

Holy Trinity Church of England Primary

Middleton Road, Oswestry, SY11 2LF

Inspection dates 24–25 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	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

- Pupils are starting to make better progress across the school but it is too early yet to see the impact of this on attainment.
- Due to inaccurate assessments, teachers have not been able to identify reliably if all pupils, including those supported by the pupil premium, are underachieving, in order to help them make better progress.
- Although recent improvements in mathematics teaching are helping pupils to make better progress across the school, they do not yet have enough opportunity to use their skills to solve word problems.
- Pupils are not being taught grammar, punctuation and spelling well enough in Key Stage 2 to improve their writing.
- Pupils in Key Stage 2 struggle to use strategies to help them to read when faced with words they do not know. They do not read often, or widely enough, from a range of texts.
- Teachers sometimes give pupils work to do that is either too hard or too easy for them, and so pupils sometimes become bored.
- Arrangements for leading the Early Years Foundation Stage, and special educational needs are interim. Leadership of these areas is not yet good.
- Teaching assistants need further training as they sometimes give pupils too much guidance so they are not able to learn from their mistakes.

The school has the following strengths

- Senior leaders, and governors, are resolute in the way in which they tackle weaknesses in teaching through frequent monitoring of lessons and checks on pupils' work.
- Attendance is improving as pupils enjoy school.
- Behaviour is improving as a result of teaching which interests students.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons and made some other short observations. Two of the 15 lessons were observed jointly with school leaders.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, subject leaders for English and mathematics, leaders of safeguarding and a small group of teachers. There was a meeting with a representative from the local authority and with four members of the interim executive board.
- Inspectors talked formally with two groups of pupils, one from each of Key Stages 1 and 2, to find out their views on the school. They also talked informally with pupils in lessons and at breaks and lunchtime. An inspector also met with two more-able students to talk about their work.
- There were too few responses on Parent View, the online questionnaire, for inspectors to take these into consideration. However, a small number of parents spoke with an inspector during the sports day for Reception pupils.
- Inspectors looked at a range of evidence relating to pupils' attainment, progress, behaviour and attendance, and records relating to safeguarding of pupils, and took into account staff responses to Ofsted's questionnaire.

Inspection team

Denah Jones, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Christine Malone

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

Information about this school

- Since being judged to require special measures in February 2013, the school has had three monitoring inspections. From January 2014, the school has been led by a new headteacher.
- The school is larger than average for a primary school.
- Most of the pupils are White British with the remainder coming from a range of different backgrounds. There are a small number of pupils in each class who speak English as an additional language.
- Over a third of the pupils are supported by pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The number of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported at school action, school action plus or with a statement is much higher than the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- Since the school's last full inspection, a number of staff have left the school and new staff have been appointed.
- The school has plans to become part of a multi-academy trust in the very near future.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and raise achievement by ensuring that:
 - the teaching of phonics, especially in Key Stage 2, spelling, grammar and punctuation is consistently good
 - pupils have more opportunities to use their mathematical skills to solve word problems and to investigate, or find things out for themselves, in mathematics
 - teachers check pupils' learning regularly and accurately, and use the results to plan activities which engage all pupils, fill gaps in learning and make pupils think really hard about their work, particularly for pupils supported by pupil premium
 - teaching assistants provide enough challenge as well as help for the pupils they support.
- Further improve leadership and management by making sure that:
 - leaders at all levels, including governors, have the skills to check on the work of the school regularly and quickly challenge weaknesses when these are seen
 - information from these checks is used to inform development plans which are regularly reviewed and updated.
- Make sure that all pupils, including those at Key Stage 2, are encouraged to read a wider range of books and to read regularly to adults.

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

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Achievement is not yet good because there has been a legacy of underachievement at Key Stage 2 based on inaccurate assessments at Key Stage 1 and, although there has recently been a sharp improvement in progress in some classes, it is still too early to see the impact of this on attainment.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage come to school at a lower level of development than is typical for their age. They make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes and catch up to levels appropriate for their age by the time they start Key Stage 1. The proportion of children who attained a good level of development in 2013 was much higher than the national average.
- Teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2013 presented a mixed picture. Fewer pupils than seen nationally reached a secure Level 2 in reading and writing, particularly in mathematics. Fewer pupils than seen nationally reached the expected standard in a check on their knowledge of the sounds that letters make (phonics).
- In the 2013 Key Stage 2 tests, attainment rose and came close to the national average. Attainment in reading and writing was just below that seen nationally, but attainment in mathematics and grammar, punctuation and spelling was well below average. In relation to their earlier attainment at the end of Key Stage 1, many pupils underachieved. In reading and in mathematics, far fewer pupils than was seen nationally made good progress and fewer than nationally made the progress that was expected of them. In writing, although pupils made the progress expected from their Key Stage 1 starting points, not enough made good progress.
- Assessment information suggested that achievement was stronger in Key Stage 1 than in Key Stage 2. Following the second monitoring inspection, school leaders carried out checks on the accuracy of assessments made at both key stages and identified some inaccuracies. This means that judgements made on the progress pupils have made across the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 in the past have been based on inaccurate information. However, assessments are now accurate and this has allowed school leaders to measure progress and attainment more accurately from January 2014.
- Attainment of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and supported by pupil premium funding was about two terms behind that of their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics in the 2013 Key Stage 2 tests. The gap between these two groups of pupils widened, compared with previous years. Information provided on pupils eligible for this support show that, in some cases, these pupils are now making better progress than their classmates who are not eligible for this funding, for example in reading in Year 2.
- Information provided by the school for each year group indicates that progress since January has accelerated rapidly and most pupils are progressing at a rate similar to that seen nationally.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to their classmates. These pupils are very well supported by teaching assistants who work with families and external agencies to provide a good level of care which includes support for learning.
- The school's assessments show that pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are on track to achieve results broadly similar to 2013, but with an improving picture of attainment for subsequent years as a result of them now making faster progress.

- Initiatives to improve reading are making a difference, as seen in the improvements pupils make to their scores in reading tests. However, pupils do not yet read fluently and with confidence in a range of texts.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Considerably better teaching over this last year is having an impact on pupils making more rapid progress in both key stages. This is at an early stage, and the school is not yet seeing a significant difference to attainment.
- Good phonics teaching in Key Stage 1 results in pupils becoming confident readers and they readily use strategies they have been taught to make sense of words. This is not as strong in Key Stage 2, where pupils do not use any particular strategy to help them when in difficulty.
- Spelling, grammar, punctuation and handwriting are not yet taught well enough to allow all pupils to write well and accurately.
- Mathematics teaching is improving and teachers plan activities which build on what pupils already know. Pupils from different ability groups are given different work to do but this does not always provide a good level of challenge.
- In mathematics in Key Stage 2, word problems usually appear at the end of an activity. This means that pupils, who do not work as quickly as others, never reach these problems, and so have little opportunity to use their mathematical skills to solve problems.
- Teachers are sometimes slow to check on learning and to identify when pupils have either not understood a particular step or are ready to move on. Time is wasted when pupils repeat routine tasks or repeat work that is too similar rather than having something new or challenging to do.
- There have been a large number of changes to teaching staff which, together with a drive to improve teaching led by the new headteacher, have eradicated inadequate teaching and raised its overall quality. Teachers readily share their planning and practice with each other.
- Teaching assistants usually support pupils well with their learning. There is some variability and sometimes these adults do not challenge pupils enough. For example, sometimes they give too much guidance and pupils start to rely on this rather than try to work things out for themselves.
- Inspectors looked carefully at pupils' work in books across a range of subjects in addition to English and mathematics. Teachers mark work accurately and this is helping pupils to learn better. Teachers write comments which tell the pupils what they are doing really well and also what they need to do to make their work better. For example, this was really effective when teachers gave pupils a short challenge task to do which made them think really hard about their work, which teachers then checked to see if they had coped with the challenge.
- The school has worked with other schools, and officers from the local authority, to check on the assessments made by teachers to make sure these are accurate. Teachers are now far more confident in making accurate assessments which can then be used reliably to check on the progress pupils make.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage outdoor area has been improved and pupils in the Nursery

and Reception classes were seen to be enjoying a wide range of activities. Children practise using new skills and keenly explore and investigate outside.

The behaviour and safety of pupils requires improvement

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Where teachers plan activities which provide the right level of challenge for pupils, they are interested, enthusiastic and show they want to learn. If this match is not right, they quickly lose interest and do not try their best.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning have improved significantly over this last year. This has been the result of work by school leaders to change the focus from drawing attention to undesirable behaviour, to rewarding and encouraging the behaviours they want to see.
- There are a very small number of pupils who exhibit quite challenging behaviours, some due to medical needs or mental health issues. These pupils are well supported by teaching assistants and some of them work entirely within the school's inclusion unit. There are now support plans in place for each pupil to move them back in to their usual class rather than continue in the unit. Pupils are taught how to better manage their behaviour.
- A small number of pupils are excluded and many are repeat offenders. The number of exclusions has reduced compared with figures from previous years, as school leaders are working with external agencies and with families to provide more appropriate solutions for these pupils.
- School leaders have high expectations of standards of behaviour. Pupils who spoke with inspectors during the inspection told them behaviour was improving and pupils know what is expected of them and the 'consequences' if they misbehave. Parents and staff agree with this view.
- The school council provides opportunities for pupils to take on positions of responsibility and to talk about their ideas to improve the school. Some representatives from this group have drawn up a code of conduct about the behaviour pupils want to encourage and what they want to stop.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement. Generally pupils say they feel safe and trust other adults to deal with any concerns straight away. However, they told inspectors there are a few pupils who do name-calling as a joke. Pupils know this is wrong as they have been taught about this in personal, social and health education.
- Pupils have a wide range of good quality climbing frames and sports equipment to play with at breaks and lunchtimes. This has been a contributing factor to improving behaviour at social times as pupils have something to do. However, they do not like the storage 'shed' where the equipment is kept and told inspectors it makes them feel unsafe. Governors told inspectors that urgent action will be taken to resolve this.
- Attendance, which has been stubbornly low in the past, has now improved to broadly average figures. Better teaching means that some pupils do not want to miss out on school and pupils told inspectors they enjoy school.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management are not yet good because not all leaders have the skills they need to fulfil their roles in contributing to improving the school. There are interim arrangements for

the leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage and special educational needs. This work has had to be 'covered' by others in the school in addition to their own responsibilities.

- Since the new headteacher was appointed six months ago, she has built on the work already done by the previous acting headteacher, and the associate headteacher, to ensure the school is well on the way to becoming a good or better school. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have been resolute in the way in which they have tackled the areas for improvement from the last inspection, although it is too soon to see any impact of this work on attainment.
- There have been many changes in staffing, but from September 2014 all vacancies will be filled and the school is looking forward to a period of stability. New and inexperienced leaders will require support as they implement development plans and monitor the impact on school improvement.
- In a relatively short period of time, the headteacher has gained a detailed understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school through checks on the quality of teaching which take place every six weeks and frequent checks on pupils' work in books and the quality of marking.
- Weaknesses in the accuracy of teachers' assessments were quickly addressed through external partners, including local authority officers, checking on the accuracy of these assessments and further checks carried out within the school. This quality assurance work has increased school leaders' confidence in the accuracy of all assessments made since the last monitoring inspection in January this year.
- Judgements made on the quality of teaching over time are accurate and pupil progress information are used to inform these judgements.
- Where weaknesses have been identified, teachers are very well supported as they work to improve their skills and understand their responsibility to make sure pupils make better progress. Teachers attend relevant training courses but also have opportunities to work with teachers from other primary schools and with officers from the local authority. Where good practice exists in the school, teachers are keen to share this with others to help colleagues to develop their skills.
- Progress monitoring is rigorous as school leaders have recently introduced a new system for checking on the progress being made by pupils and to identify those at risk of underachievement. Teachers need further training in the use of this, so that they can identify any gaps in the progress being made by certain groups of pupils such as those supported by the pupil premium.
- School leaders and teachers have worked hard to engage with parents and the local community and this is starting to have an impact in improving attendance figures. The school has other plans to support those in the community who speak English as an additional language through introducing English conversation groups.
- Views of staff are highly supportive of the work of school leaders and recognise the positive direction in which the school is now moving. They feel their strengths are being recognised and they are being supported in developing their skills in teaching and leadership.
- Pupils are provided with a range of opportunities to develop their spiritual, social, moral and cultural education, but school leaders are keen to develop this further so that pupils continue to develop tolerance and respect for themselves and others. An inspector observed an assembly in which pupils were very well behaved and listened intently as a group of pupils talked about their fund-raising work for the Red Cross. They proudly showed others their work in using

mathematics to display information to show how much they had collected.

- Sports funding has been used to employ specialist coaches in gymnastics and football and also to fund swimming qualifications for staff who will then be able to teach pupils how to swim.
- The local authority has provided good support and challenge for the school. Regular visits have been carried out and effective support has been provided for leaders of English and mathematics and also in working with other staff experiencing difficulties with leadership.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governance of the school has shown a marked improvement as a result of the formation of an interim executive board (IEB) which occurred at the time of the last monitoring inspection. Meetings focus sharply on the school's action plan and members of the IEB monitoring group check every six weeks on the progress being made with the key actions.
- Members of the IEB manage the performance of teachers well. Information presented to governors in making decisions about teachers' performance includes progress information for pupils in their class. The headteacher has recently carried out a mid-year review of all teachers and this information has been shared with governors.
- IEB members recognise the need to improve the way in which the performance of teaching assistants is managed to provide them with opportunities to develop their professional practice related to performance targets.
- Information on pupil premium spending has not yet been presented to members of the IEB in a way in which they can monitor the impact on progress and attainment for eligible pupils. The new systems for monitoring progress will enable this to take place.
- Safeguarding procedures meet current national requirements and all staff have regular child protection updates and training.

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	135786
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	441855

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	317
Appropriate authority	Interim executive board
Chair	Graham Casson
Headteacher	Pam Edwards
Date of previous school inspection	26 February 2013
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