

Whitchurch Primary School

22 Bristol Road, Whitchurch, Bristol, BS14 0PT

Inspection dates 8–9 January 2015

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		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement.

- Pupils, especially boys and the more able do not make enough progress across Key Stages 1 and 2. Consequently, many do not reach the levels they are capable of by the end of Year 6.
- In some lessons, teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low. As a result, pupils do not make good progress because the work is not challenging.
- Attendance is below average. This is because many families take their children on holiday during term time. Leaders have not taken a firm stance against this.
- Over time, governors have not challenged leaders robustly enough to make the necessary improvements.
- Not all comments written by teachers in pupils' books help individuals improve their work, particularly in writing.
- Leaders have not been able to improve the quality of teaching quickly enough. Some of the newly appointed subject leaders are not yet fully involved in improving the quality of teaching and raising standards.
- The early years provision requires improvement because over time not all children have made the progress in their learning that they are capable of, particularly in writing.

The school has the following strengths

- The acting headteacher has worked on developing and implementing a new system which checks pupil progress more effectively.
- Behaviour is good because pupils' attitudes are positive and they are keen to learn. Pupils feel safe and are kind and considerate to each other.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 12 lessons or parts of lessons, five of these jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. They scrutinised a range of pupils' work and heard a number of pupils from Years 2 and 3 read.
- The inspectors attended an assembly and observed pupils' behaviour at lunch and break times. They also checked the school's records related to behaviour and safeguarding.
- Discussions were held with pupils, the headteacher, deputy headteacher, subject leaders, governors, parents and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 77 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire. Inspectors also conducted an analysis of the 17 responses to the staff questionnaires.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' attainment and progress. They looked at the school's evaluation of its performance, school development plan and documentation related to teachers' performance overtime.

Inspection team

Shahnaz Maqsood, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Gareth Davies

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is slightly smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and supported by the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Children attend the Reception class on a full time basis.
- The previous headteacher retired in the summer of 2014. The governors appointed an acting headteacher and an acting deputy headteacher from September 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by:
 - developing the skills of subject leaders so they are better equipped to help staff improve their teaching
- Improve attendance so that it is at least in line with the national expectations.
- Raise standards of attainment of pupils, especially boys and those who are more able by:
 - closely monitoring their progress and putting in place support when they fall behind
 - organising activities which enthuse and interest them.
- Improve the quality of teaching to be consistently good or better by:
 - raising teachers' expectations and ensuring that the work set is always challenging
 - ensuring marking helps pupils to improve their work
 - making sure pupils know what they have to do to succeed
 - ensuring children in early years make good progress, particularly in writing.

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

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement. Information about pupils' progress is not always used to ensure pupils receive the right support if they fall behind.
- The acting headteacher knows the school's strengths and the areas that require improvement. He has made a number of effective changes recently and introduced systems which ensure that pupils' progress is monitored and supported regularly.
- Checks on the quality of teaching are undertaken by senior leaders. Actions taken to address weaknesses are increasingly having a positive impact. The process for setting targets for teachers is beginning to be more rigorous, with teachers' pay now being directly linked to pupils' progress. Consequently, the quality of teaching is improving.
- Some subject leaders are new and have not yet acquired all the necessary skills for identifying effective teaching. They are being well supported by senior leaders and have clear plans for improvement. However, they are not yet fully accountable for teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility.
- The curriculum has been adapted to meet the new national requirements. The school has rightly focused on choosing interesting topics, such as flight. These new topics are motivating the pupils, particularly the boys and the more able. As a result, standards are starting to improve and pupils are making faster progress.
- A programme which focuses on sharing positive values promotes social, moral, spiritual and cultural development well. Pupils learn about the importance of respecting each other's beliefs. This is achieved through well-planned assemblies, visits to different places of worship, such as mosques, citadels and churches. A renowned musician has taught all the pupils to play the djembe drums which they enjoy very much. Sculptures made by the pupils are displayed in the corridors. Pupils are helped to understand British values and what it means to live in modern Britain. For example, they develop a greater understanding of democracy through the work of the school council where issues are discussed and then decisions are made by voting for them.
- The school takes a very strong stance against discrimination. Staff actively promote tolerance and equality of opportunity for all pupils.
- The pupil premium is used well so that those who are disadvantaged achieve in line with other pupils.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet current statutory requirements. Governors routinely check that staff training is up to date and procedures for safer recruitment are rigorously implemented.
- The school fosters positive relationships with parents. Parents are increasingly well-informed and supportive. They are now much more aware of the impact that holiday absences during term-time have on their children's education.
- The well-run breakfast and after-school clubs are becoming increasingly more popular because they help parents juggle their work commitments with child-care arrangements.
- Sport funding has been used to pay for specialist coaches to improve the teaching of physical education. The school is a member of a local school sports partnership which organises competitions and this has increased its involvement in competitive sport. Pupils also experience a wide range of sporting activities, such as tobogganing, fencing and lacrosse.
- Until recently the local authority did not consider this school to require improvement and, consequently, made infrequent visits. They have now increased their involvement with senior leaders and are supporting them in school improvement. The local authority is confident that leaders have the capacity to help the school to improve.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governors are very supportive of the acting headteacher and are committed to improving the school. However, they do not check data thoroughly enough. This has prevented them from challenging leaders and holding them to account for school improvement.
 - Governors take full responsibility for ensuring that safeguarding arrangements meet current statutory requirements. Finances are well managed.
 - Governors are aware of the quality of teaching and support leaders with taking effective action against weak teaching. They understand the process for setting targets and make sure that teachers are only rewarded if the pupils in their class make good progress.
 - Governors have some knowledge of the performance of disadvantaged children. However, they are in the early stages of developing rigorous systems to check how well the government funding is used to support them.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils play and cooperate well at break and lunchtimes. Parents also agree that behaviour is good.
- Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning in lessons. They always try their best and behave well, even when the task is too easy.
- Pupils know what is expected of them and are aware of the behaviour policy. They respond to teachers' requests and adhere to the classroom rules.
- Attendance is below the national average. This is because too many parents take their children out of school for holidays during term time. The school is working hard with families to make them much more aware of the impact that holiday absences during term time have on their children's education.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel safe in school and are confident that the adults will help them if they have any problems.
- Pupils told inspectors that there is no bullying in school. They were sure that if there was bullying the adults would deal with it straightaway. They spoke about the work done during anti-bullying week and how teachers were helping them understand what it was like to be a victim.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of different forms of bullying, including cyber bullying. They know how to keep themselves safe when using the internet.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because teachers often set tasks which are too easy or repetitive. As a result, pupils' progress is not good, particularly that of the most able and boys who, in the past, have not been sufficiently challenged by the teaching.
- Evidence in books indicates that the quality of marking varies too much from one class to another. A few books seen during the inspection were not marked and in others the comments did not help pupils clear up misconceptions and improve their work. This was particularly the case in the pupils writing books because their progress was not checked and monitored. As a result, improvements in the structure, accuracy and style of writing occur too slowly.
- Pupils are not always sure what they are supposed to learn because, in some lessons, teachers do not always make it clear in lessons what they are expecting their pupils to learn.
- Relationships between pupils and adults are positive and classrooms are attractive. However, pupils only make appropriate progress when the tasks set are challenging.
- Pupils working with teachers during reading lessons make secure progress because questioning is probing and encourages pupils to think more deeply. For example, in one lesson, pupils were able identify features of a play script. However, pupils were then given unchallenging tasks which hindered their progress.
- The relationships between letters and sounds (phonics) are taught well and pupils use a range of strategies to read. The school has invested in books and software to encourage boys to read.
- Most teachers develop pupils' mathematical skills well. However, they do not always give their pupils the opportunity to apply these skills when answering questions and solving problems.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs benefit from small group and individual sessions with specialist teachers and teaching assistants.

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because there are inconsistencies in progress and this has an impact on overall attainment. In the Year 6 national tests for 2014 pupils achieved standards which were broadly in line with the national average but had dropped from 2013 when they were above average overall. Pupils' make the best progress in Year 6 where teaching is of high quality and extra support is provided. Progress is not always consistently good in Years 3, 4 and 5.
- Girls achieve better than boys. In the Year 6 national tests of 2014 girls attained above average standards and achieved well. Although boys' attainment was above average in writing, mathematics and in the spelling, punctuation and grammar tests, it was below average in reading because too few achieved the

high levels. Boys were two and half terms behind girls in English and mathematics. However, the school's current data shows that the progress of boys is improving and the attainment gap between girls is narrowing.

- In the 2014 tests at the end of Year 2, overall standards were average which was a drop from 2013 when they were significantly above the national average. Inspection findings indicate that pupils in Years 1 and 2 are not achieving as well as they could. Pupils make good progress in reading and use a range of different ways to help them. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonic screening check rose from below in 2013 to in line in 2014. However, pupils' attainment in writing is below average in Year 2.
- Achievement in mathematics requires improvement because pupils do not make good enough progress. This is due to inconsistent teaching in the past; the rate of progress in mathematics is now improving because teachers are providing more challenging activities.
- The progress of the more able pupils is inconsistent because they are not provided with sufficient challenge. Fewer pupils than seen nationally attain the higher levels at the end of Year 2 and 6.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve similarly to their peers in school and with other pupils nationally. They make better progress when they are provided with specialist support and teaching during individual or small group sessions.
- Disadvantaged pupils eligible supported by additional funding progress at least in line with their peers, and in some cases better. In the 2014 national assessments, the gap in disadvantaged pupils' attainment compared with other pupils nationally was equivalent to about a term's progress in reading and mathematics and close to three terms in writing. When compared with other pupils in the school, the equivalent gaps are about one term in reading and two terms in mathematics and writing. The gaps are closing but there is some variability between year groups.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- The Early Years Foundation Stage provision requires improvement because children are less well-prepared for Year 1 than they should be. However, recent changes indicate that provision has started to improve.
- Children progress well in their speaking and listening skills and express with confidence their ideas and feelings. They also make good progress in their personal development. They get on well with each other, take turns and are respectful of each other's feelings. The progress they make in these areas of learning is evaluated carefully and then activities are then planned to further develop their skills.
- The teaching requires improvement but is steadily improving as weaknesses are rectified. Children, especially the more able, are increasingly making the progress they are capable of in the key skills of reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers have a secure knowledge of how to teach letters and sounds accurately. Although, this is used well to help the children make effective progress in reading, until recently it was less evident in the development of their writing skills.
- Behaviour is good because the calm and supportive environment helps the children settle quickly. Children's social skills are well developed because the children play and share well together. For example, inspectors saw two pupils helping each other to dress up when they were in the role play area.
- Children feel and are kept safe at all times.

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	109073
Local authority	Bath and North East Somerset
Inspection number	449556

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	203
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Christine Dyer
Headteacher	Carl Hornsby
Date of previous school inspection	29–30 June 2010
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