

Bishops Lydeard Church of England (VC) Primary School

Mount Street, Bishops Lydeard, Taunton, TA4 3AN

Inspection dates

19–20 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Require improvement	3
Leadership and management		Require improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that has serious weaknesses.

- Pupils' achievement is inadequate because too many pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable, especially in writing.
- Pupils at the early stages of learning to read and write are not developing their skills systematically enough to become fluent readers and writers.
- Teachers' judgements about how well pupils are doing are based on too narrow a range of work and are too generous. Consequently, they do not plan work with the right level of difficulty.
- Many teachers do not stretch the most able pupils, and there are gaps in the achievement of different groups of pupils.
- Behaviour is not good because too often in lessons when pupils are not interested enough, they lose concentration and waste too much time.
- Until recently, governors' and senior leaders' judgements on how well the school is performing have not been accurate. They have not identified the right priorities to secure improvement. This means that their plans to move the school forward have had limited impact.
- Teachers' targets for improving their performance are not linked precisely enough to the achievement of the groups of pupils in their classes.
- The school has not been effective enough in communicating to parents how well their children are doing and involving them in their learning.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher and other senior leaders have taken some successful steps to improve pupils' achievement, the quality of teaching and behaviour. This shows the school is capable of improving further.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are well supported and are making good progress. This area of the school's work is well led.
- Pupils say they feel very safe. They are well cared for and enjoy all the school has to offer.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a wide range of teaching across the school in a variety of subjects, including several joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. In addition, inspectors made a number of short visits to classrooms, the dining hall, the breakfast club and the playground. They also observed an assembly.
- Meetings were held with pupils, governors and the school's leaders. Also, the lead inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority and the local leader of education.
- Inspectors took account of the 50 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and written correspondence, as well as consulting informally with parents before the start of the school day. They took account of the 29 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including the school's improvement plans. They examined a range of documents, including information on pupils' current progress, minutes of the governing body meetings and the plans for use of the school sport fund.
- The inspectors heard pupils read, talked to them in lessons and evaluated samples of their work.

Inspection team

Sandra Woodman, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Wendy Marriott

Additional inspector

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

Information about this school

- This school is an average-sized primary school. Pupils are organised in seven classes with single-age groups. The very large majority come from a White British background.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is below average. This is the additional government funding provided to give extra support to those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and to children who are looked after. Currently, there are no children who are looked after in the school.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported at school action is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported at school action plus or with a statement of educational needs is also below average.
- The school has received support from a local leader of education to help with improvement planning.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The new headteacher took up her post in February 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is at least good by ensuring that teachers:
 - have high expectations of what all groups of pupils, especially the most able, can achieve and communicate these more precisely to pupils
 - provide work which consistently interests and motivates pupils so that they maintain their concentration in lessons
 - judge pupils' work more accurately based on a wider range of evidence, and use this information to plan work with the right level of challenge for all groups of pupils.
- Improve pupils' achievement, especially in writing, by ensuring that pupils:
 - have enough opportunity to write at length to practise and extend their skills
 - are able to use punctuation correctly and are accurate and proficient in their use of spelling
 - develop their early reading skills systematically and thoroughly so that they quickly become fluent and confident readers.
- Increase the impact of all leaders, including governors, on raising standards by:
 - routinely evaluating the effectiveness of teaching in terms of its impact on the achievement of pupils of different abilities
 - linking teachers' targets for improvement more precisely to the achievement of groups of pupils in their classes
 - providing parents with timely information about how well their children are doing in a way that is easy for them to understand.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

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 may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- From broadly average starting points when they join the school, pupils' attainment has declined since the previous inspection and is now below average. Current progress rates mean that attainment is not improving quickly enough in either Key Stage 1 or Key Stage 2.
- There is too much variation in the progress made by different groups of pupils. Those pupils supported by additional funding have made less progress over time than their classmates, particularly in writing.
- The Year 6 pupils in 2013 who benefitted from additional funding made less progress in all subjects than other pupils in the school. Their attainment in national tests represented almost three terms less progress than their classmates in reading, and five terms in writing and in mathematics. Pupils currently in the school supported by additional funding are making better progress this year because of the more specific help they are given. However, the gaps in attainment when compared with other pupils are still not closing quickly enough.
- The progress of the most able pupils is not fast enough, particularly in writing, as the work does not challenge them fully.
- In Key Stage 1, pupils are not acquiring the skills to become fluent and confident readers and accurate spellers; this limits their progress in reading and writing. Consequently, pupils performed below the national average in the Year 1 phonics (the sounds letters make) screening check in 2013.
- In Key Stage 2, pupils are not able to use a wide range of punctuation accurately in their writing and standards of spelling are weak.
- Most children start school in the Reception class with skills that are typical for their age. However, not enough children reach the expected levels for their age, especially in reading and writing, by the end of the year. This means that they do not typically start Year 1 as confident and competent learners.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are making good progress across the school. This is because of the well-planned support they receive.
- In mathematics, pupils are developing their skills in calculation more effectively than previously as a result of the rigorous policy that has been introduced. They have more opportunities to apply their skills to solve problems. There are early signs that rates of progress are accelerating in this subject.
- Greater numbers of pupils take part in a wider range of sports and competitions than was previously the case, supported by the new school sports funding. They have improved their skills and performances in activities such as orienteering and 'Zumba' dance.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- Over time, the quality of teaching has not been good enough to secure the rapid progress necessary to raise pupils' attainment. Consequently, pupils are underachieving and not reaching the standards of which they are capable, particularly in writing.
- Frequently, teachers across the school do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. Often the work is too easy for the most able pupils and too hard for others. When this occurs, pupils lose interest easily, become distracted and their learning is held back.
- Teachers do not use a wide enough range of work when making their judgements about how well pupils are doing. This means that their judgements are over-generous and so they do not plan activities that have the right level of difficulty for pupils.
- Throughout the school, teachers do not give pupils sufficient opportunities to write at length in order to practise and extend their skills to become effective writers. They do not teach the

necessary knowledge and skills relating to spelling and punctuation effectively; as a result, pupils make too many basic errors in their work.

- Teachers do not teach the early skills of reading systematically or thoroughly enough to enable pupils to become fluent, accurate and confident readers. As a result, pupils have not gained the essential skills which they need to understand what they are reading.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the adults promote children's speaking and listening skills and personal development well. However, they do not teach the skills of reading and writing rigorously enough to ensure that children reach the levels expected for their age by the time they begin Key Stage 1.
- Pupils supported by additional funding have not in the past received the specific extra help to raise their attainment. However, their progress is improving as a result of recently implemented changes. Teaching assistants have received comprehensive and well-planned training and now provide clearly targeted support for these pupils.
- Teachers' marking is generally helpful and pupils act on the guidance given to make improvements to their work. These comments are most effective in mathematics. In this subject, better guidance from leaders is enabling teachers to use their marking to challenge pupils' thinking, as well as making simple corrections to their work.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs benefit from well-planned activities. The leader responsible for this area has ensured that teaching assistants have been well trained. As a result, they are able to challenge pupils' thinking effectively while making the learning enjoyable.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Although pupils are polite, friendly and considerate of others, too often in lessons there are lapses in concentration when pupils lose interest in their learning. On such occasions, too much time is wasted. This slows pupils' learning.
- A small minority of parents who completed the online questionnaire expressed concern about behaviour. Pupils spoken to by inspectors conceded that they are 'chatty' in class and that when teachers insist on pupils staying focused, they achieve more.
- Pupils enjoy taking on extra roles and responsibilities such as 'play leaders' and school councillors. Their behaviour in and around the school has improved with the stimulating new range of equipment that has been purchased recently for the playground.
- Pupils are clear that bullying, in whatever form it takes, such as racist name-calling or cyber-bullying, is rare. They are confident that any problems are sorted out quickly and effectively by the adults. 'Everybody is friends with each other and nobody is left on their own' was one such comment from a pupil, and others agree.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel very safe in school and most parents who completed the online questionnaire or who spoke to the inspectors confirm this view.
- The school takes good care of pupils with emotional difficulties. Parents say that the school staff are willing to go 'that extra mile' to ensure all pupils are settled and happy in school.
- The school's records show that effective action is taken to tackle any discrimination and is starting to address issues of inequality. Leaders ensure that pupils learn about pertinent issues, such as racial differences, and so incidents of harassment are very few.
- School leaders have worked effectively with parents to encourage regular attendance and reduce any unnecessary absences. As a consequence, current attendance rates are above average and punctuality is good.

The leadership and management

require improvement

- Over time, leaders, including governors, have not been vigilant enough in ensuring that all groups of pupils have achieved well. They have not tracked progress accurately enough to reverse the downward trend in attainment in Key Stage 2, or identify the weaknesses in the teaching of reading and writing across the school. However, leadership requires improvement because recent improvements made since the arrival of the new headteacher are only just beginning to show impact on pupils' progress and the quality of teaching.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been considerable changes in the leadership and staffing. This turbulence is now resolved but it has prevented improvements to the quality of teaching being made securely or quickly enough.
- Until recently, checks on the impact of teaching did not focus clearly enough on how well groups of pupils of different abilities were achieving. The new headteacher has introduced far more rigorous checks. The impact of this work is beginning to become evident in the way the teachers are planning for greater challenge in pupils' work, especially in mathematics.
- The local authority has provided 'light-touch' support for the school, through a local leader for education. Although helpful, this has not been extensive enough to help the school make rapid improvements to the quality of teaching and or raise pupils' achievement significantly.
- In the past, teachers' targets for improving their performance have not focused precisely enough on the achievement of all pupils in order to speed up progress rates. Higher expectations of staff are in place now, which are helping to improve teachers' practice.
- Some parents expressed concerns, when speaking to inspectors and in the online questionnaire, about the way the school tells them how well their children are achieving. They say they do not find the information easy to understand or feel sufficiently involved in their children's learning.
- The new headteacher has the overwhelming support of staff and governors. She has set a fast pace for improvement and has already introduced changes to the outdoor environment that have had a positive impact on pupils' behaviour. She has revised the school's support for those pupils with additional funding so that they are beginning to make better progress.
- Those leaders who are responsible for subjects (middle leaders) are better trained and clearer about their roles than previously. They check on the improvements they have implemented, for example, in teachers' marking, and support colleagues better in improving their practice.
- The well-organised support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs has speeded up their progress, demonstrating the school's commitment to equality. Stronger leadership in how the additional funding is used is also beginning to improve the progress of those pupils who are supported by it.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills are promoted well by a range of subjects and enrichment activities that extend pupils' experiences.
- The new sports funding is being used effectively to increase levels of pupils' participation in a range of sports and competitions. These activities are improving the physical well-being and health of all pupils as well as providing opportunities for staff to extend their skills.
- All statutory requirements for safeguarding are met.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Until recently governors were not provided with an accurate picture of pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching. This has limited their effectiveness over time. They have accessed good-quality training from the local authority in using pupils' performance data and are using this knowledge to help them check the school's work for themselves. They are now beginning to provide strong challenge to the school's leaders about pupils' progress. They know how teachers' performance is being managed, how this is linked to their pay progression and how any underperformance is being tackled. Governors are aware that some parents are concerned about shortcomings in the information they receive about their children's progress and their involvement in their learning. They are taking steps to improve this.
 - Governors manage the budget carefully. They know how the additional funds are allocated to support eligible pupils and sports development. They are not clear about the impact these funds are having on pupils' achievement and physical health.

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	123791
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	442501

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	218
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Charles Cooke
Headteacher	Mary Clothier
Date of previous school inspection	7–8 November 2012
Telephone number	01823 432582
Fax number	01823 433605
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