

Worthen CofE Primary School

Worthen, Shrewsbury, SY5 9HT

Inspection dates 19–20 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- The proportion of pupils making better than expected progress over time in writing is not high enough.
- Teachers do not always ensure that pupils apply the skills they have learnt in spelling, punctuation and grammar in all pieces of writing.
- The most-able pupils do not attain sufficiently high standards in all subjects as not all teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- Teachers do not always set work that is sufficiently challenging or accurately matched to pupils' abilities, particularly in Years 3 and 4.
- Teachers' marking in mathematics does not provide enough guidance to pupils on how they can improve their work.
- Governors do not have a clear enough view of the school's strengths and weaknesses to provide sufficient levels of challenge and support to school leaders.
- School leaders do not always use the outcomes of monitoring and evaluation to set clear targets for improving teaching and raising pupils' achievement.
- The systems for assessing pupils' progress in writing are not consistent across the school and not enough opportunities are created to compare assessments with teachers both within the school and with teachers in other schools.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has ensured that a well-planned and relevant curriculum makes learning exciting for all pupils. The curriculum makes a strong contribution to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils have an outstanding understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe. Their behaviour is good.
- Children progress well in Reception because of good teaching and provision that is accurately matched to their ages and capabilities.
- Pupils make good progress in reading and they attain well above-average standards in reading by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 10 lessons or parts of lessons, two of them jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector looked at work in pupils' books and listened to some pupils in Year 1 read. He met with a group of pupils to gain their views of the school. The inspector observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime, lunchtime and at the end of the school day. He attended an assembly.
- The inspector looked at a range of documentation, including assessments and records of pupils' progress; the school's checks and records relating to safeguarding, child protection and attendance; records of how teaching is managed; and the school improvement plans showing how well the school is doing.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other staff, four governors and a representative of the local education authority.
- There were not enough responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, for the responses to be considered. The inspector talked to parents at the end of the school day and considered letters from parent. He also looked at the responses from the eight staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Adam Hewett, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is very much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage attend full-time.
- Pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes. Pupils from Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are taught in one class. Pupils from Year 3, Year 4 and a very small number of Year 2 pupils in another; and pupils from Years 5 and 6 are taught in the third class. The headteacher teaches in the Year 5 and 6 class for three days each week.
- Almost all pupils are of White British background. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium is below the national average. This is additional government funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority. The pupil premium provides support for one in seven of the pupils in school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is one in five pupils, which is above the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- A before and after-school club, run by the school, operates every day.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and raise achievement, particularly in writing and mathematics, by ensuring that:
 - all teachers' expectations of what pupils can and should achieve are sufficiently high, especially in Years 3 and 4
 - marking in mathematics provides pupils with clear guidance on how they can improve their work
 - skills in spelling, punctuation and grammar are accurately taught and are applied in all pieces of writing
 - sufficiently challenging pieces of work are set for more-able pupils, particularly in Key Stage 1 and Years 3 and 4.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - ensuring monitoring and evaluation undertaken by leaders within school is used to set clear targets for improvements in teaching and are accurately linked to the national *Teachers' Standards*
 - establishing a more consistent system of practice in assessing pupils' writing and providing opportunities for teachers to compare and confirm their assessments with staff from this and other schools
 - improving governors' understanding of the effectiveness of the school so that they can provide appropriate challenge and support.

An external review of governance is recommended in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- School leaders, including governors, do not make sure that the outcomes from the various forms of monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and of pupils' progress are used effectively to set clear targets for improvement. Expectations of what aspects of teaching need to be improved and how this can be achieved are not always conveyed clearly to teachers.
- The headteacher, together with other leaders, makes sure that assessments of pupils' work are regularly carried out. However, there has not been enough emphasis on ensuring that teachers have an agreed approach to assessing the progress that pupils are making in writing. School leaders have not created sufficient opportunities for teachers to compare their assessments with other teachers, either in the school or with those of teachers from other schools.
- The headteacher checks regularly on the effectiveness of teaching and there are clear links between pay progression and pupils' achievement. However, the targets that are set for staff are not always accurately matched to the specific standards expected of teachers or identify how their teaching can be improved.
- All teachers within this small school have leadership responsibility. They have brought about improvements within their subject areas, including providing more opportunities for problem solving in mathematics and adapting provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs so that it accurately meets the particular learning needs of individual pupils. Staff share the headteacher's ambition for all pupils to achieve well. They are proud of their school and are keen to improve their own practice. These factors, together with leaders' success in increasing the progress that pupils' make by the end of Key Stage 2, demonstrate the school's capacity for further improvement.
- The headteacher's promotion of a caring, community atmosphere encourages pupils' good behaviour and respect toward other people. The school is highly effective in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils understand and appreciate the school's core values of respect and tolerance for other people and they learn about different beliefs and faiths, both within Britain and across the world. They have a deep understanding of the importance of celebrating and protecting the natural environment. They are well prepared for life as citizens of modern Britain.
- The headteacher, together with the other teachers, has been very effective in developing a strong curriculum that is in line with new national requirements. The plans for each of the topics include details of the skills that pupils need to develop as they progress through the school. Extremely good use is made of the school grounds as a base for learning, and all pupils look forward to and benefit from their weekly Forest School sessions.
- Leaders appreciate the importance of equality of opportunity and they check that gaps in the achievement of different groups of pupils are identified and tackled. The pupil premium funding has been used very effectively to provide additional help for disadvantaged pupils.
- The school has used the additional sports funding to widen the range of activities it provides, including archery and indoor rowing. It has employed a specialist sports coach for one day a week who works alongside staff to develop their skills. The school has ensured that all pupils have regular swimming lessons.
- The school works closely with parents, and all parents who spoke to the inspector were very positive about the work that the school does with their children and its important role within the local community.
- The local authority has provided appropriate support to the school. It has identified where teaching could be improved in mathematics and has worked alongside teachers to improve their teaching in this subject.
- The school has effective arrangements for safeguarding that fully meet current requirements.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governors are very supportive of the school and recognise the areas where it is successful. However, they do not provide sufficiently high levels of challenge. They do not use the full range of information that is available to them to compare how well the school is doing with other schools nationally or to understand what impact teaching is having on pupils' achievement.
- Governors make sure that the school's finances are used effectively. They understand how the primary sports funding and pupil premium allocation are spent and they measure the impact of this spending on pupils' progress. They make sure that the school meets its statutory duties, including those related to safeguarding. They also make sure that pupils' achievement is taken into account when making decisions about teachers' pay.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are extremely positive about their learning and this has a good impact on their progress. They settle quickly to work, respond sensibly to instructions and enjoy contributing to lessons. They told the inspector that lessons are not disrupted by poor behaviour.
- Pupils are polite, caring and demonstrate respect for each other and for adults. Older pupils show consideration and responsibility for the younger children in school. They have a strong sense of what is right and wrong, and this is reflected in the very low levels of inappropriate behaviour.
- Pupils are proud of their school and appreciate the responsibilities they have for caring for and developing the school environment. They are all involved in growing vegetables and other produce in the Forest School area and in looking after the school chickens.
- Parents have a very positive view of the school and appreciate the value that is placed on supporting their children's social well-being and involving families in their education. As one parent commented, 'Worthen Primary really cares about its pupils and the wider community.'

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils have a deep understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe in a wide range of situations, including e-safety, road safety and water safety. They also have a particularly strong understanding of the impact that homophobic or racist language could have and ensure that it does not occur.
- Incidents of bullying are extremely rare but when they do occur pupils say that they are dealt with quickly and firmly by teachers and other adults. Pupils have a good understanding of the different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying.
- Attendance has usually been above average. It is well above average in the current school year. This is due to the enjoyment that pupils get from being in school and the robust systems that are in place to help pupils and parents understand the importance of regular attendance. The well-run before- and after-school club provides a safe and caring environment for the small number of pupils who attend.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Staff do not consistently set high enough expectations for pupils of what they should achieve and, as result, pupils' progress is not always as rapid as it could be, particularly in Years 3 and 4.
- The tasks that are set for the most-able pupils are not matched accurately to their abilities and are not sufficiently challenging for them. As a result, they do not always achieve the higher standards of which they are capable.

- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly. However, in mathematics, the marking does not provide enough information to pupils of what they need to do to improve their work or to correct misconceptions in their understanding. This means that pupils sometimes continue to make the same errors or do not move rapidly enough on to the next stage of learning.
- Pupils are increasingly being taught key skills in spelling, punctuation and grammar and are provided with a good range of writing activities. However, when they write independently, errors are not being identified and there is not enough emphasis from teachers on ensuring accuracy. As a result, pupils continue to make mistakes and their progress in writing is not as strong as in other subjects.
- The teaching of reading is good. A combination of daily lessons in phonics (the sounds that letters make), together with regular opportunities to read to adults, helps pupils to make good progress across the school. Pupils develop a keen interest in reading and attain well above-average standards in reading by the time they leave the school in Year 6.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are extremely good. Pupils are confident to ask questions of their teachers when they are unsure about what to do. Pupils take pride in their work and use their individual targets in mathematics and writing to measure their own progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils, as well as those who are disabled or who have special educational needs, benefit from being taught in small groups and from one-to-one support. Teachers and teaching assistants provide good levels of support and ensure that tasks are appropriate for the particular learning needs of the individual pupils.
- Very good use is made of laptop and tablet computers to support pupils in their learning. In a Year 5 and 6 lesson, pupils used their computer skills well to write instructions for a graphics program, incorporating images and different text styles. This helped them to make carefully considered decisions about what types of presentation and phrases would be the most effective in conveying the information to the person who would be reading it.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because pupils do not make consistently good progress throughout the school.
- Attainment varies from year to year. In the national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2014, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels in reading and writing was below national averages, with mathematics broadly in line.
- Pupils' attainment in national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2013 was below average, particularly in writing and mathematics. In 2014, attainment improved sharply, particularly in mathematics and even more so in reading, where it was well above average. However, in writing, and especially in spelling, punctuation and grammar, it was still below that expected.
- The most-able pupils do not consistently achieve as well as they could, with too few pupils reaching the higher levels of attainment in mathematics and writing by the end of Year 2 and too few reaching the higher levels of attainment in writing by the end of Year 6. This is due to the degree of challenge for these pupils not always being sufficiently high in all lessons.
- In the 2013 and 2014 Year 1 phonics checks, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard was above the national average.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make progress that is at least in line with the other pupils in school. The school quickly identifies what support is required to help pupils overcome any barriers to learning and makes sure that they receive the help that is required. This shows the

school's success in promoting equality of opportunity.

- The small number of disadvantaged pupils make progress that is at least in line with their peers in school in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2013 and 2014, there were too few disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 to compare their attainment without risk of identifying the individuals.

The early years provision

is good

- Most children start in Reception with skills and knowledge that are typical for their age. They make good progress and, by the time they start in Year 1, their attainment is above average in most areas of learning. School data from 2014 shows that children's attainment was particularly strong in physical development and in developing an understanding of the world around them.
- Teaching is consistently good and is accurately matched to the ages and abilities, with different provision from the older pupils in the mixed-age class. Children are enthused by the opportunities they have to learn by investigating things for themselves as well as by the activities led by the teacher. During the inspection, children performed shadow puppet shows for each other and made written signs for the puppet theatre. This helped them to develop their writing skills and to gain an understanding of light and dark.
- Staff assess each child's skills and knowledge when they start in Reception and then use this information to ensure that all children are provided with opportunities to learn through activities that are well matched to their particular abilities. Parents are involved in the initial assessments and are provided with very good information during their child's first year in school. Staff also work with the local pre-school group to gain information about the children before they start in the Reception Year.
- The teaching of early reading is effective because staff ensure that the children develop a secure knowledge of phonics that they are then able to use to build words.
- Children's behaviour is good. They form good relationships with each other and are keen to talk about what they are doing, both with adults and with the other children. They have a very good understanding of how to keep themselves safe in a range of different situations.
- The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. The leader works closely with teachers in a number of other local schools to ensure that assessments are accurate and to learn from teaching and provision that is particularly effective. She has focused on developing more mathematical learning opportunities for the children, both in the indoor and outdoor classrooms, and this has resulted in children achieving a greater understanding of numbers, shape and space.

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	123518
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	444095

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	56
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Ryan
Headteacher	Jonathan Brough
Date of previous school inspection	8–9 March 2010
Telephone number	01743 891320
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