

Bulford St Leonard's Church of England Primary School

John French Way, Bulford, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP4 9HP

Inspection dates

12–13 November 2014

| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Requires improvement | 3 |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------|
| | 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

- Pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 do not make sufficiently rapid progress because teaching is not consistently good.
- Pupils typically make slower progress in writing and mathematics than they do in reading.
- Work set for pupils, including the most-able, is not always sufficiently challenging.
- Not all members of staff set high enough expectations for pupils' academic achievement.
- Teachers do not always use and explain subject terminology precisely enough.
- Teachers do not consistently check up on pupils' learning in lessons. They therefore do not always know when they need to adapt tasks for pupils or give further explanations to help them understand.
- Not all teaching assistants are as effective as they could be. Some would benefit from better provision for training to help them carry out their roles more effectively.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher's high aspirations and committed approach to leadership offer the school a strong sense of direction. Governors and senior leaders share her vision, and give good support. As a result, there has been some higher attainment, for example in the Early Years and in reading and mathematics by the end of Year 2
- The school has a warm, inclusive ethos. Pupils respond well to its calm, welcoming atmosphere.
- Members of staff are proud of the school. This leads to the strong team spirit.
- Early years provision is good. Children settle quickly in the Nursery and Reception classes. They feel secure, and make good progress, often from low starting points.
- Behaviour is good and pupils show positive attitudes to their learning. Pupils feel safe at school. They say there is almost no bullying.
- Governance has improved since the previous inspection. Governors now offer the school better informed support and hold the school to better account.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching across the school, including two joint observations with the headteacher. Inspectors also scrutinised samples of pupils' work in English and mathematics. They heard a sample of pupils in Years 1 and 2 read.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the school's staff, the Chair, Vice Chair and two other members of the Governing Body. A meeting was held with the school's improvement adviser representing the local authority.
- Inspectors analysed the 11 responses that were recorded on the online survey (Parent View) by the end of the inspection. Inspectors also spoke with small numbers of parents accompanying their children to school.
- Inspectors took account of the 37 responses to the questionnaire for school staff.
- Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' current attainment and progress, planning documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to safeguarding, performance management, the use of extra government funding and the curriculum.

Inspection team

| | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| Chris Grove, Lead inspector | Additional Inspector |
| Lesley Stevens | Additional Inspector |
| Margaret Faull | Additional Inspector |

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a primary school that is broadly average in size.
- The school is situated in a village north of Salisbury and draws its pupils from the local area which includes an army camp.
- About three quarters of the pupils are from military families.
- Well above average numbers of pupils join or leave the school at other than the usual times. In 2013/14, almost half of the pupils joined or left the school during the year.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (which provides additional funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children in local authority care) is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is about one quarter of all pupils. This is well above average.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of a maintained Nursery and two Reception classes. The Nursery runs separate morning and afternoon sessions. Most children attend part time, but some attend both sessions. Most children who attend the Nursery transfer into the Reception year.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has appointed five new teachers within the last two years.
- The breakfast club is managed by the governing body and formed part of this inspection.
- The school is part of a local cluster of schools known as the Plains Schools Partnership. The schools have applied to become a multi-academy trust.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is good or better by:
 - checking up more frequently on how well pupils are learning during lessons
 - giving further explanations or adapting learning tasks where necessary
 - making more precise use of subject terminology.
- Improve the rate of pupils' progress and raise their attainment by:
 - setting tasks in writing and mathematics that provide appropriate levels of challenge for different groups of pupils, including the most-able.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - all members of staff set high expectations for pupils' academic achievement
 - teaching assistants have improved opportunities to develop and extend their teaching skills.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

require improvement

- The school's leadership and management require improvement because there has not been sufficient impact in improving the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement by the end of Year 6 since the previous inspection.
- Attainment in national assessments by the end of Year 6 was lower than in the previous year and well below national averages.
- Not all teachers and assistants hold high enough aspirations for pupils' academic achievement. This is evident, for example, when adults accept and praise mediocre work by pupils who are capable of doing better.
- The school has made a significant investment in appointing teaching assistants. However, they are not playing a consistently effective role in improving pupils' achievement. Responses to the staff survey indicate that some assistants would welcome better opportunities for further training. Inspectors agree with this view.
- Senior leaders do well to maintain the school's very positive and calm ethos despite the high turnover of pupils every year. This feature of the school is a challenge for the leadership, but does not on its own account for the weaknesses in pupils' achievement.
- The headteacher offers strong leadership and commitment. She communicates high aspirations for improvement. The governing body, and the recently re-structured senior leadership team, now gives her much better support.
- Some aspects of the school are improving. Achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage improved significantly in 2014. Despite the high turnover of pupils in the year group, attainment at the end of Year 2 rose and was higher in reading and mathematics than in previous years. Attendance is now average and rising.
- Those who completed the staff questionnaire unanimously expressed their pride in the school, and agreed that they know what it is trying to achieve as a school.
- All members of staff show that they fully support the headteacher's high expectations for pupils' conduct and attitudes to school, as is evident from their good behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Leaders have developed good procedures to support new arrivals to the school and to assess their needs. As a result, new arrivals quickly settle into the school.
- Senior leaders make half-termly checks on pupils' progress. Any pupils who are falling behind receive additional support which helps them to catch up.
- Senior leaders regularly conduct observations of teaching. Leaders accurately evaluate the impact of teaching on learning. The school's improvement planning focuses on appropriate priorities.
- The quality of middle leadership is not yet consistently good. Good leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage has led to better outcomes for children. The leadership of English and mathematics has been successful in improving current progress, and in raising attainment in reading and mathematics by the end of Year 2. However, the leadership has not succeeded in raising attainment in reading and mathematics at the end of Year 6, although attainment in writing has improved.
- The curriculum provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The assembly themes and religious education lessons focus on values such as tolerance of and respect for others. The school itself is a harmonious community that reflects these values well and makes sure that discrimination is tackled. The election of school council representatives gives pupils good opportunities to learn about democracy. The school organises a good range of visits, visitors and other out-of-school activities. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders spend the primary sports funding effectively. The school has employed a sports coach to model good practice in sports teaching and then to support teachers in leading lessons. Leaders are also using the funding to support sports competitions, provide additional after-school clubs and to train the school's playground sports leaders.
- Leaders spend the additional government funding effectively to ensure equality of opportunity. For instance, a part-time member of staff has been employed to help pupils who are new to the school to settle in quickly and start learning.
- The school is part of a cluster of schools known as the Plains Schools Partnership which aims to support

families in their local communities. The Partnership enables schools in the cluster to make additional provision, such as counselling and educational psychology services, particularly for children from families in the armed forces. These services are widely used and provide good support for pupils.

- Leaders prioritise all aspects of child protection and safeguarding, which fully meet requirements.
- The local authority's improvement adviser has visited the school regularly to check progress on identified issues, such as governance. She has also led termly reviews which analyse key aspects of the school's effectiveness. These activities have had a positive impact on improvement.

■ The governance of the school:

- The effectiveness of the governing body has improved since the previous inspection. It is less reliant on the headteacher and provides a greater level of challenge to the school. It has challenged school leaders about the gaps in attainment between different groups. Governors have also specified the information that they want the headteacher's report to include. As a result, they are now able to ask better informed questions about the school's performance.
- Governors have a clear understanding of the school's particular context and of the weaknesses in its performance. They know that pupils' progress improved in 2013/14, and also what is done to tackle any underperformance. With the support of the improvement adviser, governors have set targets for the headteacher and have appraised her performance in the light of those targets. They have assured themselves that the school makes effective arrangements to set targets for other staff. Through the headteacher's detailed reporting, they know whether salary progression has been merited. Governors are well informed about how the school spends its additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and the extent to which this is improving their progress. Governors also fully meet their statutory obligations, which ensures the effectiveness of the school's arrangements for safeguarding.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils say so themselves. Teachers and assistants have high expectations for pupils' behaviour.
- Pupils show very positive attitudes to learning in class. They listen attentively to their teachers and to other pupils. They are responsive in lessons; they willingly answer teachers' questions, and work well with others.
- Pupils are courteous towards adults. They move sensibly around the school and behave well in the playground at breaktimes. At lunchtimes in the hall, the atmosphere is calm and pupils behave sensibly. In whole-school assemblies they respond enthusiastically to opportunities to sing.
- Those parents who took part in the online survey all agreed that the school makes sure its pupils are well behaved. All the members of staff who responded to the questionnaire agreed that behaviour is good and is consistently well managed.
- Attendance in the 2013/14 school year was broadly average. This represents a considerable improvement on the previous year. In the current year to date, attendance has risen further. The higher rates of attendance reflect the effectiveness of action taken by school leaders.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They learn how to keep safe. They feel very well informed about the risks when using the internet, and say that the school teaches them the safe use of computers.
- Pupils understand what constitutes bullying. They say that there is almost no bullying. When difficulties occasionally occur with other pupils, pupils say they are very confident to speak to an adult in the school, because they see teachers and assistants as trustworthy and fair.
- The rate of exclusion has declined very considerably over the last year, and involves few pupils.
- Although only a small number of parents responded to the online survey, all agreed that their children are safe in the school, and are well looked after. All the members of staff who completed a questionnaire judged that pupils are safe at school.
- Those pupils who attend the breakfast club enjoy the sessions and appreciate the work of the adult supervisors. The supervisors maintain a safe environment, and offer good pastoral care and a calm start to the day. They also provide a healthy breakfast which includes a range of choices for pupils.

The quality of teaching**requires improvement**

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because in recent years it has not led to good achievement by pupils in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers do not always set tasks that extend and challenge all groups of pupils well. Sometimes, teachers give the most-able pupils work which does not stretch them enough. This is particularly the case in some mathematics lessons.
- Teachers do not regularly check up on how well pupils are learning in lessons. This means that they sometimes miss opportunities to correct misunderstandings or provide additional explanations to support pupils' learning.
- In some lessons, teachers use the technical terminology of particular subjects very effectively. For example, in a Key Stage 2 English lesson, pupils showed a good understanding of words such as 'relative clause' or 'conjunction', which they could accurately incorporate into their answers. However, this good approach is not consistently followed in all classes.
- Despite these weaknesses, pupils' better progress over the last year, most evidently in reading and writing, indicates that teaching across the school has begun to improve.
- Teachers and assistants are adept at fostering good relationships with pupils. This is the key to the school's strong pastoral care for pupils.
- The marking of pupils' books indicates what pupils need to do to improve the quality of their work. Another good feature is the school's expectation that pupils should respond to their teacher's advice.

The achievement of pupils**requires improvement**

- Pupils' achievement in Years 1 to 6 since the previous inspection has not been good enough, and requires improvement. Pupils do not make sufficiently rapid progress. Progress is generally slower in writing and mathematics than in reading.
- In 2014, pupils' overall attainment in national assessments by the end of Year 6 was well below the national average. However, a higher proportion of pupils reached the expected standard in mathematics, and especially in writing in comparison with 2013. Pupils from services backgrounds performed a little better than other pupils in the school.
- There are too few more able pupils in the school to report on their attainment in national assessments. School data show that they make progress at a similar rate to other pupils. They do not make more rapid progress because teachers do not consistently set them sufficiently challenging tasks.
- The school keeps good records on each pupil's progress. However, comparisons with the national data are difficult to make because of the very high turnover of pupils. Overall, pupils are not making enough progress to reach expected levels of attainment.
- School data, and inspection evidence about pupils' work, show that pupils are now beginning to make better progress, particularly in writing. This is the case for all groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- Attainment by the end of Year 2 was well below average in reading, writing and mathematics in 2012 and 2013. In 2014, it improved and was close to average in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils take part readily in physical activities. For instance, pupils in Year 3 enjoyed practising control of the ball in a hockey lesson led by the teacher with support from the sports coach.
- In the 2014 national assessments, the gap in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in the school widened a little in reading and mathematics in comparison with the previous year. However, in writing the gap narrowed. The gap was the equivalent of three quarters of a term in reading, and about a term in writing and mathematics.
- The comparison between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils in the school and that of other pupils nationally shows larger gaps. In the case of reading and mathematics, the gap widened. In writing, the gap narrowed slightly. The gap was the equivalent of nearly three terms in reading, and rather more in writing. In mathematics, the gap was almost five terms.
- Inspection evidence shows that disadvantaged pupils are currently making broadly similar progress in all subjects to that of other pupils. Progress for all pupils requires improvement.
- The school's leadership is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and to tackling discrimination. It spends the additional government funding in ways that meet these aims. For instance, the leadership has employed a part-time member of staff whose role is to help pupils who are new to the school to

settle in quickly and start learning.

- The school also provides a range of additional, targeted support, particularly for Year 6 pupils. This is aimed at helping them reach the expected levels of attainment in writing and mathematics. In 2014, this had a positive impact on raising disadvantaged pupils' attainment in writing, but not in mathematics. Leaders also use the funding, where necessary, to subsidise pupils, for instance to attend the breakfast club or to enhance self-esteem through participation in musical and sporting activities.

The early years provision

is good

- The school's provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage improved markedly in 2014. As a result, children have made better progress to reach levels of development that are much closer to the national average than in past years.
- Children's knowledge and skills are typically well below those that are expected for their age when they first come to school, especially in their understanding of early reading and writing skills.
- By the end of the Reception Year in 2013/14, most children made good progress and reached the expected levels of development. This indicates that they are well prepared for entry to Year 1. In reading, writing and mathematics, the proportions of pupils who reached the expected levels increased sharply.
- Children's improved achievement reflects the good quality of teaching and leadership in this area.
- In the Nursery, the children get off to a good start. The teacher and the other members of staff provide a wide range of purposeful activities. They engage extremely well with the children, encouraging the growth of their language and thinking skills.
- Children in the Nursery display very positive attitudes, concentrate on their tasks and behave very well. Adults do much to help children to work independently. They focus well on the care and safety of children. Children make good progress in the Nursery. They develop firm foundations for later learning, including their skills in communication and language and their personal skills.
- In the Reception classes, the atmosphere is calm. The children behave respectfully towards adults and other children, and show very positive attitudes to learning.
- Teaching in the Reception classes is of good quality. Phonics (linking letters and sounds) is taught well. The teachers and teaching assistants provide children with good models of the pronunciation of sounds. They provide good opportunities for children to learn correct letter formation.
- Staff work well with parents, for instance through the effective use of communication books.
- The new leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved the use of assessment information. This has helped the leader to gain a better overview of children's progress and to plan appropriately challenging learning activities.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| 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

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| Unique reference number | 126309 |
| Local authority | Wiltshire |
| Inspection number | 442503 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 264 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Andy Parry |
| Headteacher | Sarah Ward |
| Date of previous school inspection | 2–3 October 2012 |
| Telephone number | 01980 632309 |
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