

Quainton Church of England School

Lower Street, Quainton, Nr Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire HP22 4BJ

Inspection dates

11–13 July 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The school has experienced considerable staff turbulence, and long-term absence of key leaders, in the last year and a half. This has severely hampered work to uphold a good standard of education.
- Governors' actions to secure sufficient leadership capacity during this time have not proved effective.
- Leaders' monitoring and self-evaluation are not sharp enough. Leaders and governors do not have an accurate understanding of the quality of teaching, pupils' behaviour or the impact of additional funding.
- The curriculum is not planned, or taught well enough, to ensure breadth and balance.
- Teaching time is not routinely well used. Teachers do not consistently enable pupils to build effectively on their previous learning. Pupils do not make consistently good progress.
- Some teachers spend considerable time talking to the whole class without making sure this is helping pupils to learn well. Teachers' questioning skills are not consistently effective.
- Pupils do not routinely receive the help needed to overcome misconceptions.
- Pupils' achievement in mathematics, at the end of key stage 2, was below average in 2016, and provisional information shows that Year 6 outcomes are low this summer.
- Teaching in mathematics, although improving, is not effective enough. Pupils have limited opportunities to develop their reasoning and problem-solving skills.
- Some pupils' behaviour at break and lunchtime is thoughtless and, at times, unruly. Staff and leaders are not identifying and tackling this behaviour effectively.

The school has the following strengths

- Safeguarding arrangements are effective.
- The curriculum contributes well to pupils' understanding of life in modern Britain. Typically, pupils have well-developed social skills and become increasingly confident young citizens.
- Children in early years get off to a good start. They make good progress and leave well prepared for Year 1.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so it enables pupils to make good progress across the curriculum by:
 - ensuring that teachers have a clear understanding of what pupils should be learning to make good progress in every subject, as they progress through the school
 - making sure that teaching is routinely challenging enough to enable pupils to make consistently good use of learning time, and build well on their previous learning
 - ensuring that all teachers are skilled in checking pupils' understanding and adjusting their approach when needed to help pupils to learn more effectively
 - developing teachers' questioning skills to help pupils deepen their thinking and overcome misconceptions
 - developing the teaching of mathematical reasoning and problem solving
 - ensuring that pupils in key stage 2 receive effective support to make up for any gaps in their learning, particularly in mathematics.
- Secure the leadership and management capacity needed to rapidly improve the school by ensuring that:
 - leaders and governors gain an exact understanding of the extent of poor behaviour by pupils, and take effective action to eliminate it
 - the curriculum is well planned and taught in a balanced way so it promotes good progress in a broad range of subjects
 - leaders' evaluations of teaching are routinely accurate and inform helpful training and support so that staff improve their practice
 - leaders have an accurate understanding of the impact of additional funding so they and governors can be sure it is used effectively.

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

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Over the last two years, leadership capacity has been severely limited. Absences of key leaders for long periods of time and turbulence in staffing have severely hampered work to move the school forward. Leaders have taken effective action to keep the school functioning from day to day. They have also overseen some improvements, most notably in early years. However, work to secure good behaviour and effective teaching across subjects and year groups has been too limited to be successful.
- The curriculum is not sufficiently well planned to ensure that pupils' learning is broad and balanced, and that it promotes good progress in each subject. Leaders have not defined the degree of skill and understanding pupils should acquire in each subject, as they progress from topic to topic, and year to year. Teachers have limited information to draw on when planning their teaching for each week. This leads to some disjointed planning and unfocused teaching. Leaders do not routinely check the quality of planning or whether all areas of the curriculum are suitably well covered.
- Leaders' work to keep an accurate understanding of the quality of teaching has been hampered by the lack of leadership capacity. Termly observations of each teacher and reviews of pupils' progress have enabled leaders to gain some insight. However, leaders have not acquired all the information needed, or analysed it well enough, to have a sharp understanding of the quality of teaching across the school. Staff do receive some helpful training, but leaders are not identifying the individual development needs of each teacher well enough. Typically, teachers have not received the support and training necessary to help them improve their practice and teach consistently well.
- Leaders are making some well-considered use of additional funding to support the progress and social development of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Suitable support is in place, including speech and language therapy and extra sessions which prepare pupils for learning and reinforce class teaching. Teachers are equipped with strategies they can use to help meet the needs of these pupils during lessons. However, leaders have a limited understanding of the impact of this work on pupils' progress.
- Leaders' understanding of the extent to which they make good use of pupil premium funding is also not sharp. School information shows that disadvantaged pupils are typically achieving well in English and mathematics. However, leaders do not know what difference the use of this funding is making. In addition, leaders spend almost all of the pupil premium funding on support for pupils in key stage 2; a very limited amount is spent on eligible pupils in key stage 1.
- The leaders' approach to identifying and tracking incidents of poor behaviour and patterns of low-level disruption is not effective enough. Leaders do not have an accurate understanding of the extent of disruptive behaviour in the school.
- Some aspects of leadership and management have proved more effective. Leaders have made sure that helpful support is in place for those with challenging behaviour, including support from the pupil referral unit. Pupils appreciate the leaders' decision to introduce organised play at lunchtime. Providing 'breakfast club' has helped improve

attendance for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

- Leaders have improved the way they collect and analyse assessment information. Recognising the previous system was not working, they have opted for a more helpful approach. Leaders now have readily available information about pupils' achievement, across the school, in English and mathematics. Leaders have identified suitable next steps. They are buying a new software program to make the process more efficient and support the development of assessment in other subjects. Leaders rightly recognise the need to ensure that assessment information is reliable so that the information they glean is helpful.
- The curriculum is effective in promoting pupils' wider development. Pupils enjoy the many opportunities they have to learn about the world around them and life in modern Britain. Pupils typically develop a good understanding of society, democracy and what it means to be a responsible citizen. Discussion in lessons, assemblies and visits such as the recent one from the Speaker of the House of Commons all contribute well to this. The importance of treating all with equal respect, regardless of difference, is a fundamental part of school life. Pupils also benefit from a wide range of visits to places of interest, which they were bursting to talk about.
- Leaders make reasonable use of sports funding. Expert coaches help ensure that PE is well taught. Teachers develop their skills in teaching the subject by working alongside these coaches. Pupils have access to a range of sports clubs. These are increasingly well attended. The school's involvement with the local sports partnership enables pupils to take part in sports festivals run by the local secondary school. However, leaders have not fully analysed the impact of the use of this funding, or reported it on the school's website.
- The local authority has provided some helpful support to the school, through the Buckinghamshire Learning Trust. The trust wisely brought in a headteacher from another school, for one day a week, while the headteacher was absent. This helped ensure that safeguarding arrangements were kept tight and school leaders had some support. Recognising the school continued to be in some difficulty, the level of support from the trust has been increased this year. An adviser from the trust has been providing useful mentoring and support for the headteacher. This has helped secure some improvements, such as in the use of assessment information.

Governance of the school

- The governing body has not provided leaders with the support and challenge needed to uphold a good standard of education.
- Governors recognise that they have not done enough to secure leadership capacity, and the confidence of parents, during a time of significant staff turbulence and absence of senior leaders.
- Until recently, the governing body has not held leaders to account for the school's performance well enough. Governors had not sought the information needed to gain a clear understanding of the quality of teaching, pupils' achievement or behaviour.
- In recent months, the situation has improved. Governors have increasingly been asking about the impact of leaders' work. Leaders are providing governors with better

information than previously about pupils' achievement. This is helping governors to gain a clearer understanding. Governors are now rightly seeking external verification to help them be sure of the accuracy of this information.

- Governors' visits to school are proving useful. For example, the governor responsible for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has been able to satisfy herself that support is in place for these pupils. Nevertheless, it is early days. Governors recognise that they do not know enough about the quality of teaching and pupils' behaviour.
- Governors welcome the idea of undertaking an external review of their work to help identify how to improve further and become consistently effective.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Records are detailed and of high quality. Checks on the suitability of staff are sound. Staff receive suitable training and keep abreast of latest requirements through regular briefings. Induction for new staff is timely and thorough. Staff know what might signal that a pupil may be a risk. Staff know how and when to refer concerns to the leader responsible for safeguarding. The leader responsible makes timely referrals to social services when needed. Staff are kept alerted to the needs of vulnerable pupils through weekly staff briefings.
- Governors take their safeguarding duties seriously and make sure all is in order. Visits to school to check arrangements include discussions with pupils to check they feel safe, and identify any aspect of this work that could improve further.
- Leaders and governors make sure there are regular checks of the site to ensure that it is a safe and healthy place to learn and work in. Fire drills and the recent 'lockdown' drill help ensure that staff and pupils know how to respond in an emergency. Newsletters inform parents about how they can support the school in keeping their children safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching does not cater well enough for pupils. Teaching is not routinely challenging enough to support good progress across subjects.
- School expectations for what good progress for pupils of differing abilities would be in each subject, by key assessment points, are unclear. Some confused planning results in a lack of clarity about what teachers intend pupils to learn. As a result, teaching can be disjointed. Lessons skip around between concepts rather than enabling pupils to get to grips with, and deepen their understanding of, a specific concept or hone specific skills.
- Pupils are often not able to make best use of learning time. At times, teachers speak to the whole class at length without making sure that pupils of varying ability are benefiting equally well from the discussion. The whole class has to listen to the same explanation even if they have already grasped the learning or are not yet ready for it. Some teachers' skill in their use of questioning to check pupils' understanding is not well developed. Where this is the case, teaching is not consistently adjusted, when needed, to help pupils learn better.

- Teachers are not routinely effective in picking up pupils' misconceptions. Too often, these go unchallenged and pupils are not given the help needed to overcome them. In some instances, teachers reinforce these misconceptions by writing positive comments on pupils' work which indicates the completed task is correct, when it is not.
- Teachers' assessment of pupils' achievement is not consistently accurate. For example, school information shows that a high proportion of pupils have reached the standard expected for their age, in Year 6, in mathematics. In fact, less than half of Year 6 reached the expected standard in the national test. Such inaccuracies further hamper teachers' ability to plan teaching that builds on pupils' previous learning.
- Teaching in mathematics is improving. However, opportunities for pupils to deepen their understanding through reasoning and problem solving are limited.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Although pupils are typically well cared for, the rough and thoughtless behaviour that some pupils exhibit at break and lunchtime causes other pupils concern. Pupils were clear that some parts of the school's grounds, and in particular the orchard and field, were not consistently well supervised. This enables some poor behaviour to go unchecked. Pupils said that, in the main, if they go to an adult with a concern it would be resolved. However, pupils were insistent that there were times when this was not the case.
- Reported incidents of bullying are low and typically resolved effectively. However, incidents of unruly or inconsiderate behaviour are not being reported or picked up well enough. Some parents have lost confidence in leaders' ability to deal with these issues.
- Other aspects of work to promote pupils' personal development are effective. Most pupils develop very positive attitudes to learning and engage well in lessons. They are reflective, thoughtful and keen to discuss and weigh up ideas.
- The school's values are threaded through the curriculum. Pupils know the importance of respecting and welcoming all, regardless of difference. For example, pupils of all ages talked of the memorable assembly that the Year 1 class had just led. They reflected on the plight of the one orange dragon who had been left out by the purple dragons. Pupils grasped the message about the importance of ensuring that everyone feels included.
- Pupils develop a good understanding of safety and how to stay safe. Activities including 'internet safety day' help pupils learn to stay safe online. Older pupils spoke with interest of their visit to The Milton Keynes Safety Centre, 'Hazard Alley', where they learned about water and rail safety, and resuscitation.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Some pupils' conduct around the

school's site is inconsiderate. Pupils said that rudeness and pushing in the corridor was quite common. Outside, a few pupils tend to indulge in rough play which, at times, spills over into aggressive behaviour.

- Younger pupils who spoke to an inspector were insistent that in class their learning was regularly disrupted by other pupils' behaviour. They had mixed views about how well it was dealt with, and were not sure what the sanctions were for poor behaviour. Parents and staff also had mixed views. Teachers do not log incidents of low-level disruption so the extent of this type of behaviour is not clear.
- Pupils' attendance is broadly in line with the national average and very few pupils have poor attendance. The attendance of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has improved and is similar to other pupils in the school.
- Pupils with challenging behaviour receive useful help to improve. This includes support from the local pupil referral unit (PRU), and some effective work with these pupils' families. Occasionally a pupil will attend the PRU for part of the week. In such cases, the school maintains regular contact with the PRU to make sure that pupils who go there attend regularly, behave well and are safe.
- There have been a small number of fixed-term exclusions this year. As a result of the support they have received, no pupil has had a second exclusion.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils do not achieve as well as they should. The curriculum is not planned or taught well enough to enable pupils, including the most able, disadvantaged and the most able disadvantaged, to consistently deepen their understanding and build an increasingly strong set of skills and knowledge in each subject as they progress through the school.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same varied progress as others due to the variable teaching quality. More positively, support outside the classroom is helping these pupils to catch up in their reading and spelling.
- Pupils' achievement in mathematics is, typically, not good enough. Provisional results for the end of key stage 2 show that, on average, Year 6 pupils' achievement in mathematics is poor. Less than half the class reached the expected standard, whereas nationally three out of four pupils reached the standard. Results were also lower than the national figure in 2016. This recent set of results signals a further decline.
- Pupils in other year groups are making better progress than Year 6 pupils. However, teaching is not consistently effective and opportunities for pupils to deepen their mathematical thinking through reasoning and problem-solving tasks are limited. As a result, pupils are not making good progress.
- Pupils typically read and write with confidence and make secure progress. However, in some year groups very few pupils are working at a high standard for their age. Pupils' use of spelling, punctuation and grammar is not consistently well developed. The proportion of Year 6 pupils reaching the expected standard at the end of key stage 2 was well below the provisional national average for 2017.
- Pupils make good progress in reading at key stage 1. The proportion of pupils reaching

the expected standard in the phonics screening check has improved this year, following a dip in 2016. Achievement by the end of key stage 1 has also improved.

Early years provision

Good

- Provision in the early years is effective. Children benefit from a caring and nurturing environment, make good progress and leave well prepared for Year 1.
- The leader of early years is making sure the provision is increasingly effective. She has benefited from working closely with leaders from other schools. This has helped her ensure that the assessment of children's attainment during the year is accurate, and that teaching is good. The leader has a precise picture of the strengths of the provision and areas for further improvement.
- Children benefit from a wide range of opportunities that support good progress across all development areas. Staff plan activities carefully, taking account of children's needs and interests. For example, children wanted to know how plants grow from seeds. This led to an experiment where children planted seeds and found out which soil, light and water help the plants to grow best.
- Teaching is effective. Adults carry out meticulous observations to assess children's learning and plan challenging tasks that enable children to make strong progress. Staff know how young children learn well. For example, regular finger exercises help children develop the skills they need to improve their manual dexterity and handwriting.
- Children make good progress from their starting points. Disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same good progress as their peers because they receive helpful support. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development has increased over the last two years and is above that seen nationally. Because of improvements in the teaching of literacy, outcomes have improved again this summer.
- Children behave well and develop positive relationships. Well-established routines help them to become confident and motivated learners.
- Children learn how to stay safe and weigh up risk. For example, children were very clear about the importance of washing their hands before they had their lunch.
- Parents are very positive about the provision. They value the helpful, frequent communication they have with school and useful opportunities to be involved in their children's learning. Home visits and activities such as the 'Teddy Bears' Picnic' help ensure that children and parents are well prepared for the start of the Reception Year. Links with pre-school settings also contribute well to this.

School details

Unique reference number	110447
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10032992

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	201
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rachel Woolrich
Headteacher	Gill Evans
Telephone number	01296 655242
Website	www.quinton.bucks.sch.uk
Email address	office@quinton.bucks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	19–20 June 2013

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average primary school. Most of the pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and need additional support is low. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is above average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of key stage 2.
- The school makes occasional use of alternative provision at the Pathways Primary Pupil Referral Unit, judged outstanding by Ofsted, to provide pupils with support to manage their behaviour.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the physical education and sport premium, special educational needs or the curriculum on

its website.

- The school has undergone a period of considerable staff turbulence since the previous inspection. The headteacher joined the school in September 2014. During the spring term of 2016 she had to take a considerable period of leave. The deputy headteacher took on the role of headteacher during this time and a headteacher from another local school provided support to the school one day a week. The deputy headteacher subsequently had to take a significant period of leave during the summer term of 2016. The leader responsible for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SENCo) left at the end of the same term. The deputy headteacher took up the SENCo role, in addition to her other duties, in the autumn of 2016. At this time, two class teachers went on maternity leave. Another senior leader has been absent on long-term leave since the spring of 2017.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 14 lessons, most jointly with senior leaders. In addition, inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work from a range of subjects, including English and mathematics.
- Inspectors held discussions with senior leaders. Discussions were also held with the acting chair and other members of the governing body. Inspectors also spoke with teachers, support staff and pupils.
- Inspectors reviewed documents including: safeguarding policies; behaviour and attendance records; self-evaluation and planning documents; and the school's records on performance management and teaching and learning.
- Account was taken of 12 staff survey responses and 91 responses by parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. In addition, inspectors considered 34 free-text responses and two letters from parents. There were no replies to Ofsted's online pupil survey.

Inspection team

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Bill James	Ofsted Inspector
Lea Hannam, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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