

Pillowell Community Primary School

School Road, Lydney, GL15 4QT

Inspection dates 2–3 December 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher is ambitious for the school. Along with leaders, managers and governors, he has the determination to continue to raise the standards of attainment through giving pupils a rich educational experience.
- Teaching is good. Pupils know what they are expected to achieve, and lessons are well planned and meet the needs of pupils.
- Pupils make good progress and achieve well from different starting points. As a result, the standards at the end of Key Stage 2 have continued to rise in reading, writing and mathematics, and are in line with pupils nationally.
- Well-planned provision for children in the early years means they make good progress and are well prepared for Year 1.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are very well supported.
- Good teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) interests pupils and enables them to read with accuracy.
- Pupils say the school is caring and they feel safe. They have positive relationships with each other and adults.
- Teaching assistants make an important contribution to the pupils' learning.
- The variety of subjects taught in the school meets the needs of pupils well and includes activities that both interest and motivate pupils.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and makes an important contribution to pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes to each other and their work.
- Parents appreciate the information on the school's website about what pupils are learning.
- In most areas, governors have a clear understanding of the school's needs and offer good levels of support and challenge to the headteacher.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always give clear advice in their marking on how pupils can improve their work.
- Pupils are not given enough guidance on how to present their work in the best possible way.
- Not all middle leaders have sufficient opportunities to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching in their area of responsibility.
- All governors do not have a complete understanding of the progress different groups of pupils are making in school and compared with other pupils nationally.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed parts of eight lessons, taught by three teachers. One of these was jointly observed with the literacy coordinator. In addition, the inspector observed small groups of pupils taught by teaching assistants.
- She spoke to three governors, including the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body, a representative from the local authority and staff including senior and middle leaders. The inspector also had informal discussions with parents at the start of the school day.
- She heard pupils from Years 2 and 6 reading and also had a meeting with representatives from the school council.
- Pupils were observed during two assemblies, at break and lunchtimes.
- The inspector looked at a range of documents, including the school's data on pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring documents, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and the safeguarding of children. The inspector scrutinised the school's arrangements for spending the additional funding for sports and the pupil premium.

Consideration was given to the 21 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire and the school's own consultation with parents. Account was also taken of the 12 questionnaires completed by members of staff.

Inspection team

Sarah Jones, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Pillowell Community Primary School is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. Pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes.
- Most pupils are of White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is one fifth. This is average.
- Just over one tenth of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is below average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Early years provision comprises a Reception class of children who attend full time.
- The school federated with Blakeney Primary School in April 2011. They share the same governing body and headteacher. Staff employed before the federation are contracted to their own schools. Staff employed after 2011 are contracted to the federation.
- Blakeney Primary School was inspected separately, however, at the same time as Pillowell Community Primary School.
- The school runs a breakfast club and a range of activities after school that include multi-skills and football.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning further to secure outstanding achievement by ensuring that:
 - marking consistently shows how pupils can improve their work
 - all staff have similar expectations of how pupils present their work
 - good handwriting is encouraged, so that all pupils write neatly
- Strengthen the leadership and management by making sure that:
 - all middle leaders are given sufficient time to monitor the quality of teaching within their area of responsibility
 - all governors know how well different groups of pupils are achieving so that they can robustly challenge school leaders about their performance in school and compared with others nationally.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides good leadership, with clear priorities to further improve the good quality of teaching and the good achievement pupils make in Key Stage 1 and 2. The headteacher has created a culture whereby pupils want to learn and be successful. He has adjusted the layout of rooms to provide more space and create a better learning environment for the pupils.
- The systems for tracking pupils' progress are very effective and provide teachers with information to plan their lessons. The systems have been adapted to accommodate the new approach to assessment.
- Middle leaders have a generally good understanding of their areas of responsibility. However, they are not all given the time needed to check the quality of teaching in their areas. This reduces their effectiveness.
- The variety of subjects taught in the school provides a rich and varied experience for pupils. There are opportunities for pupils to work together, and to develop their understanding of other subjects, as well as to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. For example, in an art lesson, Year 3 and 4 pupils designed and painted their own Greek pots, and in their assessment, they reflected on their learning and how they would improve their work next time.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is developed particularly well through subjects they study and in assemblies. Pupils took great pride in talking about their work on Remembrance Day 2014, and shared their understanding of the impact the two World Wars had on Britain today and in the past. In an assembly on kindness, pupils had the chance to think about how they treat others when they are different to themselves, and understanding that everyone is equal and discrimination is not tolerated in the school. Pupils' learning experiences in history, in assemblies and through links with local secondary schools help pupils prepare for life in modern Britain.
- The school has a positive relationship with the majority of parents. One parent said that his daughter who had recently moved to the school had settled very quickly and was enjoying her work.
- The school uses the pupil premium effectively to support disadvantaged pupils. Most of the support is used to provide extra interventions to help close the attainment gap in reading, writing and mathematics with other pupils.
- The school makes good use of the additional primary physical education and sport premium to promote healthy lifestyles and pupil safety. All pupils have access to swimming lessons with a target that all pupils will be able to swim at least 25 metres by the time they leave the school. A sports coach works alongside teachers to develop their skills in teaching a range of different sporting activities, such as multi-skills and dance and movement. There are more opportunities for pupils to participate in local competitions. Both pupils and governors spoke about the school's recent achievement in a hockey tournament.
- The school has received appropriate support from the local authority in recent years, enabling the school to sustain its focus on continuing improvement. It attends a range of local authority training courses for governors and subject leaders.
- Arrangements to safeguard pupils are good and meet statutory requirements to help ensure that all pupils are well cared for.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is mainly effective and fully committed to the federation. Governors are well informed about the school's performance and they provide support and challenge when reviewing targets for the school. Governors regularly visit the school, talking to pupils and meeting with staff. This gives them a good understanding about the quality of teaching. Governors set challenging targets for the headteacher, and understand the link between teachers' pay and any underperformance, and check pay awards are justifiable. They manage the school's finances well and are aware of how the additional pupil premium and primary physical education and sport premium are used to improve pupils' experience in education.
 - All governors do not fully understand how well groups of pupils are doing in school or compared with others nationally. This means that they are not so effective in asking challenging questions on the progress of different groups of pupils as they are on other areas of the school's work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They are friendly and well-mannered to staff and visitors, and they have

the confidence to talk to visitors about their learning and achievements.

- Pupils concentrate well in lessons, especially when the work captures their interest. Occasionally, pupils can lose concentration and low-level disruption can occur. This is why behaviour is not outstanding.
- Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities. During the inspection, pupils from the school council were selling healthy snacks as part of 'Healthy Wednesday'. They had organised the event taking responsibility for the finances and making sure they had balanced the budget carefully.
- The attendance of pupils has continued to improve for the last three years and is now just above the national average.
- There have been no permanent exclusions for the last three years.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils say they feel safe and, although there are times when they fall out with each other, they say bullying is rare. Pupils could explain the different forms of bullying and are confident, should anything occur, they know who they would speak to and it would be dealt with quickly. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe when online.
- A small proportion of parents who responded to Parent View were not so confident in the way the school deals with bullying. However, the vast majority of parents who spoke to inspectors were positive that the school dealt with it effectively.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching in all areas of the school is good. Teachers and teaching assistants know their pupils well. Teachers' planning is informed by what they already know about pupils, to ensure they meet their needs and challenge them to deepen their understanding.
- Teaching assistants are used well to support pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. These pupils benefit from the school's effective approach and make good progress.
- The relationship between the pupils and adults is good. Pupils have the confidence to ask if they are experiencing any difficulties with their work. Pupils also make good use of the literacy and numeracy displays on the walls in the classroom to support their learning.
- Pupils think deeply about their understanding as a result of effective questioning. This was seen in a mathematics lesson with more-able pupils who were required to explain which method they had used for a calculation, and why.
- Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to further develop their skills in literacy in other subjects. For example, in a Year 1 and 2 lesson, a group of pupils were reading a book on butterflies. They asked questions about the development of the butterfly from a chrysalis and made links to previous work on life cycles.
- The teaching of reading is good. Pupils read regularly. They say they enjoy reading for both pleasure and research. Younger pupils use their knowledge of phonics well to help them read new words. Older pupils read with confidence and accuracy. One pupil explained how reading has helped improve her writing, as she is able to take ideas and new words from the books she has read.
- Pupils rate their teachers highly and say they enjoy their lessons, especially when they are made fun and involve a challenge. Pupils occasionally rush their work to move onto the next activity; as a result, the presentation is sometimes poor and work is difficult to read in both literacy and numeracy books.
- Marking and feedback are improving and now inform pupils on how well they are doing. Many of the comments are helpful and show pupils how to improve their work. However, teachers do not always challenge pupils about the presentation of their work.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils achieve well from their different starting points, which are broadly typical, and attain levels above those nationally in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave school. This is because teachers successfully provide learning activities for a full range of abilities in each class.
- The achievement of Year 1 pupils in the national screening check for reading has continued to improve, with the proportion reaching the required standard in 2014 showing a further improvement on 2013.
- Pupils have continued to make more than expected progress in Year 2. As a result, the majority of pupils

reach the level expected for their age in reading and writing, and mathematics, by the end of Key Stage 1.

- In national tests, pupils in Year 6 continue to make the good progress expected of them in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The decision the school has taken to have two daily sessions when all pupils are taught in groups according to their level of understanding has strengthened pupils' understanding of letters, sounds and spellings, and their mathematical skills, even further.
- The most-able pupils make rapid progress. They benefit from the targeted daily sessions and the challenges they receive in their lessons. The proportion of pupils achieving the highest levels by the end of Year 6 has continued to rise.
- Early identification of pupils at risk of falling behind enables the school to put into place revised and effective provision to meet the needs of these pupils. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive targeted support. The progress of these pupils is good, and on occasions outstanding, from their different starting points.
- The small number of pupils supported by pupil premium funding make similar good progress to other pupils in the school. There were too few pupils at the end of Year 6 to make a judgement on the attainment of pupils known to be disadvantaged in comparison to other pupils in the school. The attainment of pupils across the school who are eligible for this funding is similar to other pupils nationally.

The early years provision

is good

- The management of early years is good. There are good relationships between staff and children. Parents say staff are very approachable and supportive.
- Children joining Reception quickly settle into routines and behave well. They learn well as a result of the consistently good teaching within a caring environment. Children are assessed when they start Reception to help staff plan activities to meet their individual needs and abilities.
- Children have many opportunities of working alongside pupils in Key Stage 1, and by the end of Reception, the majority have reached a good level of development and are well prepared for the transition to Year 1.
- Staff make the learning fun for children. For example, when Reception children joined Key Stage 1 for a science lesson on looking after themselves, they enjoyed the opportunity to role play in the 'doctor's surgery' and learnt about different roles. This included the patient and receptionist as well as learning about pieces of equipment, such as what a stethoscope is used for.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work effectively together to meet the needs of individuals. The quality of teaching is consistently good. The progress children make is recorded in individual 'learning journeys'; these are illustrated with photographs and commentaries and build up a clear picture of children's achievements.
- Teachers and teaching assistants teach phonics well, which helps children at the early stages of reading. Children enjoy identifying new sounds in familiar everyday words including the names of children in the class.
- Safeguarding is effective and the procedures in place ensure children are safe at all times, whether using the indoor or outside spaces.
- Staff have provided training for parents on supporting children with their phonics.

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 inspector.</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 inspector.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	115554
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	449106

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	68
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andy Moore
Headteacher	Brett Stevenson
Date of previous school inspection	19–20 May 2011
Telephone number	01594 562244
Fax number	01594 564945
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