

# Otterhampton Primary School

School Lane, Comwich, Bridgwater, TA5 2QS

## Inspection dates

6–7 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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		Require improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Achievement is not yet good as the recent improvements in the teaching have not had sufficient time to accelerate progress so that it is consistently good throughout the school.
- Until recently, progress was not as good in mathematics as it is in reading and writing. As a result, attainment in mathematics has not been high enough.
- Occasionally, teachers do not allow pupils sufficient time to practise and consolidate their skills.
- In some lessons teachers do not plan always plan activities that better extend pupils' thinking in order to deepen their understanding.
- Sometimes the youngest children do not have enough opportunities to be imaginative, which limits their learning.
- Until recently, the school's leaders, including governors, did not track the progress that pupils make closely enough to identify and tackle any underachievement promptly.
- Leaders' checks on the impact of teaching on pupils' progress are not focused sharply enough on how well different groups of pupils learn. They do not identify the weaknesses or ensure that they are fully resolved.
- Teachers' targets for improvement do not centre precisely on raising the achievement of the different groups of pupils in their classes.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has galvanised the staff team to make the necessary improvements and has taken effective steps to tackle weaker teaching.
- The provision for pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs is well led and managed.
- Reading is taught thoroughly and most pupils are making good progress so that attainment is rising quickly.
- Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Pupils are polite and friendly, with positive attitudes to their learning.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed six lessons, all of which were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, she made a number of short visits to lessons, the dining hall, the breakfast club and the playground.
- Meetings were held with pupils, governors, school leaders and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the 27 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) written correspondence, as well as consulting informally with parents and carers before the school day. She also took account of the 10 responses to the staff questionnaires.
- She observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including the school's improvement plans, information on pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring files, minutes of the governing body meetings, the plans for the use of the physical education fund and records relating to special educational needs, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- The inspector heard pupils read, talked to them in lessons and evaluated samples of their work.

## Inspection team

Sandra Woodman, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school, with pupils organised in three mixed-aged classes.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- Only a very small number of pupils are supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals).
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported at school action is above the national average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The headteacher was in post at the time of the previous inspection. There have been several changes to staffing since then.
- The school is part of the Quantock group of nine local schools who work in partnership together.
- The school provides continuous care for pupils with before- and after-school clubs.
- The pre-school provision run by the school did not form part of this inspection.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- There were less than 11 pupils in the Year 6 group which left in the summer, so their attainment in relation to national floor standards is not reported.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is typically at good or better by ensuring that:
  - teachers plan activities that better extend pupils' thinking in order to deepen their understanding in all lessons
  - teachers always allow pupils sufficient time to practise and consolidate their skills
  - the curriculum in the Early Years Foundation Stage provides children with enough opportunities to use their imagination when developing their learning activities.
- Increase the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  - making sure that the quality of teaching is evaluated more precisely in terms of its impact on the attainment and progress of different groups of pupils
  - ensuring that the checks on teaching are rigorous enough to identify any weaknesses and resolve them systematically
  - linking teachers' targets for improvement more sharply to the attainment and progress of different groups of pupils in their classes.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because the progress that pupils make across the school is uneven and varies between subjects and groups of pupils. Attainment in reading and writing at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 has been broadly average, but is below average in mathematics.
- In 2013, the Year 6 pupils made good progress from their starting points in reading and writing and they achieved better than in previous years. In mathematics, not enough pupils made good progress from their starting points. However, improvements to the quality of teaching are showing impact, with better rates of progress in current year groups and rising attainment in all subjects.
- Closer tracking of attainment and progress is ensuring that any underachievement is identified and addressed promptly. However, on occasions the work planned by teachers lacks challenge and pupils complete tasks too easily without practising and consolidating their skills sufficiently or developing their understanding.
- Until recently the most able pupils were not stretched sufficiently and could have achieved more. Increasingly teachers focus on ensuring these pupils have the opportunity to extend their thinking in lessons so that currently they are making better progress.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are making good progress overall as the support they receive is planned carefully to accelerate their progress
- The progress of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is equal to, or better than, that of other groups in school. The numbers are too small to compare their attainment in national tests with others. The school is narrowing gaps in attainment for those pupils in reading writing and mathematics because the pupil premium fund is used well to support individual pupils through well tailored small group work.
- The school performed well above the national average in the Year 1 phonics (the sounds letters make) screening check in 2013, which reflects the effective teaching of phonics. Pupils enjoy reading the new range of literature on offer and speak knowledgeably about their books, demonstrating a thorough understanding of what they have read.
- Children start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with the skills typical for their age and make steady progress, with most entering Year 1 as confident learners. On the whole they achieve well but sometimes the use of their imagination is limited.
- Supported by the new fund for physical education, more pupils are taking part in a wider range of activities and extending their skills in sports such as badminton and gymnastics. They are enjoying the chance to compete more often against other schools.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because pupils' progress over time has not been consistently good.
- Evidence shows that teaching is getting better, and this was confirmed by observations during the inspection. While the weakest teaching has been eradicated, some inconsistencies remain.
- Sometimes teachers do not plan activities that extend pupils' thinking right through the lesson in order to deepen their understanding of new concepts. Sometimes they allow insufficient time for pupils to practise and consolidate their skills in lessons so that they can become more accomplished learners.
- Regular assessment and better use of progress information are helping teachers to provide improved support for pupils and increased levels of challenge, especially in mathematics. For example, the most able pupils in Year 6 were working on probability problems that required them to think and discuss at a very high level while others in the class worked on negative

numbers.

- Teachers and teaching assistants question and listen well to pupils in lessons, giving clear explanations to clarify the learning and address misconceptions. Marking provides pupils with helpful comments about how to improve their work.
- Good support from the local authority and an external consultant has helped the school to develop teachers' skills in the teaching of phonics, spelling and grammar. In addition, support from the partnership is helping teachers provide more challenging work for the most able pupils in mathematics.
- In all lessons, teaching assistants offer effective support to disabled pupils and those with special educational needs so that their progress is now good. Carefully considered programmes of support are checked and adjusted regularly to ensure that the work suits pupils' needs.
- Effective teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is enabling children to make sound progress, especially in phonics, language and communication skills. However, occasionally children do not have enough opportunities to use their imagination in their learning, and this limits their progress.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Typically pupils are polite, friendly and considerate of each other. They are keen to learn, settle quickly to lessons and try hard. These positive attitudes are contributing well to the better progress now being made. For example, when Year 2 and Year 3 pupils were acting as 'poem detectives' their strong levels of concentration helped them to make good gains in their learning.
- Behaviour is not yet outstanding because sometimes there are lapses of concentration by a few pupils. When this occurs, pupils' concentration wanes and progress slows.
- Pupils, the large majority of parents and the staff are positive about standards of behaviour. Pupils are clear about the systems to promote good behaviour, responding promptly to teachers' instructions. A few parents expressed concerns about the way the school deals with behaviour but inspection evidence shows that, overall, this is managed well.
- Pupils enjoy taking on a range of roles and responsibilities in school as recycling monitors and playground buddies. In particular they cherish the 'Bright Sparks' group created to encourage the development of those pupils with gifts or talents.
- Pupils are clear that bullying, in whatever form it takes, such as racist or homophobic bullying, is unacceptable but say that it seldom happens here. They have confidence in the adults to sort out any minor disagreements or fallings out.
- Pupils show good consideration and respect for each other and cooperate well in lessons. 'It's like being part of a caring family here,' was one such comment from a pupil, and others agree.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Discussions with pupils confirmed this, and most parents who completed the online questionnaire or spoke to the inspector agree. Pupils judge that the school prepares them well to maintain their personal safety both in school and in the wider community, through robust e-safety training and social skills programmes such as 'peer mediation'.
- School records show that the school deals effectively with a few pupils with behavioural or emotional difficulties and the incidents of poor behaviour are very few.
- The school gives a high priority to encouraging pupils to attend regularly and, as a consequence, current attendance rates are above average.

### **The leadership and management require improvement**

- Since the previous inspection the school has experienced significant turbulence in its staffing. School leaders and governors recognise that achievement should be better but considerable staff

changes have hampered progress. Nevertheless, leadership and management require improvement because they have not secured good enough teaching to enable all pupils to make good progress.

- Firm steps taken to strengthen the quality of teaching are increasing the pace of improvement. The headteacher has the confidence of staff and all are dedicated to making the necessary changes to increase progress rates.
- Improved procedures for checking and tracking of pupils' attainment and progress are enabling leaders to gain a clearer understanding of achievement across the school, resulting in more accurate self-evaluation and sharper improvement plans.
- All leaders check regularly on the quality of the teaching but they do not focus their evaluations precisely enough on the learning for different groups of pupils. This means that weaknesses in practice are not always identified and resolved quickly enough.
- Rewards are in place for good and outstanding performance and there are systems for tackling underperformance, should it occur. However, teachers' targets for improvement are not linked closely enough to the attainment and progress of pupils in their classes.
- Middle leaders have been trained well in their roles and responsibilities and are leading new developments effectively. The coordinator for special educational needs has ensured that provision is clearly targeted to accelerate progress.
- Good support that the school has commissioned over the last year has helped senior leaders gain an accurate view of the school's performance and increase the pace of improvement.
- The range of subjects is broad and balanced, promoting all aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Increasingly the curriculum is being adapted to promote faster progress, although sometimes there are not enough opportunities for the youngest children to use their imagination in their learning activities.
- Monitoring of the plans for the use of the physical education fund shows there has been an increase in the uptake in new sports and a greater participation in competition. To sustain these developments staff have had the opportunities to work alongside professional sports coaches.
- Parents are encouraged to participate in school life and some help out as volunteers. Parents appreciate the openness of staff and the opportunities to become involved in their children's learning.
- Equality of opportunity is promoted well and there have been no recorded incidents of harassment in recent years. The pupil premium fund is managed effectively to support individual pupils.
- All the statutory requirements of safeguarding are met and there are good systems in place to maintain the safety of pupils. Training for staff and governors in areas such as child protection and first aid is up to date.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors have a keen understanding of the school's performance in the national context and also compared to similar schools, both in terms of pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching. They monitor the school's work for themselves and challenge and support the school's leaders with increasing rigour. They are aware that achievement has not been good enough but are clear about the success of the improvements now being made. They keep their knowledge and skills up to date through good quality training provided by the local authority, such as training in understanding performance data. They understand how the performance of staff is managed and how this is being aligned to their pay progression. Governors manage the budget effectively, including the pupil premium fund and the new physical education fund. They know how the funds are being used and the impact they are having on pupils' achievement and physical health. They also ensure that statutory duties such as safeguarding 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	123692
<b>Local authority</b>	Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	432412

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

<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>	76
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Marcus Ford
<b>Headteacher</b>	Bridget Hemmings
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17–18 May 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01278 652487
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