

St White's Primary School

St White's Road, Cinderford, Gloucestershire, GL14 3DH

Inspection dates 11–12 December 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.

- The achievement of pupils at the end of Year 2 is inadequate in English and mathematics. Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 in national assessment tests has been consistently below national averages over time.
- Over the last two years pupils leaving in Year 6 have made significantly less progress throughout Key Stage 2 when compared with national averages. Progress for current pupils remains slow in reading and writing.
- Teaching is not closing the achievement gap between pupils eligible for additional support through pupil premium and others quickly enough.
- Progress made by disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and more able pupils is too slow and less than that made by other pupils.
- Pupils do not use, and so do not develop, their skills in writing in different styles in a range of subjects.
- Teachers do not use the information they have to make sure learning tasks are matched well enough to pupils with different abilities.
- Teachers do not provide pupils with clear enough guidance or feedback that will help them understand how to improve their work.
- The behaviour of pupils is too variable and not yet good enough.
- The information school leaders hold is not used efficiently to review how well different groups are achieving as they progress through the school.
- School plans do not provide clear information about how the intended actions will improve the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils. The plans do not clearly explain how these initiatives will be reviewed or measured for their success.
- Over time, school leaders and governors have not secured the improvements needed in the school and accountability is weak.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils feel safe at school and well looked after by the adults around them.
- The school is now working more closely with the local authority to improve the quality of teaching and learning.
- The school is making better links with parents and encouraging them to share in their children's learning.
- The social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of the pupils is well supported by the school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 15 lessons, including two jointly observed with the headteacher. Inspectors also undertook short visits to classrooms to observe pupils discussing their learning with their parents.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and with a representative of the local authority. The inspectors also met with members of the senior management team and year team leaders.
- A wide range of documentation was reviewed, including planning, checks on teaching and learning and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- The inspectors listened to pupils read and scrutinised samples of pupils' work in books.
- Responses from 34 parents to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were considered. Inspectors spoke informally with parents as they left the Year 2 nativity performance and took account of the views of staff through the responses in 13 staff questionnaires

Inspection team

David Hogg, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Inge Fey

Additional Inspector

Linda Rowley

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

- St White's Primary School is an average-sized primary school situated on the edge of Cinderford in the Royal Forest of Dean. It draws nearly all of its pupils from the local area. There are very few children from minority ethnic groups attending school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for additional pupil premium support provided for looked after children, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children of service families is below the national average. There are no children from service personnel attending the school.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported at school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs is well below the national average and those supported at school action is a little above average.
- The school meets the current floor standards, which are the minimum standards for attainment and progress expected by the government.
- The headteacher has been in post since January 2013 and his deputy since September 2013. The governing body in its present form has been in place since July 2013 and the Chair of Governors took over the role at the start of December 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is consistently good or better by ensuring:
 - teachers use the information they hold on pupils to plan learning activities that are not too easy or too difficult for the different groups in their classes, especially the more able and those with special educational needs
 - teachers raise their expectations of what pupils of all abilities can achieve, especially the more able
 - pupils are provided with clear guidance on what they are expected to know, understand and be able to do in a single lesson or series of lessons.
 - teachers mark work so that pupils know what and how to improve and have opportunities to respond to marking quickly.
- Ensure that all groups of pupils consistently make good progress and attain more highly in English and mathematics across Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 by:
 - improving pupils' basic skills in mathematics by giving them more chances to apply those skills and to use them in other subjects
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to write in different styles in other subject areas to develop and widen their skills in writing
 - ensuring that the progress made by pupils eligible for free school meals, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is faster and any gaps in their skills and understanding are closed more quickly.

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, including governance, by:
 - ensuring that school leaders at all levels use the information they hold on how well different groups of pupils are doing to compare their progress and intervene where appropriate.
 - producing school development plans that identify clearly and specifically how improvements are to be achieved, who is going to monitor the actions and how the impact of the actions is to be assessed
 - developing middle leaders further so that they can effectively review the quality of teaching and learning and use their skills to coach other teachers by modelling good and outstanding teaching
 - ensuring the governing body holds the school rigorously to account by monitoring the impact of actions aimed at raising the achievement of different groups of pupils such as those eligible for pupil premium funding.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved further. In addition, an external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance should be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 has been low in recent years in all subjects and is now significantly below national averages. An improvement in 2012 so that standards were broadly average in reading and mathematics was not sustained and results fell back in 2013 to be well below national averages.
- The progress made by pupils between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 has been significantly below national expectations for the last two years and is still too slow in reading and writing.
- At the end of Year 6 pupils' attainment in national assessments has been consistently below national averages in English and mathematics over time. Results in 2012 showed some improvements but still were below average. In 2013 the results declined especially in mathematics which dropped again to be significantly below national averages.
- School based data indicate that the progress pupils make in mathematics is too slow and is below that in reading and writing in all year groups. Pupils' books show that they do not have enough opportunities to apply their skills in mathematics. Much of the pupils' work is mundane, involving practising repetitive exercises that lack challenge.
- The progress made by disabled pupils and those with special educational needs in most year groups and in most subject areas is generally weaker than that made by other pupils. Recent improvements in the support provided by teachers and teaching assistants have yet to fully impact on the outcomes for pupils.
- The attainment of more-able pupils in Year 6 was in line with that seen nationally in 2013. The information the school holds does show that the progress made by more-able pupils in different subject areas and in different year groups is inconsistent. This arises because they are not always given challenging work to do.
- Those pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium funding are not being helped sufficiently to close the gaps in their skills compared with other pupils. In the most recent national curriculum assessments at the end of Year 6, pupils in receipt of the pupil premium were behind by about four terms in both English and mathematics. The school's own information indicates gaps are not closing rapidly enough in other year groups and are widening from their different starting points.
- There is some variation over time in outcomes for boys and girls and in the data the school holds for different year groups. However, in the lessons seen, there was no noticeable variation in engagement or apparent progress made by either boys or girls. Children enter Reception with skills well below those typically found, especially in the areas of communication, language and literacy. They generally make good progress due to well-organised teaching in which learning is carefully planned and offers a range of activities tailored to interest the pupils. This good foundation is not built on in subsequent years.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- Teaching over time has not been good enough to enable all pupils to make rapid enough progress from their different starting points. Although some good and better teaching was observed during the inspection, the quality of teaching is still too variable. There is too little teaching that is good enough to close the gaps in pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding.
- Teachers do not consistently use information they have on pupils to plan challenging lessons that match the needs of all groups of pupils, especially the more-able. Consequently the progress of some pupils is inadequate because their learning does not move on quickly enough.
- Teachers try to provide pupils with information about what they are going to learn but do not always clearly explain what pupils are expected to do. Pupils are not given clear targets that explain to them what they are aiming to learn and what they are expected to produce over a period of time.
- Work is marked but does not consistently provide pupils with sufficient guidance on how and

what to improve. When marking is more explicit, pupils do not get sufficient opportunities to improve their work or address the points raised by the teachers.

- Evidence from pupils' books indicates teaching in mathematics is structured to help different groups of pupils learn but the activities tend to be routine and not very exciting. Writing in books is not sufficiently extensive. Pupils do not practise writing across subjects for different purposes and audiences.
- In the past, the support work for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs in intervention sessions and the activities happening in the class have not been coordinated sufficiently and did not dovetail together well. Recent training for teaching assistants has led to them taking on a greater role in the class, as seen in a Year 3/4 literacy class. Teaching assistants are now working alongside class teachers more effectively with the teachers taking on greater responsibility in organising and planning the support work.
- There are some indications that the efforts the school has made recently to improve the quality of teaching are having an impact, with some better teaching seen during the inspection. The themed topic of 'Rivers' in Year 5/6 classes provided opportunities for pupils to suggest things they would like to find out. Teachers booked a canoe trip down the River Wye to fire up pupils' interest successfully.
- Teaching is typically stronger in upper Key Stage 2 and in Reception but this stronger practice has not been used effectively by the leadership team to model good practice.

The behaviour and safety of pupils requires improvement

- Pupils' behaviour is inconsistent. At times, pupils lap up work. However, in some lessons, pupils do not get through enough work because they lose interest in tasks or teaching. Pupils say that when they are taught by newer teachers or supply teachers, their behaviour is not good.
- Pupils say they feel safe and well looked after when they are in school. They have a good awareness of personal safety for example 'stranger danger' and the need for careful use of the internet. They are welcoming and courteous and can talk at length about how they enjoy their time at school.
- There have been a small number of incidents of thoughtlessness with property but acts of unkindness and incidents of bullying are rare. Pupils say that if they need support after falling out with others, teachers and other adults are there to help.
- The school is on a split site with a road running between the upper and lower schools. A risk assessment has recently been carried out to review the hazard. The crossing is very well supervised by adults when pupils have to move between the two sites, for example at break time. The playground is small but pupils behave sensibly when playing ball games and with larger toys. Attendance is broadly average but has shown some variation over time. The school does not monitor the attendance of groups of pupils closely but does use the support from the cluster group of schools to work with families to raise attendance rates of individual pupils.

The leadership and management are inadequate

- Leadership and management at all levels over time have not secured the improvements in the school that are necessary for better outcomes for pupils. The new headteacher has implemented some changes but they have yet to impact significantly on standards of teaching and learning for all pupils. The school has not sufficiently addressed the issues from the previous inspection and pupils' achievement has declined from the satisfactory judgement given at that time, to being inadequate. This sustained decline means that the school is not demonstrating that it can improve further.
- The varying rates of progress by different groups and underperformance overall means that the school is not providing equality of opportunity for pupils.
- There is insufficient responsibility delegated to middle leaders in checking the quality of teaching

and how well pupils are doing. This reduces their effectiveness in their areas of responsibility. The school's systems for tracking the progress groups of pupils make are not used efficiently and effectively to make sure that all pupils are achieving as highly as they can and that any additional support provided is improving pupils' achievement

- Due to the school's reluctance to accept external support in the past, the local authority reports it has found it difficult to effectively provide the necessary help to the school. The school is now much more receptive to working with others and receives a high level of support from the local authority and consultants. The school will require further external support as the leadership in the school over time has not secured the necessary improvements and the current team has not demonstrated sufficient urgency in their efforts to move the school forwards.
- School development plans do not spell out clearly enough how improvements are to be achieved. They lack rigour and clear measures of impact that would improve the quality of teaching quickly .
- The school curriculum does not meet the needs of all groups of pupils as it is not ensuring pupils develop their skills in reading, writing and mathematics quickly enough. This is recognised by the school and it is currently being reviewed with the purpose of engaging and motivating pupils more thoroughly. Recent work on 'Rivers' culminated in parents visiting classes in the upper school to play 'Wyeopoly', a game made by pupils that showcased their work on the local area. The school draws well from the local and wider community to enrich pupils' awareness of cultures and faiths and to support and challenge as they develop socially and emotionally.
- The school has plans to extend pupils' opportunities to take part in sporting competitions and to develop staff expertise in certain areas such as gymnastics through use of the additional primary sport funding grant. The school is linked with a group of schools locally to help develop its plans but has yet to use the funding effectively in school.
- Teachers have targets that are linked to pupils' outcomes and form the basis of promotion and salary advancement. The system to review this is now much more rigorous.
- Procedures and policies for safeguarding and child protection are in place and provide the basis on which pupils of all ages are kept safe within school and, when they need to be, well supported.
- Newly qualified teachers should not be appointed.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body does not hold the school rigorously to account for the progress pupils make. In the past it has not reviewed the information the school holds and provided the necessary level of challenge. The new Chair of the Governing Body is a governor at an outstanding school locally and is now providing greater challenge to the headteacher for the outcomes for pupils. The current governors have received training from the local authority and have a better understanding of their roles. Governors review carefully the financial position of the school but are only beginning to effectively check how resources are being spent to help those pupils eligible for pupil premium support. The governors are also only starting to review the school's plans to use the additional funding support to develop the teaching of sport in the school. They have become more aware of the quality of teaching and understand that teachers have targets which link salary increases and promotions to pupils' outcomes. The governors review how well the school keeps the pupils safe through audits of the safeguarding procedures and make sure they meet statutory requirements. There have been improvements in governance but they are very recent and are not yet demonstrating the necessary impact on the work of the school.

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	115520
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	426752

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	273
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Adams
Headteacher	Gary Law
Date of previous school inspection	29–30 September 2011
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