

Clunbury CofE Primary School

Clunbury, Craven Arms, Shropshire SY7 0HE

Inspection dates

14–15 November 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
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

- Although outcomes are now improving quickly, they have been too low since the last inspection, especially in writing.
- The proportion of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, working at a higher standard or at greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics is low.
- Not enough pupils in key stages 1 and 2 have made sufficiently rapid progress.
- Teaching is not consistently challenging or engaging for the most able pupils who, at times, find the work too easy. Boys are allowed to dominate discussions too much.
- Teachers' expectations for the quality of pupils' written work and presentation in their books are not consistently high. Written feedback from teachers to pupils does not routinely comply with the school's policy.
- There are too few opportunities for developing children's early literacy skills.
- Responsibilities for improving aspects of provision are not shared widely enough across the staff.
- The pupil premium fund is not sharply focused on improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.

The school has the following strengths

- The school has rapidly improved since the current headteacher was appointed. She is successfully tackling weaknesses in provision and outcomes.
- The headteacher and staff have been highly successful in improving pupils' behaviour, which is good.
- Staff, pupils and the very large majority of parents are fully supportive of the headteacher's vision for the school.
- Governors have successfully overseen the federation of schools, which has done much to strengthen this school's leadership. Leaders have engaged well with the local authority and diocese to bring about improvements.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- The early years provision and the teaching of phonics are good.
- The culture of safeguarding is strong.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more pupils, including the most able and disadvantaged pupils, make rapid progress by ensuring that:
 - teaching consistently challenges the most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged
 - pupils have the opportunity to work at a high standard and greater depth, especially in writing
 - children in the early years have more opportunities to develop their writing skills
 - teachers' expectations of the quality and presentation of pupils' work in their books are high
 - written feedback to pupils about their work complies with the school's policy
 - teachers engage girls in discussions about their work as much as they do boys.
- Further increase the impact that leaders and governors have on school improvement by ensuring that:
 - there is a wider distribution of leadership in the school
 - the pupil premium spending is focused more directly on improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in reading, writing and mathematics
 - the website meets requirements for information the school must publish about its curriculum in each year group.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since the headteacher was appointed, there have been significant improvements in the effectiveness of the school. She has ensured that there is greater stability in teaching staff. Through better monitoring and performance management, teaching and outcomes are improving, especially for younger pupils. Previous weaknesses identified in teaching, including in the early years, have been addressed. Any weak teaching has been improved.
- Soon after the last inspection, the school fell into rapid decline as a result of a high turnover in leadership and teaching staff. As a consequence, outcomes at the end of key stage 2 between 2013 and 2016 fell, especially in writing.
- The headteacher has successfully addressed the issue of the previous disruptive behaviour of a very small minority of pupils. This had a negative impact on the learning of others. The school is now a calm and orderly environment where teachers can get on with their prime role of teaching, largely free of disruption.
- The headteacher has a very honest and accurate view of the school's strengths and aspects that need to be improved further, including in teaching.
- The recent federation with two other schools has further increased the school's capacity to improve. However, within the school, governors are now looking to distribute leadership responsibilities more widely to ensure that all contribute strongly to the school's improvement.
- The headteacher has the support of staff, pupils and the overwhelming majority of parents. Those responding to Parent View said that they would recommend the school to other parents. All staff who responded to the staff survey, and in discussions with the inspector, said they were proud to be a member of the school. They all said the school was improving rapidly. Parents spoken to were universally positive about the headteacher's leadership.
- The headteacher has engaged well in partnerships with the local authority and diocese to bring about improvements. The local authority continues to be actively involved with the school but, as improvements continue, it no longer provides the intensive support it previously offered.
- The new pupil tracking system enables leaders and teachers to analyse which pupils are on track in each subject and who is falling behind.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well in lessons and during assembly time. Each month a core value, such as tolerance or respect, is celebrated in line with fundamental British values. The school engages well with local inter-faith communities in Craven Arms and pupils develop a fair understanding of different viewpoints.
- The physical education (PE) and sport premium is used effectively to provide sport and play equipment for pupils. Pupils enjoy a broad range of sports clubs. Opportunities for team games and competitions have increased since the federation with two other schools. Pupils participate in gymnastics, swimming and dance.

- Effective leadership of special educational needs ensures that the individual needs of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are met well and that resources are appropriately targeted.
- Pupils enjoy a broad and balanced curriculum. Pupils have increasing opportunities to write at length in different subjects, for example as part of their topic work on dinosaurs and 'Skara Brae' (a village in Orkney). Pupils enjoy out-of-class experiences through trips and residential experiences.
- The pupil premium has been used predominantly, and successfully, to promote the behaviour and personal well-being of the small minority of disadvantaged pupils in school. It has not been used as effectively to improve pupils' outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics.

Governance of the school

- Governors have been forward-looking in overseeing the federation with two other local schools. They have made a successful appointment of the executive headteacher, which is leading to improvements. They know the strengths and weaknesses of the school well. Members of the governing body are in school frequently, looking at pupils' work and talking to them and to their parents. They ensure that leaders meet all their duties and requirements with regard to safeguarding. Following the recent formation of the new federated governing body, governors are now tackling past weaknesses with urgency.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders ensure that safeguarding is the top priority for everyone in the school. Staff are trained well and kept fully up to date with the latest guidance. They are vigilant to any risks and aware, for example, of any pupils who have food allergies. The site has been made secure following previous concerns raised. Pupils play safely in the playground. Leaders are prompt in responding to any safeguarding incidents. They are diligent in making timely referrals and recording information in a secure and confidential way.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Although pupils are set different tasks according to age and ability, the extent to which the most able pupils are stretched and challenged is not high enough. As a result, not enough pupils are working at a higher standard or in greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers' expectations for the quality of pupils' written work and its presentation are not consistently high enough. Pupils have the opportunity to write at length in a range of styles, such as stories, diaries, newspaper articles and factual reports. However, the emphasis is on quantity rather than quality.
- Teachers' written feedback to pupils is not consistently in line with the school's policy.

As a result, areas for development are either not set by teachers, so that pupils do not know how they can improve their work, or where they are set, not followed through consistently by teachers or pupils. At other times, pupils are not given enough time or the opportunity to complete their work.

- Teachers have detailed information on disadvantaged pupils, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and those pupils who have fallen behind with their work. This information is not used by teachers well enough to inform planning. There is not a consistent enough level of challenge for these pupils. Instead there is an overemphasis on praise if the work has been successfully completed. There are too few opportunities to extend pupils' learning.
- There are too many times where boys, who are in the majority in the school, are allowed to dominate discussions. They sometimes call out answers to questions before being asked to respond.
- Teachers use computers and other technology well, for example to support pupils collecting and recording information on dinosaurs. Pupils are able to conduct independent research, although, at times, tasks are loosely planned and lack structure.
- Pupils have increasing opportunities to develop mathematics mastery through solving word problems. However, they sometimes struggle to unpick the calculation required by the questions posed.
- Teachers and additional adults teach phonics well. They model sounds effectively. As a result, pupils can use decoding strategies successfully when reading unfamiliar words. Younger pupils can break down sounds before attempting to pronounce whole words such as 'has', 'end' and 'day'.
- Teachers deploy additional adults well to enable pupils to work in smaller groups and receive additional support to help them with their learning.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are strong. Teachers and additional adults manage classes and groups skilfully to ensure that pupils behave well. Lessons are free of any disruptive behaviour.
- The headteacher has worked successfully with staff to establish a positive climate for learning in lessons. Pupils focus well on their tasks and have positive attitudes.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils spoken to said they feel very safe in school and reassured by the enhanced fencing around the school site. They said that bullying hardly ever happens but if it did occur, they are confident that they would report it and it would be dealt with successfully by adults. During the inspection, pupils attended a whole-school assembly about peace and anti-bullying. They were asked what they would do if they were bullied. Almost all put their hands up to say that they would tell an adult.
- Pupils report that they enjoy coming to school and enjoy almost all of their lessons and activities, including mathematics, PE and art. The reading club at lunchtime is also very

popular with pupils. A small number of pupils said that they do not enjoy French.

- Pupils develop independent study skills through conducting their own research into history topics such as Queen Victoria. Older children attend to the upkeep of the local church and maintain a herb garden in the school grounds.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe when using the internet. For example, they are aware of what to do if they are online and a sign flashes up to say they have won a prize. If it is for a competition they did not enter, they said they would not click on accept but instead would report it to an adult. They know not to give personal information to strangers.
- Pupils who spoke to the inspector and those responding to the online pupil survey said that staff in school respect them. In turn, they said they are accepted and welcomed by others from different backgrounds. There is a small but increasing level of cultural diversity in the school. Pupils from other backgrounds are made to feel at home, for example by welcome signs in Polish and Welsh.
- Pupils experience democracy in action through the election of a school council, which has produced a diverse range of pupils as representatives.
- Pupils have a good understanding of Christianity. They know about the beliefs of Quakers through their work on chocolate and visits to Cadbury World. Pupils also have a limited understanding of other religions, such as Hinduism which they have studied through the celebration of Diwali.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They conduct themselves well in lessons and when walking around the building. Their behaviour during breaktimes is of a high standard. They are polite and friendly towards visitors.
- Since the appointment of the current headteacher, there has been a significant improvement in pupils' behaviour. Expectations are very clear. The previous disruptive behaviour exhibited by a small minority of pupils has been challenged and now there is a calm, orderly environment in the classrooms, which are free of disruption.
- Pupils know the behaviour code well and say it is enforced strictly. They know the progressive consequences of misbehaviour, from missing a few minutes of 'golden time' or playtime for minor misdemeanours to letters home to parents for more serious incidents. They confirmed that behaviour in lessons and around the school is now good, with the exception of a few occurrences.
- Until recently, there had been no exclusions. More recently, since the appointment of the headteacher, there have been some exclusions. Pupils reported that the behaviour system is now strictly implemented but is only required for a very small number of cases.
- According to parents' responses to Parent View and those spoken to by the inspector, pupils behave well in school. The school's weekly behaviour logs confirm that there are now just a few minor incidents recorded each week.
- In the playground, pupils play well together and ensure that no one is left out. They are sensible when using the restricted play area and any other play equipment.

- The level of attendance had been consistently above the national average up to 2016. However, during the last academic year, rates of attendance fell to below average. This term it is still below average. The rate of persistent absence is limited to a small number of pupils; in most instances this is linked to medical conditions and illness.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Numbers in each year group are very small and, therefore, assessment information should be treated with caution. It is not possible to comment specifically on outcomes for Year 6 pupils in the most recent tests and assessments in reading, writing and mathematics in 2017 because very small samples make meaningful analysis difficult. However, since 2013, outcomes have been low for pupils, especially in writing.
- The relatively high mobility of pupils is a challenge for those pupils who have had disruptions in their learning through moving schools.
- The school's new tracking system indicates that not enough pupils currently in Years 1 to 6 have made sufficient progress from their starting points.
- Too few pupils are on track to be working at a high standard or in greater depth by the end of key stages 1 and 2. This includes the most able pupils and disadvantaged pupils.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in phonics by the end of Year 1 was falling up to 2016. Outcomes in Year 1 phonics improved in 2017 after the previous three-year decline.
- Since the appointment of the current headteacher, there have been improvements in teaching. This is arresting the previous declining trend in outcomes. There is now an improving picture in each key stage, especially for younger pupils up to Year 4. Older pupils still have a lot of ground to make up by the end of Year 6 to be well prepared for the next phase in their education.
- A higher proportion of pupils, especially younger ones, have made more accelerated progress since the start of this academic year. At the time of the inspection visit, the school had not carried out its first assessment of the year but work in pupils' books shows improvements in writing in each key stage. Pupils throughout the school are now making better progress than before.
- The overall progress of disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities is improving.

Early years provision

Good

- Provision and outcomes are improving rapidly in the early years. Following the appointment of the current headteacher, any identified weaknesses, including those flagged up by external reviews, have been addressed with rigour and urgency.
- New and effective leadership is in place. The indoors environment has been transformed. It is a pleasant learning area with many examples of children's work on display and a range of engaging learning activities set out.
- Children now benefit from the newly-designated Nursery and Reception rooms and can

move freely between the indoors and outdoors learning environments.

- Children, including those who joined the school very recently, have established routines of good behaviour. They are kept safe and secure through the careful attention of staff.
- Adults have developed positive relationships with children and their parents. This helps children to feel secure at school and also encourages them to engage successfully in activities.
- The proportion of children reaching a good level of development increased significantly in 2017. This includes in writing, which had been low in previous years. Learning journals indicate that current children are making rapid progress across almost all of the areas of learning in which they are assessed. However, the school could make more of the improved provision to develop children's early writing skills.
- Teachers and additional adults teach phonics well. Lessons engage and enthuse children, who participate actively in tasks such as finding hidden sounds around the room. In more formal structured activities, the boys are often allowed to dominate discussions.
- Information for parents is detailed so that they know how their children are doing and how they can support them at home.

School details

Unique reference number	123541
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	10032695

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 aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	55
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Simon Mondon
Executive headteacher	Anna Cook
Telephone number	01588 660 207
Website	www.clunburyschool.org.uk
Email address	head@clunbury.shropshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	20–21 March 2013

Information about this school

- Clunbury CofE Primary School is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. Pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes: one in the early years, one in key stage 1 and the other in key stage 2.
- The proportion of boys in the school is consistently higher than that of girls.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- The school is one of the three members of the Blue Hills Federation. The current governing body has had oversight of the three schools in the federation since it was established in September 2017. A number of former governors from the school have transferred across to the newly federated governing body. The chair is new in post.
- The current headteacher was appointed in an acting executive capacity in January 2017. She took up the position of permanent executive headteacher in September 2017.

- The early years coordinator was appointed in May 2017.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is broadly in line with the national average. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- Most pupils are White British. There are very few minority ethnic pupils and none who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school mid-way through a key stage is high.
- The school has not been assessed against the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 because of the very small number in the cohort.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the curriculum on its website.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed six lessons or parts of lessons, all of which were jointly observed with the headteacher. In addition, the inspector made a number of other short visits to lessons and other activities.
- The inspector heard pupils read during lessons and conducted a scrutiny of their written work in literacy and other subjects, and their numeracy work.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, other leaders, members of staff and spoke to a group of pupils.
- The inspector met six members of the federated governing body, including the chair and the former chair of the school governing body.
- The inspector met with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector spoke to 11 parents during the inspection. In addition, he took account of 23 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, 12 responses to the pupil survey and seven responses to the staff survey.
- The inspector observed the school's work and scrutinised a number of documents, including those relating to the school's self-evaluation, as well as improvement plans and the school's information on pupils' recent attainment and progress.
- The inspector reviewed information about pupils' behaviour and attendance. He also checked policies and procedures relating to special educational needs, pupil premium funding, PE and sport premium funding, safeguarding and child protection.

Inspection team

Mark Sims, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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