

Guyhirn CofE VC Primary School

High Road, Guyhirn, Wisbech, PE13 4ED

Inspection dates 20–21 May 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	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		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Pupils, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and the most able, are not always expected to work at the levels of which they are capable, especially when they are all set the same task to complete.
- Teachers do not consistently provide pupils with clear advice on how to improve their work, or make sure that, when advice is given, pupils follow this up quickly.
- Pupils' work is not checked thoroughly for avoidable mistakes, which are then not always corrected.
- Teachers do not always encourage pupils to produce their best work in writing and mathematics.
- The provision for younger pupils for whom the school receives additional funding is not helping them to make at least as much progress as other pupils.
- Leaders do not make sure that teachers consistently follow agreed guidance on teaching and the marking of pupils' work.

The school has the following strengths

- Children learn quickly in the Early Years Foundation Stage, especially in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils behave well and feel safe at school. They are courteous and considerate towards others.
- Good provision is made for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Leaders and governors are making sure that the school is improving quickly. There has been a strong drive to improve the school this year, and achievement and teaching are now getting better rapidly.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching in nine lessons, all jointly with the acting headteacher.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, teachers, pupils, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector took into account the 23 responses to the online Parent View survey. Informal discussions were held with a random sample of parents.
- The inspector considered the views expressed in survey responses from 10 members of staff.
- A range of information supplied by the school was scrutinised, including the school's own information about how well pupils are doing, planning documents, checks on the quality of teaching, the school development plan, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and safeguarding procedures.

Inspection team

Alison Cartlidge, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Guyhirn CofE VC Primary School is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority) is well above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported by school action is broadly average and the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- There have been many changes in staffing since the last inspection, including leaders. At the time of the inspection, there was an acting headteacher and two temporary teachers at the school. The acting headteacher has been seconded from a local school where the headteacher is a national leader of education, and the school receives some additional support from this school.
- The pre-school on the same site is managed by the school but is inspected separately. Its last inspection report can be found on www.ofsted.gov.uk.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and the rate of pupils' progress across the school, by:
 - making sure that all pupils, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and the most able, are enabled to work at the levels of which they are capable, especially when the whole class is working together
 - expecting pupils to consistently do their best in their written work and mathematics
 - ensuring that younger pupils for whom the school receives additional funding make at least as much progress as other pupils in their class.
- Improve the impact of support pupils are given to help them to improve their work, by:
 - consistently providing pupils with advice on how to improve their work next time
 - making sure that pupils respond to advice quickly
 - checking that pupils do not make avoidable errors in their work.
- Make sure that all leaders are vigilant in checking that agreed whole-school policies on teaching and marking are being followed by all members of staff.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- While pupils' achievement is improving rapidly this year, progress is not consistent across the school. Since the previous inspection, attainment by the end of Year 6 has been low in reading, writing and mathematics. However, there has been a steady upward trend, and school data show that attainment in the current Year 6 is on track to be much higher than in previous years. Where progress is slower than it should be, it is due to pupils being given inappropriate work and not due to weaknesses in the pupils' attitudes to learning.
- While some recent support work is starting to have a positive impact, the progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs requires improvement because they are given work that is too hard for them in some lessons, preventing them from achieving well.
- The gap in attainment between pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding and other pupils is closing. In national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2013, these pupils had caught up with others in mathematics, but were a term behind in writing and a year behind other pupils in their reading. In the current Year 6, there is no difference between the attainment of these pupils and others in the class. However, the progress of some of the younger pupils is not fast enough because teachers are not making sure that they are well enough supported in their learning.
- The progress of the most able pupils is improving, and these pupils are on track to do better than in the past. They are not always working at the level of which they are capable.
- Attainment on entry to the school varies considerably from year to year. The majority of children in the current Reception Year were working within the levels expected for their age when they started school. These children make good progress from their starting points, especially in reading and mathematics. For example, children learned quickly when writing numbers to ten to make a number line of fish and when adding small numbers together. Occasionally, opportunities are missed for children to practise and develop their writing when they are working outside on activities they have chosen for themselves.
- Results in the Year 1 phonics (linking sounds and letters) screening check in 2013 were above average, reflecting improvements made in the teaching of early reading skills since the previous inspection. One pupil in Year 2 was proud to announce that he had improved his reading, giving as his reason, 'I sound out the words and read every single day.'
- Leaders have been successful in halting the decline in attainment at the end of Year 2 over the last three years, and school data indicate higher standards than in the past.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The teaching is not consistently good across the school. Nevertheless, leaders have been responsible for improving teaching over the year.
- Teachers accept work which is not of high quality and do not expect pupils to consistently improve and produce their best work. Consequently, the work in pupils' books is of variable quality and does not always build on what they already know and can do.
- When teachers are working with the whole class, they do not always ensure that the work enables all pupils to understand and learn quickly. Sometimes, it is too hard for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and, at other times, it is not hard enough for the

most able. When this happens, some pupils become quietly inattentive and their learning does not move forward fast enough.

- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Members of staff work together well as a team to support groups of pupils of differing ability. They provide good support for children to learn about sounds and letters. For example, in one lesson, children were quick to learn when they tested their knowledge of 'ar' and 'or' by matching up the pretend lily pads on the river and they were keen to change letters to make different words.
- Across the school, there are good resources to support pupils in their learning. For example, in Years 2 to 4, pupils were shown various pictures depicting the water cycle before making their own informative posters.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have good relationships with the pupils and, consequently, there is a relaxed atmosphere in lessons and behaviour is managed well. Recent training has helped staff to become more effective when working with groups of pupils.
- Teachers ask some good questions to check the pupils' understanding and are good at introducing and explaining the meaning of new vocabulary such as 'precipitation' and 'photosynthesis'.
- Teachers frequently mark pupils' work but do not always provide them with enough guidance on how to do better next time, or make sure that any advice given is followed up quickly. Consequently, pupils continue to make errors in their work and do not always do well enough.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Parents and pupils are pleased with behaviour at the school, and school records show that behaviour is good over time. Pupils typically make positive comments such as, 'We work together,' and 'Bad behaviour does not happen often.'
- Pupils are polite and friendly and are keen to work together, to help around the school and to protect the environment. As one pupil said, 'I like the pupils and teachers and working as a team.'
- Pupils concentrate well and help each other when working with their talk partners in class. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 worked together well helping each other to remember the seven life processes of living things.
- When learning slows in lessons, it is not because pupils are unwilling to work, but because they are not given clear enough guidance on what they should achieve or because the work they have been given is either too hard or too easy.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and their enthusiasm is very evident in the delightful singing during collective worship. Rates of attendance have been well below average in the past, but leaders have been holding discussions with parents to stress the importance of regular attendance and, consequently, the levels of attendance have improved dramatically this year.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils know how to stay safe and are very knowledgeable about e-safety. They know they should 'blow the whistle' if they find unsuitable material when using the computer.

- Pupils feel safe at school and know that unkind behaviour is dealt with well; as one pupil said, 'The headteacher encourages us and is very supportive.' They understand that it is wrong to cheat or make others suffer. The school is vigilant in discouraging discrimination of any kind.

The leadership and management are good

- The acting headteacher has been relentless in her drive to improve the school and has the full support of the governing body and other members of staff. There have been many recent changes in staffing, but a clear sense of purpose and direction has been established. Consequently, the school has been improving rapidly this year, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage where provision is good.
- Clear plans have been followed to improve teaching and raise attainment. Members of staff have received relevant training, and inadequacies in teaching have been tackled unflinchingly. Leaders have established agreed whole-school policies for teaching and marking pupils' work, although the implementation of the policies is not being checked enough to ensure that they are being followed consistently by all members of staff.
- The local authority and the school of a national leader in education provided a high level of support initially this year, but are appropriately reducing this support now that leaders are demonstrating the capacity to go on improving the school unaided.
- Leaders, including middle leaders, promote equal opportunity well. Funding is being used well to support the pupils entitled to the pupil premium so that the gap in attainment between these and other pupils has closed by the end of Year 6. Individual and group help has been provided, along with additional resources to support learning. Leaders are rightly reviewing provision for a few of the younger pupils whose progress has been insufficient in writing and mathematics.
- The curriculum has rightly been modified to focus on improving attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics, and improvements in resources have helped pupils' to develop more positive attitudes towards learning. There is strong provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are given clear guidance which influences their moral and social behaviour, for example, through the sharing of school value statements such as, 'What you say should reflect what you do.' They take part fully in prayer, act out stories from the Bible and enjoy singing hymns. These activities help them to become considerate and respectful.
- The additional funding to develop sport is being used well. Specialist coaching and new clubs have increased the level of physical activity of the pupils and their interest in sport. For example, pupils enjoy learning the local traditional dancing and take part in various ball games at playtime. These activities contribute well to the pupils' healthy lifestyles and physical well-being, enabling them to reach the standards of which they are capable.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. Members of staff are trained in keeping pupils safe, are caring and have been checked for their suitability for working with pupils.
- The school has a good partnership with the parents. Parents have increased their confidence in the school this year and have welcomed the changes made and the way their concerns are being dealt with. They especially appreciate that their children are happy and are kept safe. They make positive comments such as, 'Members of staff are very friendly and nurturing,' and 'The teachers are helpful.'

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governance has improved rapidly this year and is good. Governors are fully aware that they did not challenge leaders well enough in the past. They have undergone an external review of their work and undertaken relevant training to equip them for their responsibilities. As a result, they are knowledgeable about the school, know how it compares with others and are realistic about its strengths and steps needed to make it good in the future. They know what teaching is like, how good teaching is to be rewarded and have been successful in helping the school to tackle the main weaknesses in teaching.

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	110806
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	441978

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

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	74
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gareth Edwards
Headteacher	Sally-Anne Barnard-Taylor (Acting headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	22 November 2012
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