

St Peter's Church of England Primary School

Fabian's Way, Henfield, West Sussex, BN5 9PU

Inspection dates

12–13 June 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		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Pupils' achievement in writing and mathematics requires improvement as teaching over time has not been good enough in these subjects.
- Teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to write extensively in English or across subjects, or for problem-solving activities in mathematics.
- Sometimes the work set in lessons, particularly in mathematics, is too difficult for the least able pupils and too easy for the most able and this slows progress.
- Teachers' feedback does not consistently help pupils to improve their work.
- Planning for activities children in the Reception classes undertake by themselves is not good enough to ensure adults can fully challenge them and deepen their understanding.
- Subject and team leaders are not sufficiently involved in checking teaching, learning and pupils' progress.
- Senior leaders do not identify areas for improvement precisely enough nor do they ensure success is accurately and thoroughly measured.

The school has the following strengths:

- Progress is speeding up across the school, with evidence of good progress, particularly in reading, after a period of decline caused by staffing disruption.
- Careful, more focused checks on pupils' progress are ensuring that any pupils falling behind are quickly identified and support put in place to help them catch up.
- Pupils behave well and enjoy school, particularly the many clubs, sporting and cultural activities and events that support their personal development well.
- Pupils have good attitudes to their work and are very keen and motivated to learn.
- The headteacher ensures that the school is a calm, harmonious community. This ensures pupils feel very safe and well cared for. He has dealt well with the staff changes and leadership restructuring that have sometimes disrupted learning.
- Governors provide support and challenge to the school. They acted quickly when needed to make sure the school improved after a decline in standards.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 21 lessons or part lessons, of which three were jointly observed with senior staff.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and three other governors, the headteacher and other senior staff. Additionally, a telephone conversation was held with a local authority officer.
- The inspectors took account of the 74 responses to the online Parent View survey and the responses to the 30 staff questionnaires.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information on pupils' current progress, planning and checks on the quality of teaching, records relating to behaviour and attendance, the sports premium action plan and documents relating to safeguarding.
- The inspectors listened to pupils from Year 2 and Year 6 read.

Inspection team

Janet Sinclair, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
David Westall	Additional Inspector
David Howley	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Peter's Primary is an above average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by additional government funding known as the pupil premium, which in this school is for looked after pupils and those known to be eligible for free school meals, is below average.
- There is a below average proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average. A few of these pupils are at an early stage of learning English.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has had significant staffing disruption due to staff changes and illness, as well as leadership restructuring which is still on-going, since the previous inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that all groups make good progress and achieve well, particularly in mathematics and writing, by:
 - developing pupils' problem-solving skills in mathematics
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to write extensively in English and other subjects at Key Stage 2
 - checking pupils' work carefully in writing and mathematics in order to set specific targets for improvement
 - making sure that teachers fully extend the most able pupils and support the least able, so that work is at the right level of difficulty in order for them to achieve well
 - improving the consistency of marking so that all pupils are clear about what they need to do to improve their work and can show that they have understood and acted on the advice given
 - improving planning in the Reception classes for activities that children undertake by themselves to ensure adults consistently challenge and deepen their understanding.
- Build the capacity of leadership and management to drive improvement by:
 - further developing subject and team leaders so that they take more responsibility for ensuring greater consistency in teaching and accelerated pupils' progress
 - identifying areas for improvement more precisely and ensuring success is accurately and thoroughly measured.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because too many pupils do not make good progress in mathematics and writing. The school is working with increasing success to address the decline in achievement caused by staffing disruption.
- Pupils' attainment over time has been above average at the end of Key Stage 2 and progress variable. The achievement of pupils currently in the school is good in reading and requires improvement in writing and mathematics.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs requires improvement. Their achievement is improving due to greater input from the pupil support manager who monitors their progress carefully and ensures they get the support they need.
- Pupils at an early stage of learning English also get help tailored to their specific needs. This helps them with their spoken English and enables them to make similar progress to other pupils in the school.
- Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds make similar progress to other pupils in the school.
- Pupils did not achieve well in the Year 1 phonics screening check in 2013. However, the school acted quickly with improved provision for the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) and ensuring that those pupils who did not succeed were fully supported to improve their phonics skills rapidly. The impact of this was evident in their high rate of success when they undertook the checks again in Year 2.
- The school has done much to ensure good reading provision. There are regular guided reading sessions that are well focused on the development of key skills, as well as book buddies and regular checks on progress. This is helping to ensure good progress across the school. Pupils spoken to in Year 6 said they enjoy their reading sessions because they are interesting and help them to improve.
- The school is working hard to improve writing and early successes can be seen, particularly in Year 2 and for boys in the Reception classes. However, at Key Stage 2, there are too few opportunities for pupils to write across the subjects or to write extended pieces that are used to set new targets to improve their writing. This hampers progress.
- Very careful termly checks on pupils' progress are now helping to identify those falling behind. These pupils are then given additional support. This is clearly helping to accelerate progress. Gaps in the performance of different groups are closing, showing that the school is focused on promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination.
- In order to more fully meet the needs of most-able pupils, the school has placed pupils in ability sets in Years 5 and 6. This ensures they are set work that better meets their needs which helps them to make better progress in lessons.
- Pupils who are supported by additional funding attain similarly to other pupils in the school in reading and lower in mathematics and writing. Their progress is tracked carefully to ensure that it is similar to that of other pupils in the school who do not attract this additional funding, and is successfully narrowing the gap.
- Children start in Reception with skills and abilities at levels broadly similar to those expected for their age, except in reading and writing where they are slightly lower. They achieve appropriately across the areas of learning so that they mostly meet expected levels of development on entry to Year 1.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it has not been good enough over time to ensure pupils make consistently good progress. Staffing changes and disruption caused a decline in teaching

quality and although it is improving, it is not yet consistently good. This limits pupils' overall progress.

- Work is not always set at the right level for pupils, particularly in mathematics; it is sometimes too hard for the least able pupils and not hard enough for the most able pupils. Pupils spoken to confirmed this. They said that although most lessons were interesting, they were not enjoyable when pupils got stuck and did not really understand what to do or when the work was too easy.
- In mathematics, although teachers provide appropriately for the development of number and calculation skills, they do not make sure there are enough opportunities for practical, hands-on problem solving in order to fully develop pupils' mathematical understanding.
- Teachers do not always use marking well to help pupils improve their work or show they have understood and acted on advice. There are examples of effective marking, particularly in Year 2, that are not yet shared across the school.
- Teaching is improving, with some examples of good teaching, especially in Year 2 and Year 6. In these Year Groups, teaching is lively, work is set at the right level for pupils and they are clear about what is expected of them. Additionally, teachers have good subject knowledge that enables them to challenge and extend pupils' ideas and understanding well.
- Improved teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) through a much more structured approach, is ensuring that pupils now use these skills well in their reading and writing. This was evident when Year 2 pupils read to the inspector and used these skills to read unfamiliar words.
- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, planning for activities the children undertake by themselves is less effective. Staff are not always clear about how to extend children's knowledge and understanding in these sessions and this slows overall progress.
- Teaching assistants provide valuable support, particularly for small groups of pupils, through good relationships and effective guidance. These groups include pupils who are disabled, those with special educational needs, those known to be eligible for the pupil premium and those at an early stage of learning English.
- Teachers make sound use of homework to support their work in the classroom.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They know the school rules and are keen to obey them because they know they are fair and keep them safe.
- Good relationships and a strong caring community ensure pupils are respectful, kind and well mannered.
- There is very good support for pupils with identified behavioural difficulties. The learning mentor and school counsellors work hard to improve their confidence, self-esteem and social skills. Consequently they rarely disrupt lessons.
- The very small number of disabled pupils receive excellent support, including the advice of external specialists. This helps them to be fully integrated and enables them to develop a good level of independence.
- In most lessons, pupils have good attitudes to their work, are keen to learn and highly motivated to complete their work. This, coupled with the school's strong emphasis on fostering good relationships, has a positive effect on their achievement.
- Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities such as being school councillors. They are pleased that they helped to design the infant library and bought outdoor play equipment so playtimes are more enjoyable.
- Pupils say that they get on well together and have few concerns about bullying because it rarely happens. They are confident that should any incidents occur they would be sorted out quickly by staff.
- School mealtimes are friendly, well-organised occasions. School lunches are healthy and pupils

have a good understanding of what constitutes healthy eating.

- Attendance is above average, reflecting pupils' enjoyment of the wide range of additional activities that are on offer.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through strong relationships and a very caring school community. Pupils work well together, respect the views of others and are caring and supportive of each other.
- Behaviour is not outstanding because sometimes, when lessons do not engage them, pupils fidget and lose interest. The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- The school provides a safe environment for its pupils. Pupils learn about how to stay safe through, for example, road and fire safety training and safe use of the internet. Policies and procedures for behaviour and safeguarding are fully in place.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school and are confident of adult help if they have any worries. They also get good support from playground buddies if they need it.
- The vast majority of parents and carers who responded to the online Parent View survey agree that behaviour is good and the school keeps their children safe. Inspection evidence confirms this view.

The leadership and management

require improvement

- There have been many staff changes since the previous inspection and these have sometimes disrupted pupils' learning. Senior staff have worked well to manage this and, in spite of continuing disruption and a new leadership structure, they have put systems in place to bring about improvement. For example, they have improved writing and the teaching of phonics, enhanced provision for reading and set up a more thorough termly tracking system that monitors the progress of all groups of pupils to speed up progress. This demonstrates the school's capacity for further improvement.
- Subject and team leaders, some of whom are new, work hard to bring about improvement in their areas of responsibility. However, they are not yet involved enough in monitoring what goes on in classrooms to ensure consistency of practice or in checking progress data to ensure good progress. This limits their ability to drive improvements in their areas or year groups.
- The school has an appropriate process for setting staff targets which means that staff have individual and whole-school priorities linked to improving their performance. However, their targets, linked to whole-school improvement, are not always specific enough to enable both staff and leaders to accurately measure these improvements.
- The school improvement plan is detailed and comprehensive, but not focused enough in terms of key areas for improvement. Additionally, measures of success are not specific enough to enable the school to clearly assess their impact.
- The checking of teaching and learning by senior leaders includes regular lesson observations, drop-ins and checks on pupils' work. This ensures that any weaknesses in teaching are followed up but it is not yet helping enough to ensure consistency of practice.
- The school has used the extra sports funding to employ sports coaches to provide tennis, cricket and gymnastics coaching and professional development for all staff. This is already having a positive impact on pupils' skills and staff expertise. It will ensure increased performance levels, better physical well-being and sustained impact in these areas over time. After-school sporting activities are a strength of the school with about 75 % of the pupils participating in them.
- The curriculum is taught appropriately through topics and enriched through special days, events and visitors such as theatre groups and Second World War veterans.
- The local authority provides light touch support for the school but this has not helped the school with the impact of disruption.
- The school works well with parents and carers. This starts in Reception with very good induction for children and parents and carers so that there is good communication from the outset. The school provides many opportunities for parents and carers to see their children's work through,

for example, year group assemblies such as Year 4's assembly on their Africa topic.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors fulfil their statutory duties well and provide good support and challenge to the school. They learn about how effective teaching and learning are because the headteacher keeps them informed and they visit classes to check for themselves. They ensure that all safeguarding policies and procedures are in place so that pupils and staff are kept safe. They keep a very close watch on the school's finances, which they carefully check. They also check the pupil premium and sports funding, how they are spent and their impact. They are clear about how well pupils in the school are doing and took decisive action to support and challenge the school when achievement declined. They quickly set up a governors' committee with a specific brief to check pupils' progress to ensure it improves. Governors undertake appropriate training so that they develop their knowledge and skills and are well informed of local and national initiatives. They are involved in setting targets for the management of the headteacher's performance and are aware of the process and new requirements that are in place for staff.

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	126028
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	443984

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	388
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Drew
Headteacher	Nick Phillips
Date of previous school inspection	29–30 June 2010
Telephone number	01273 492447
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