

Hilperton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Newleaze, Hilperton, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 7SB

Inspection dates

19–20 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		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Progress in reading and writing is slower than in mathematics and varies between groups throughout the school.
- Some of the most able pupils are not achieving as well as they should.
- Teaching, particularly in Reception and Year 1 classes, is not yet of a good enough standard for all pupils to make consistently good progress.
- In books and in lessons, there are inconsistencies between classes in the quality of advice teachers give to pupils to help them to improve.
- Some pupils find it hard to be enthusiastic about learning and teaching does not capture their attention.
- The standard of writing produced by many younger pupils is not as good as it should be. Many of them do not use phonics (the sounds that letters make), punctuation and sentence construction accurately.
- Pupils find it hard to learn and apply their multiplication tables.
- Leaders in charge of subjects have not been given time to check the quality of teaching in their subjects or to analyse progress data.
- In the past, governors have not been effective in driving improvements and did not know enough about the quality of teaching, pupils' progress and the impact of how the extra pupil premium funds were spent.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher has a realistic view of the school's performance. She is ambitious and determined to drive the school forward. She has already made some improvements.
- Pupils behave well. They feel very safe in school.
- Attendance is above the national average.
- Pupils' learning is enlivened by a wide range of activities which promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- The care and welfare of pupils are particularly effective.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons involving seven teachers. Three of the lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspectors held discussions with school leaders, staff, governors and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documentation including improvement plans, the systems for tracking pupils' progress, the arrangements for safeguarding pupils and samples of pupils' work. They heard groups of pupils reading and spoke with others about behaviour and safety arrangements at the school.
- Account was taken of 36 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and the views expressed by those parents and carers who spoke with inspectors at the start of the school day. The inspectors also considered 17 staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Michael Bartleman, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Carol Worthington

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils come from a White British background.
- Around one pupil in 20 is disabled or has special educational needs supported through school action. This is below average. Around one pupil in 10 is supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, which is above average.
- Around one pupil in eight is supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children or with a parent in the armed forces). This is below average. There are very few looked after children or children with a parent in the armed forces.
- The governing body manages daily before-school and after-school clubs.
- The pupils are taught in mixed age classes in Years 4, 5 and 6 and in single age classes in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Years 1 to 3.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2013.
- 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, particularly in Reception and Year 1 classes so that it is good or better by ensuring that:
 - teachers plan work that is neither too hard nor too easy for pupils
 - learning journals (used in Reception) evaluate what children can already do and understand so that teachers plan the next steps they need to take
 - adults intervene to extend pupils' language, vocabulary and to reinforce their phonic (letters and the sounds they make) skills
 - the Reception class outside area is developed to provide opportunities for children to develop rich language, to practise number work and to learn new skills.
- Increase the proportion of pupils making consistently good progress in reading, writing and mathematics by ensuring that:
 - the most able pupils are given hard enough work
 - all groups of pupils are interested and involved in their lessons
 - teachers' marking in books and comments in lessons tell pupils what they have done well, and what they need to improve
 - activities in lessons develop pupils' phonics, spellings, punctuation, sentence construction and multiplication tables so they are able to complete more difficult work successfully.
- Improve the effectiveness of leaders and managers, including governors, by:
 - making sure that agreed school policies are followed consistently
 - developing the role of subject leaders in checking school developments, pupils' progress and the quality of teaching
 - making sure that governors hold leaders and managers fully to account for providing an acceptable standard of education.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because pupils are not making consistently good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. The most able pupils are not given hard enough work.
- Many younger pupils lack confidence with their phonics, punctuation, sentence construction and remembering mathematical skills. This limits their ability to move on to harder work successfully.
- Reception children's achievement requires improvement. Children enter the school with levels of development expected for their age. Although they are keen to learn, their curiosity and willingness are not always nurtured by staff. In the outside areas, there are too few areas where pupils can practise number work and develop rich language and other skills.
- Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 have varied since the previous inspection. In 2013 they were above national levels in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6. However, many pupils should have done even better but they did not make good progress in Years 3 to 6.
- Pupils in Key Stage 1 make slower progress than they do in Key Stage 2. This is because activities in Year 1 do not build on what children can actually do, so their learning slows down. Despite good teaching in Year 2, few pupils attain the higher level in national tests.
- The school's data show that achievement is improving, although there is a small proportion of pupils in each year group who are not making enough progress. Progress varies too much between groups and between different subjects.
- The school has worked effectively to improve the teaching of phonics which has started to develop pupils' knowledge more securely. Following disappointing results in the phonic screening check in 2012, there was an improvement in 2013 to national levels.
- Pupils have many opportunities to read for a variety of purposes in lessons. The improvements in guided reading were evident in the activities provided in some classes, although not consistent across all classes. Standards in reading are above national levels in Year 6 and in Year 2.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to their classmates due to highly focused one-to-one and group sessions. However, learning slows when pupils, particularly those who are supported at school action plus, are not given activities they can manage when the whole class is working together.
- Pupil premium funding is used to provide additional support and nurturing activities. The attainment of pupils supported by the pupil premium in English and mathematics in Year 6 in 2013 was the equivalent of one term below their classmates in both subjects. Most eligible pupils currently in the school are making similar progress to their classmates.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is not consistently good enough to ensure that all pupils achieve well throughout the school. Until recently, teachers have not been accurate in grading what pupils can do in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, pupils, particularly younger ones, sometimes have work that is too hard or too easy for them. When work is too hard, adults often have to support individual pupils or small groups which limits the progress of the class as a whole.
- Despite recent improvements, not all teachers provide written comments which acknowledge what pupils have done well and where they need to improve further. The recently introduced learning toolkits and targets for pupils have started to focus them more on their learning.
- Most of the parents who responded to the questionnaire believe that teaching is good. What the inspectors saw did not confirm this view. However, teaching is improving and having an increasingly positive impact on pupils' achievement, although some teachers' questions are too simple and do not encourage pupils to think hard about what they are learning.
- In the past information in the Reception's learning journals has been descriptive rather than

evaluative, reflecting variations in the quality of teaching. Adults do not always intervene at the right moments to guide and extend children's learning, to record their progress and what they can do accurately.

- The role of teaching assistants has developed rapidly since the headteacher's appointment. Well-managed training has ensured that they are actively involved and effective in supporting individuals or when they are working with a small group of pupils.
- During the inspection some effective teaching was seen in Years 4, 5 and 6. Relationships are strong and pupils learn well and understand the work because teachers and teaching assistants ask them questions which make them think carefully. The teacher's enthusiasm for English language helped pupils remain attentive and interested when they wrote captions for pictures from their Roman theme day. Pupils discussed and shared their ideas with each other before writing so they learned from each other.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Although most pupils conduct themselves well around the school, when the pace of learning slows or activities are not well organised, they have little enthusiasm to learn, do not settle down quickly and produce untidy, often unfinished, work. Pupils and a few members of staff express reservations about behaviour and the ways teachers manage it.
- Around the school and in the playground, pupils get on well, learning to appreciate difference and diversity. The school is effective in promoting positive relationships. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- Teachers encourage pupils to discuss their work which develops their social skills well. Pupils respond well to 'stars of the week' and headteacher awards for good work and behaviour.
- Pupils take some responsibility, for example, as peer mentors and councillors, which develop their personal skills well. Pupils spoken to expressed a wish for more ways to take responsibility. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about the recent Roman theme day, baking bread and learning in the school's extensive grounds.
- School records confirm that pupils' conduct is good and that it has improved over time. The few pupils who find it difficult to manage their own behaviour are supported well. Practically all parents and carers feel that behaviour is good.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils learn how to keep safe, for example when using the internet. They have a good awareness of all forms of bullying. Pupils say bullying does happen but have confidence in school staff to sort it. Leaders cited examples of how effective the school has been resolving some recent issues and supporting individual pupils.
- Attendance is above average, which reflects pupils' enjoyment of school.
- Pupils and parents greatly appreciate the well-run early morning breakfast club, which provides a calm and sociable start to the school day, and the after-school clubs.
- Strong links with health and social care professionals, together with staff who know their pupils well, help to give sensitive support for pupils whose home circumstances may make them at risk of not doing well.

The leadership and management

require improvement

- The new headteacher is securing improvements in the school's performance, but these have not had time to have full impact. Leadership and management require improvement because there remain inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, rates of pupils' progress and in the way school policies are carried out, for example in following agreed marking procedures so that pupils know how to improve their work
- The headteacher understands the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The school

improvement plan addresses the main inconsistencies in teaching and the gaps in achievement. Expectations have been raised.

- Enough has been done to address weaknesses and to maintain the school's positive ethos to show that there is capacity to improve further. For example, teaching assistants are helping pupils' learning much better; phonics is taught better; and important management structures, such as arrangements for staff appraisal, assessments and tracking of pupils' progress, have been established.
- Until recently, the school has not developed the skills of subject leaders or involved them in checking the quality of teaching or standards in their subject area.
- The headteacher has the support of pupils, staff and parents. She has already created an atmosphere where good learning and behaviour can flourish. One child commented, 'Our new headteacher is amazing, we are doing lots of exciting things.' Most parents are positive about the work of the school.
- The funding available through the pupil premium is now used effectively to help eligible pupils to take a full part in school life, and receive, where appropriate, specific resources and adult time.
- Teachers' work is managed well. Decisions about the salaries teachers receive are based on the progress made by the pupils they teach. Teachers are held to account for their pupils' progress by having regular meetings with the headteacher and other leaders.
- The curriculum provides a good range of activities which pupils enjoy. The school uses the curriculum well to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Effective use of visits locally, and further afield, and theme days, enrich the curriculum and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of the wider world. The school has good links with the local church. Many volunteers from the local community support pupils' learning in school.
- The school makes effective arrangements to see that pupils are safe and that adults appointed to work in the school are appropriately qualified and experienced.
- The school is strongly committed to ensuring equality of opportunity, although leaders recognise that some groups do not achieve as well as they could.
- The school has used the new primary school sports funding to arrange for staff training, coaches, and to increase pupils' participation in after-school sports and inter-school competitions. The subject coordinator has good plans to check regularly what impact these initiatives have on pupils' well-being and health. At this stage, it is too early to evaluate them.
- Regular support from the school improvement adviser has helped the headteacher develop a realistic view of the school and to implement a number of improvements successfully. The school works effectively with a range of other schools in the local area to share teacher training and to check the accuracy of its assessments.
- Partnerships with parents are developed effectively and start with the well-managed introduction to the Reception class. Parents much appreciate that the headteacher is at the front gate every morning.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors know the school's strengths and what the school needs to do to keep improving. Governors are supportive and some of them visit the school regularly. They are increasingly well informed about the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement; they know that some pupils should do better.
 - The governing body has recently reviewed its practices and developed an action plan to build on the improvements that have been made since the headteacher's appointment. They discuss whether the extra pupil premium funds have been spent effectively.
 - Governors accept that they have not always had a good understanding of the management of teachers' performance and the national Teachers' Standards and how these affect pay rises and promotion. They are now better informed and much more involved in the school's self-evaluation, and checking the school improvement plan. Governors monitor spending carefully, and ensure that they fulfil statutory duties for safeguarding and child protection requirements.

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	126328
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	441068

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	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	172
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Terry Hughes
Headteacher	Vicki Cann
Date of previous school inspection	3–4 November 2010
Telephone number	01225 755343
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