-sit in Year 2.
- The numbers in each year group are small so patterns in achievement of specific groups of pupils, such as those who are eligible for additional support from the pupil premium grant, are rather unreliable. The school's own monitoring indicates that these pupils are well supported and the funding is effectively spent to support the pupils' academic needs and, if needed, additional pastoral support.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Over time, teaching in the school has not ensured pupils have consistently made good or better progress from their different starting points by the time they leave in Year 6.
- Teachers do not use the information they have on their pupils as effectively as they could to plan activities that help all groups learn well in their classes. Although tasks are planned to meet the needs of most of the class, teachers' expectations of what the lower ability and more able pupils can achieve are not high enough. For example, in a Year 2 mathematics class, more able pupils were required to complete a task that was very similar to that of the others in the class and did not provide a great deal of challenge or move their learning on sufficiently.
- Teachers let pupils know what they are going to learn in a lesson in very general terms. This does not provide pupils with clear enough guidance of what is specifically expected of them at the end of an activity.
- Marking in pupils' books by teachers generally gives pupils guidance on how to improve their work. Pupils respond with brief comments or by initialling that they have read what the teacher has written. For example, one pupil in the Years 3 and 4 class asked for an additional challenge task as she found an activity quite easy. However, pupils do not always make the corrections or changes to their work quickly enough and improvements are not always made.
- Children in the Reception group work well with pupils from Years 1 and 2. At times they work alongside the other pupils, but on other occasions they work together as a small group with the class teacher or teaching assistant. Due to the age and layout of the building, their opportunities to move between the classroom and the outdoor learning area have to be more structured. The outdoor area is relatively small, but the children can develop their skills through exploration and

play with a range of resources and activities.

- Teachers usually use teaching assistants effectively to support different abilities within class and in small group sessions around the school. They work closely with the class teachers in planning activities and are confident in delivering parts of the lesson when the class teacher may be working with their own target group. However, on occasions, they do not review what the pupils have learned closely enough to check the progress they are making.
- Teaching assistants are involved in teaching pupils the sounds letters make (phonics). In one session observed, the teaching assistant changed the focus of the activity when it was clear pupils were unsure about it. Consequently, pupils were able to reinforce their understanding of the sound that combinations of letters made, which supported their good progress.
- Classrooms are bright and welcoming. Pupils' work from literacy and topic activities is displayed and is of high quality. The pupils are encouraged to use the helpful information on the learning walls which guides and helps them develop ideas to include in their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils have received visits from a range of groups such as the police and fire service who have worked with the pupils on road safety and care around the home. Pupils have a good understanding of e-safety and safe use of social media games. They could say why some that are aimed at children must be used with caution and what they should and should not share online.
- Pupils must walk to different parts of the village for indoor and outdoor PE lessons. This is very well managed by the school, with teachers ensuring that pupils move through the village sensibly and quietly so as not to disturb others.
- The behaviour of pupils is good overall and contributes well to their learning. In lessons pupils focus on their studies and enjoy learning. They demonstrate the ability to work together, sharing and discussing ideas and then coming to the front and presenting them back to the class to show others what they had learned.
- In a Years 3 and 4 mathematics lesson, pupils were provided with a range of activities to work on. Each pupil knew what they had to do and moved quickly to begin work so no learning time was lost. As pupils completed the tasks they shared their work with others and discussed if they were on the right track.
- The relationships in school are very good and there is an ethos of trying hard in the school. All of the pupils, from the youngest to the oldest, work well with their teachers and teaching assistants and there is no evidence that they are any less engaged when working with different staff.
- Pupils say that acts of unkindness are rare and if pupils do fall out most make friends again very quickly. Pupils are kind to each other and they play well together. The ethos and values of the school are developed in assemblies and lessons. The school is effective in promoting positive relationships and ensuring there is no discrimination.
- The school has provided the pupils with a range of playground toys to enjoy at break and lunchtime and pupils share these with each other. Parents commented that the pupils are very friendly to each other.
- The school council is active in the school and works to support and encourage charity events. The school is a key component of the village and looks to involve the pupils in community life as much as possible, for example in the village Scarecrow Trail.
- Pupils' attendance has been in line the national averages over the last few years and the school has worked hard to reduce absenteeism. This is beginning to pay dividends, with attendance showing signs of improvement.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Middle leaders are developing their skills, although they are not yet involved in the monitoring

and development of teaching within their subject areas.

- The school has used the support from the local authority well through a link with a headteacher from an outstanding primary school nearby.
- The headteacher has quickly identified aspects of the school, including teaching and pupils' achievement, that need to improve. He has taken steps to raise the quality of teaching through more rigorous monitoring and has eradicated less effective teaching. The accountability of teachers for the outcomes of their pupils has increased and this is firmly embedded with the procedures that determine teachers' salary progression.
- The systems to check how well pupils are doing have been made more manageable and now provide teachers with a clearer picture of the progress being made by pupils in their class. Pupils' achievement targets are now more rigorous and challenging.
- The school is currently reviewing the curriculum in light of the new National Curriculum. Plans are in place to enable pupils to practise their mathematics skills in topic work, as they do in writing already. The school is actively involved in village life, providing pupils with activities such as gardening in an allotment and using the beauty of the village in art work. Although the school is small, it tries to offer a full range of wider opportunities, such as singing at the Small Schools Concert. The school looks to enrich the pupils' lesson with visitors, for example older people from the village came to school to talk about their own experiences during the Second World War.
- The school has clear aims for using the primary sports funding to raise the staff skills in teaching PE through teaching alongside, or under the guidance of, sports coaches, although it is too early to evaluate the impact of this funding. In addition, the school is looking to increase the involvement of pupils in sporting activities and encourage their enjoyment. The school takes part in inter-school sports, for example a girls' team represented the school in a cricket tournament and members of the judo club enjoyed success at an event just before Christmas.
- The school is determined to provide equality of opportunity for all pupils and to challenge any intolerance. The school values are celebrated in lessons and in assemblies and help promote the social and moral development of the pupils alongside the spiritual and cultural understanding of different beliefs and faiths.
- Safeguarding and child protection procedures meet statutory requirements and ensure the welfare of pupils is of the highest priority.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Not all governors understand the information on pupils' progress in order to hold senior leaders to account for this being good. The governing body understands that the school still needs to develop further. The governors have a good understanding of the quality of teaching through direct observations and feedback from the headteacher and local authority partner. Information from the headteacher gives governors a clear picture of how the progress pupils make is linked with the salary progression of the teachers and what support has been provided to improve teaching and to deal with underperformance. They have been supportive of the new leadership team, but are now looking to provide greater challenge to the school for how well groups of pupils are doing, for example the more able and those eligible for additional support from pupil premium funding. They recognise the need to develop the skills of all governors to compare national achievement information alongside that held by the school to check if all pupils are progressing as they should. The governing body draws on a wide range of skills and utilises them well to review safeguarding procedures so pupils are kept safe. It oversees the financial position of the school, including the primary sports grant.

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	126333
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	431108

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	73
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Johnny Wrench
Headteacher	Richard Hearn
Date of previous school inspection	18–19 June 2012
Telephone number	01249 730271
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