

Templefield Lower School

Malham Close, Flitwick, Bedford, MK45 1AJ

Inspection dates 13–14 May 2015

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		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Teachers do not check carefully enough how well pupils are doing in lessons and adapt their teaching so that pupils make faster progress.
- Too few pupils make good progress. Some of the most able pupils do not reach the higher levels of attainment they should.
- Children do not make consistently good progress in the early years. The adults do not monitor children's progress closely enough.
- Boys do not make enough progress or attain high enough levels in writing.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to use their writing skills across a range of subjects.
- Teachers do not always deploy teaching assistants effectively so that pupils benefit fully from their presence in classrooms.
- Leaders do not use the good teaching in the school to help others to improve their skills by observing their colleagues at work.
- The school does not plan effective ways for parents to support their child's learning at home.
- The new headteacher's clear plans to accelerate achievement and improve teaching have not had time to impact fully.
- Middle leaders do not play an effective role in improving pupils' achievement and teaching in the areas for which they are responsible.
- Governors have not improved teaching and achievement since the last inspection.

The school has the following strengths

- A revitalised approach to the teaching of phonics (sounds that letters make) means that pupils are now making rapid progress in reading.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, particularly those who have social or emotional difficulties, develop positive attitudes and learn new skills through effective support.
- Pupils understand what they have done well and what they need to do to improve because teachers mark their work carefully.
- Pupils say they really enjoy coming to school and, as a result, their attendance has improved.
- Pupils behave well, are kept safe and learn in an environment where adults care for them well.
- , Following a recent review governors have introduced effective procedures for checking on the work of the school and holding the headteacher to account. As a result, the school is improving.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes and visited 16 lessons, of which four were seen jointly with members of the school’s leadership team.
- Meetings were held with three members of the governing body, the headteacher, subject and other middle leaders. Inspectors also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors held meetings with groups of pupils and looked at their work in books. They talked informally with pupils at breaks and lunchtimes. They listened to pupils read.
- The 70 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View were considered and inspectors also noted the 23 responses to the staff survey.
- Inspectors looked at several documents including the school’s evaluation of its own performance; plans for improvement; the schools own information on pupils’ progress; policies; and records of pupils’ behaviour and attendance. Safeguarding information and documents were reviewed.

Inspection team

David Cousins, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Pauline MacMillan	Additional Inspector
Rajeshree Mehta	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is slightly larger than an average-sized primary school. In addition to classes for pupils in Years 1 to 4, there is a full-time Reception class and a Nursery for children who are above the age of four; these children are admitted in January or April and attend for mornings only.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, supported by the pupil premium is well below the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs is broadly the same as the national average.
- Most pupils come from a White British background. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The current headteacher has been in post since January 2015.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good and accelerates pupils' progress by:
 - ensuring that all pupils, especially boys have opportunities to develop higher levels of skill in writing and use them across a range of subjects
 - supporting the most able pupils to reach the higher levels in all subjects
 - supporting parents to help children extend and practise key skills at home
 - making sure that good practice in the school is shared between teachers to help them improve and enable pupils to make better progress
 - providing other adults in classrooms with training so they focus successfully on what pupils can be expected to learn in all parts of the lesson
 - regularly checking pupils' understanding and adapting their teaching accordingly.
- Improve leadership and management to develop:
 - the effectiveness of all leaders in checking the progress of pupils, particularly boys and children in the early years
 - the role of subject and phase leaders in checking the quality of teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility and their understanding of how well pupils achieve.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- School leaders, including those with responsibility for subjects have not monitored well enough to gain an accurate view of the progress pupils are making, including children in the early years. As a consequence, pupils' progress has been slower than it should have been.
- Although the school has identified that boys are making insufficient progress in writing, actions to improve outcomes have not been swift enough and, as a result some have fallen behind.
- The quality of teaching is not consistently good across the school. The teachers do not share good practice so that they learn to improve the range of methods that they use to help pupils make better progress. Leaders are now checking teaching more thoroughly. A new monitoring system is beginning to help teachers collect evidence to show that they are improving.
- The new headteacher has brought great energy and skill to the task of transforming the school. She is quickly establishing a culture where rapid improvements in teaching and achievement are expected. The governing body and staff have considered how they can improve pupils' learning and, more broadly how they can further develop a school of which the community can be proud. This has given clarity and direction to plans to improve the school.
- School leaders have successfully improved pupils' attendance and behaviour. They have responded to some concerns raised by parents. Both parents and pupils report that, because of the steps taken by the new headteacher behaviour is much improved.
- The school is developing a curriculum which is broad and balanced but is yet to result in all groups of pupils making good progress. The school has recently introduced the new National Curriculum and has appropriate plans for the assessment of pupils' progress.
- The curriculum effectively supports and develops pupils' understanding of life in modern British society. For example, pupils learn about democracy by voting for representatives on their school council and understand the importance of holding them to account for their actions. Pupils understand that others have different views and listen to their opinions respectfully in class discussions.
- The school provides disabled pupils and those with special educational needs with the support they need. For example, a small group of pupils in the 'nurture' group are helped to improve their attitudes so they can take a full part in lessons. In this and other respects, the school secures equality of opportunity. The school does not tolerate discrimination of any kind.
- Safeguarding routines are well established. Policies and procedures meet statutory requirements. Senior leaders and governors make sure pupils are safe. Staff have received appropriate safeguarding training and are familiar with the relevant school policies and guidance, for example how to spot and report any concerns about pupils' welfare.
- The funding for physical education (PE) and sport is providing more opportunities for pupils to participate in competitive sports events. It is also improving the skills of teachers of PE through training and by working alongside skilled coaches. The funding is helping pupils to engage in regular, active sessions of PE, which are promoting an increasingly healthy lifestyle.
- The school has benefited from the support of the local authority. Recent initiatives in leadership and governance have been effective in improving the skills of the headteacher and governors.

■ The governance of the school:

There have been considerable changes following a review of governance. Governors now have a sharper focus on improving the school. They have a newly elected Chair of the Governing Body and a new routine

and organisation of meetings and reports. Governance is increasingly effective. Governors have a growing understanding of the quality of teaching. They have studied the school's performance data and other information and welcomed external scrutiny of the school, to check that their understanding of the issues facing the school is accurate. As a consequence, they are now in a stronger position to provide challenge to senior leaders about the quality of provision and pupils' achievement. Governors know about the management of teachers' performance. They are fully aware of how school tackles any underperformance. They also ensure that pay awards are linked to the effectiveness of staff. Governors manage the school's finances effectively. They also carefully monitor the school's safeguarding arrangements. The governors and headteacher recognise how important a successful school is for the local community. They have set ambitious but realistic targets for improvement.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. This is also the view of the vast majority of pupils and parents who spoke to inspectors. They are pleased with the steps taken by the headteacher to reinforce consistently good behaviour.
- Pupils are proud of their school and most maintain a smart appearance in their school uniforms. They take on extra responsibilities, such as class or assembly monitors, school council representative and librarians.
- Pupils conduct themselves well. They like coming to school and enjoy learning. They know the behaviour rules and are keen to earn enough stickers or golden tickets to enjoy the rewards that good behaviour brings, like having tea with the headteacher.
- Around the school pupils are polite and courteous, responding well to the 'thumbs up' from adults to show that their courtesy has been recognised. At playtimes, pupils play happily together and they report that the new 'zoned' areas mean that they can play safely.
- There have been no exclusions in recent years. Minor misdemeanours are recorded and are at a low level.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe and the vast majority of parents support this view.
- Pupils know about different types of bullying and they say bullying is an unusual event in school. The evidence in the school's records supports this view. Pupils are confident that if bullying happens their teachers will deal with it quickly. They have adults in school they would turn to with any worries or concerns and know how to keep themselves safe outside school and when using the internet.
- School leaders ensure that health and safety procedures are followed closely, such as regular emergency evacuation practice, and that there is adequate supervision of all areas where pupils work or play.
- Staff check attendance thoroughly and there are effective systems to follow up absences. Patterns of attendance are analysed and the school works well with families and pupils to see if there are reasons why a pupil may not be coming to school regularly. As a result, attendance has improved and is broadly average.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because some groups of pupils, particularly boys do not make the progress they should in writing. Evidence from pupils' books shows that sometimes during writing activities pupils are not taught how to finish them off properly. Pupils have too few opportunities for sustained writing for a range of purposes and audiences as part of their work across the curriculum.

- Teachers do not always observe closely how well pupils are doing in lessons, so that they can respond quickly to change the tasks when they see that the work they have set is too easy or too hard. This means that occasionally pupils continue to make the same errors and so do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Teachers do not always manage or direct teaching assistants effectively, in all parts of lessons. Consequently, there are times when they are not as active as they should be in assessing pupils' work and providing support when they see pupils are struggling.
- The school does not set consistent expectations of how parents and carers can support learning at home, for example, through the use of reading records.
- The marking of pupils' work has been a recent focus for improvement. A new system, which is popular with pupils, is now in place and teachers are using it consistently across the school. This means that pupils now understand how they can improve their work.
- In mathematics, number and calculation skills are taught well. Pupils now have more opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills to solve problems. For example, in a Year 1 lesson a proud pupil swiftly worked out a problem involving adding five sheep to a flock of six sheep stating that 'six and four made ten and five is one more than four so it has to be eleven sheep!'
- There are sufficient reading resources for pupils. An increased emphasis on the teaching of phonics means that pupils confidently use their skills well to read new words. Pupils are clear about the way the reading scheme works and read a suitable range of story books.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils do not make consistently good progress from their starting points across the school and in the early years. Boys, in particular do not make sufficiently rapid progress in writing. The standards reached by boys in writing are behind those of girls in most year groups.
- Over time, pupils have attained broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. This was the case in 2014, with a slightly below average proportion attaining the higher levels in reading and mathematics.
- At the end of Year 4 in 2014 most pupils reached the levels expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics, having made the rate of progress expected in Years 3 and 4.
- Recent actions taken by the school have raised and clarified expectations of the rate of pupils' progress. As a result, pupils are beginning to make better progress in mathematics. In reading, their progress is accelerating because phonics is well taught. The information held by the school for the pupils in Year 2 shows that most are on track to make the expected levels this year in reading and mathematics. A few will do better than this, especially in reading. Pupils' progress in writing is inconsistent with some groups, such as boys, not making as much progress as they should. The position is similar for pupils in Year 4 this year who have also benefitted from the recent changes and are achieving better outcomes in reading and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive extra help in lessons or in small groups. Pupils' phonics skills are improving and as a result, they are making faster progress particularly in reading. In other subjects they make similar progress to other pupils.
- Although the recent actions taken by leaders are resulting in improvements in the progress of the most able pupils, it still varies too much across the school. A few of them are reaching the higher levels, particularly in reading and mathematics. The school's data and work in pupils' books indicate that more of these pupils will attain higher levels at the end of Key Stage 1 this year than last year.
- Appropriate support for pupils who join the school during the course of the school year or who speak

English as an additional language helps them to settle quickly and to catch up so they achieve as well as other pupils.

- There are too few disadvantaged pupils to report on their achievement in detail but an increased focus by leaders on these pupils' outcomes means that their progress is improving and the gaps in their attainment with others in the school and nationally are beginning to narrow.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- Children's skills and knowledge on entry to the school in the Nursery and Reception classes are typical for their age in most areas of learning. Boys' early writing skills are weaker on entry than expected.
- In 2014, the proportion of pupils attaining a good level of development was as expected, showing that they had made steady progress since they started school in most areas of learning. However, boys' writing skills remained weaker than their skills in other areas of learning. Too little is being done to help them to catch up, in writing, during the early years.
- Teaching requires improvement because, although adults watch how well pupils are doing in lessons, they do not make full use of the information they collect. Leaders have not analysed this information, to check how the children are doing and if standards are rising. Inspection evidence suggests that pupils will attain broadly average standards having made steady progress from their starting points.
- The children have positive attitudes to learning and want to share their ideas. For example, they contributed enthusiastically to a good discussion in the Nursery class about the length of 'Pinocchio's nose' using play dough to show longer and shorter; longest and shortest.
- Children behave in a safe way. They decide what to play, discuss their roles in activities, cooperate well, and take turns. They willingly take responsibility, for example, for giving out food at snack time, and sitting and talking calmly.
- Leadership and management of the early years provision requires improvement because until recently monitoring of assessments in the Reception class was inconsistent. There are gaps in the evidence to show how well children are doing across some areas of learning. The adults are now planning activities so that assessment evidence builds up systematically.

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	109527
Local authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	462122

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	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	295
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Simon Earles
Headteacher	Heather Lampard
Date of previous school inspection	21 May 2013
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