

St Andrew's Primary School

St Andrew's Estate, Cullompton, Devon, EX15 1HU

Inspection dates

13–14 March 2014

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		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

- Pupils' achievement is not yet as good as the recent improvements in teaching have not had sufficient time to speed up progress so that it is consistently good throughout the school.
- Progress in mathematics has been slower than in reading and writing. As a result, attainment in mathematics has not been high enough.
- Until recently, Key Stage 1 pupils have not developed their skills in phonics (the sounds letters make) well enough for them to become fluent readers.
- Teachers have not used the information about how well pupils are doing to set work for pupils at the right level of difficulty.
- Marking in pupils' books does not let them know how they can improve their work
- In the past, leaders, including governors, have not responded quickly enough to falling standards. They have not taken steps to make sure that pupils achieve well over time.
- Leaders do not check the impact of teaching rigorously enough on how well different groups of pupils learn. They do not identify the weaknesses or ensure that they are fully resolved.
- The school has not been effective enough in involving parents in their children's learning.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher, the new leadership team, governors and the staff know what needs to improve. As a result, achievement is starting to get better.
- The quality of teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good so that children make good progress.
- Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Pupils feel safe, are polite and friendly and have positive attitudes to their learning.
- Teaching assistants are skilled and they make a difference to the achievement of the pupils they support.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons, several of which were joint observations with the headteacher or deputy headteacher. In addition, inspectors made a number of short visits to lessons, the dining hall and the playground, and observed two assemblies.
- Meetings were held with pupils, governors including the chair of governors, and the school's leaders. Also, the lead inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 25 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) as well as consulting informally with parents and carers before start of the school day. The inspectors also took account of the 29 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including improvement plans, information on pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring files, minutes of the governing body meetings, the plans for use of the physical education funding and records relating to special educational needs, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- The inspectors heard pupils read, talked to them in lessons and evaluated samples of their work.

Inspection team

Sandra Woodman, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Malcolm Davison	Additional inspector
Julie Jane	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils come from a White British background.
- An increasing proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds arrive at the school speaking little or no English.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked-after children and those with parents in the armed forces) is below average.
- 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.
- There have been significant changes to the leadership and staffing of the school since the previous inspection.
- The school is part of a cooperative trust with four other local schools.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is good or better by ensuring that teachers:
 - make better use of the information that is collected about pupils' achievement to plan work which is hard enough for all groups of pupils
 - provide pupils with guidance about how to improve their work, when they mark books
 - give pupils enough time to reflect on the advice in the marking and check that they put it into practice.
- Increase the effectiveness of leadership and management by making sure that leaders:
 - evaluate the quality of teaching in terms of its impact on the attainment and progress of groups of pupils of different abilities
 - check the teaching rigorously enough to identify any weaknesses and resolve them systematically
 - provide parents with information about how well their children are doing in a way that is timely and easy for them to understand.

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 has been closer to the national average but it has been below average in mathematics at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- In 2013 the Year 6 pupils made steady progress from their starting points in reading and writing and their attainment was broadly average. In mathematics, pupils did not make enough progress and many did not reach the levels of which they were capable. 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.
- The most able pupils achieve relatively well but could be making more progress in mathematics with more challenging work.
- Compared to other pupils with similar starting points, the Year 6 pupils in 2013 who benefitted from additional government funding made similar progress in reading and writing and slightly better progress in mathematics. Their attainment was four terms behind their classmates' in reading, two terms in writing and one term in mathematics. However, the gaps are closing in current year groups as these pupils are getting effective extra help that is speeding up their progress.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs generally make progress in line with that of their classmates because of the well-planned support they receive.
- Pupils with little spoken English settle quickly to school and make fast progress in their language acquisition because of the precise individual help the school offers.
- Pupils performed well below the national average in the Year 1 phonics (the sounds letters make) screening check in 2012 and 2013, which means they were not acquiring the skills to become fluent readers. As a result of changes to the way reading is taught, all pupils are making better progress in their reading and comprehension skills, and developing a great love of books.
- Most children start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skill levels that are typical for their age, although a few have lower levels than this. They make good progress so that by the time they start Year 1, they are confident learners and the majority have the skills and understanding expected at their age.
- Greater numbers of pupils take part in a wider range of sports and competitions supported by the new fund for physical education, and have improved their performances in activities such as cross-country, running and netball.

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.
- In some lessons, some groups of pupils do not make enough progress as the work is either too easy or too difficult. This is because teachers do not routinely use the information about pupils' achievement precisely to set work that gives the right level of challenge.
- Teachers' marking does not consistently give pupils the precise steps they need to make improvements to their work. Sometimes pupils have too little time to act on this advice and this restricts how well their work improves.
- The positive relationships across the school create a productive learning environment. In most lessons pupils cooperate well and enjoy the interesting activities that teachers plan for them.

- In the most effective lessons, teachers have high expectations of pupils and stretch their thinking to the full. For example, in one strong Year 5 and 6 lesson, pupils were expected to use precise mathematical vocabulary to explain their methods for solving problems, and this was helping to develop their understanding of multiplication exceptionally well.
- Pupils supported by the additional government funding are benefitting from the extra guidance from teachers and small-group work. As a result, currently they are making good and sometimes faster progress than their classmates, which is helping to close any gaps in attainment.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and those pupils with little spoken English, benefit from well-planned activities and good support from well-trained and skilled teaching assistants.
- Teachers have a keen desire to do their best for pupils, and good support from the local authority consultants and the partnership of schools is helping to improve their practice.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children enjoy the lively and 'playful' approach by the adults that gives them the chance to explore their ideas and develop their speaking and listening skills effectively. Children's experiences are enhanced by the good-quality reading resources that are readily available to them.

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 to their work quickly and try hard. These positive attitudes are contributing to the better progress now being made. For example, in one Key Stage 2 class pupils wrote uninterrupted for a long period to the accompaniment of classical music, showing high levels of concentration.
- Behaviour is not yet outstanding because of occasional lapses in concentration in lessons by a few pupils when they become restless and waste some time.
- Pupils, the majority of parents and the staff are positive about standards of behaviour. Pupils are clear about the systems to promote good behaviour and greatly appreciate the 'privileges cards' that they can earn. A small minority of parents expressed concern about the way the school deals with behaviour but inspection evidence shows that, overall, this is managed well.
- Pupils enjoy taking on roles and responsibilities such as school councillors, and contribute well to school life by organising charity events and managing the fund for playground equipment.
- Pupils are clear that bullying, in whatever form it takes, such as racist name-calling or physical bullying, is rare. Pupils are confident that any minor disagreement or 'falling-out' is sorted quickly by the adults. 'There are lots of kind adults you can ask', was one typical comment by a pupil and others agreed.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe in school and the majority of parents who completed the online questionnaire or who spoke to the inspectors agree. They judge that the school prepares pupils well for the next phase of their education through effective links with the local secondary school.
- School records show that the school deals effectively with a small number of pupils with behavioural or emotional difficulties, and the incidents of poor behaviour are few.
- School leaders have worked hard with parents to encourage regular attendance and reduce any unnecessary absences. As a consequence, current attendance rates are above average and punctuality is much improved.

The leadership and management require improvement

- Leaders, including governors, have not been vigilant enough in ensuring that all pupils have achieved well. They have not tracked progress precisely enough to enable them to respond quickly to reverse the downward trend in mathematics.

- Since the previous inspection there have been considerable changes in the leadership and staffing. Leaders have eradicated the weakest teaching and have made appropriate plans to improve the teaching still further. However, they do not check rigorously enough on the impact of teaching by looking at the progress of different groups of pupils in lessons and in their books. This means that leaders do not always identify any weaknesses in practice and resolve them quickly.
- New middle leaders are trained well and ambitious for the school. They have taken decisive steps to improve the quality of teaching, especially in reading and mathematics, but these actions have not had long enough to raise pupils' achievement to a consistently good level.
- Some parents expressed concerns when speaking to inspectors and in the online questionnaire about the way the school tells them how well their children are doing. They are not always made aware of any problems soon enough. This means that they are not involved fully in supporting their children's learning, and this hampers progress.
- The headteacher and governors have set appropriately challenging targets for staff as part of their performance management. They use the information about pupils' achievement more systematically to hold teachers to account for standards, linking this to their pay progression.
- Senior leaders have gained an accurate view of the school's performance as a result of good support and well-targeted training from the local authority, which is helping to increase the pace of improvement.
- Pupils' experiences across a range of subjects are varied and interesting, helping to promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. They have good opportunities to develop their talents in areas such as art and music.
- Checks on the plans for use of the new physical education funding show that more pupils are involved in a wider range of sports and competition such as cross-country running and martial arts. In addition, staff are developing their skills to help sustain these activities.
- Equality of opportunity is promoted at all times and any discrimination is tackled well. There are no recorded incidents of harassment since the previous inspection. The additional government fund for pupils eligible for free school meals is being used well to support these pupils.
- All the statutory requirements for safeguarding are met and there are effective systems in place to maintain the safety of pupils.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governance of the school has been through a period of change. As a result of the effective support from the local authority this academic year, governors have become better organised and better trained. They have a clearer understanding of the school's performance both in the context of similar and all schools nationally and why this has not been good enough. They are more involved in checking the school's work for themselves and are very aware of standards of teaching across the school. This is helping them to challenge the school's leaders more effectively about pupils' achievement. They know how teachers' performance is being managed and how this is linked to their pay progression. Governors are aware that some parents are concerned about the way they receive information from the school and are taking steps to attend to this.
 - Governors manage the budget carefully, including the additional funds for pupils eligible for free school meals and for the development of sport. They know how funds are allocated and the impact they are having on pupils' achievement.

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	113070
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	440995

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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	294
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Wayne Baker
Headteacher	Bryan White
Date of previous school inspection	8–9 December 2010
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