

St Matthew's Church of England Primary School

Church Road, Cainscross, Stroud, Gloucestershire GL5 4JE

Inspection dates

4–5 July 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders and governors have an overly generous evaluation of the school's performance. As a result, school leaders, including governors, have not acted robustly over time to address weaknesses.
- Over time leaders have not managed the performance of teachers well. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning has declined.
- Middle leaders have not been effective in raising standards within their subjects. Training and professional development for middle leaders have not resulted in sufficient improvement in pupils' outcomes.
- Too often, teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low. Most teachers do not use assessments to plan learning that builds on what pupils know already. As a result, too many pupils do not achieve well, particularly the most able and in key stage 1.
- Too often, teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment are inaccurate. Pupils are given tasks which are too easy or too hard.
- Pupils lack a good understanding of mathematics. This hampers their ability to apply their skills, solve problems and make strong progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities do not make swift enough progress. For many, teaching does not meet their needs.
- Over the previous three years there has been a decline in the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standards in writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 1.
- Weak teaching in the Reception Year has prevented children making sufficient progress, particularly the most able.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils generally conduct themselves well around the school.
- Safeguarding is effective.
- Pupils' attendance is above the national average. Leaders have worked well with families to ensure that pupils attend school regularly.
- Parents and carers are positive about the school and the leaders. They value the caring and nurturing ethos.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management, including governance, by:
 - supporting leaders in developing the skills to carry out their roles effectively
 - putting in place a thorough and coherent approach that improves the quality of teaching, learning and assessment
 - ensuring that checks on the quality of teaching take account of the impact of teaching on pupils' progress
 - governors fulfilling their statutory duties to ensure that pupils' progress improves swiftly
 - making sure that funding provided for disadvantaged pupils and for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is used effectively.
- Through effective teaching and learning, raise standards achieved by pupils by ensuring that teachers:
 - receive the training they need to improve the quality of their teaching
 - have high expectations of what pupils know, understand and can do
 - provide pupils with the skills and knowledge required to make rapid progress
 - use accurate assessments to plan learning that meets the needs of pupils, especially the most able, disadvantaged and those who have SEN and/or disabilities
 - develop pupils' mathematical knowledge and reasoning skills.
- Improve the leadership of the early years foundation stage so that:
 - teachers' assessment is accurate and used to plan learning that sustains children's interest so that they achieve well, especially the most able children
 - children are well prepared for Year 1.

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

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Leaders and governors have an overly generous evaluation of the school's performance. School leaders, including governors, are not improving weaknesses swiftly enough. For example, children do not make enough progress in Reception, especially the most able.
- Leaders do not manage the performance of teachers well. Leaders have not been effective in holding teachers to account for pupils' learning. Leaders do not provide teachers with clear guidance about how to improve. As a result, the quality of teaching is poor and too many pupils underachieve.
- Until recently, leaders and teachers have not been tracking pupils' assessments effectively. Therefore, too many teachers do not have an accurate understanding of pupils' progress. Assessments are not used effectively to plan learning activities that are closely matched to pupils' needs. As a result, too many pupils are not achieving the standards of which they are capable.
- Leaders' strategy to deploy additional pupil premium funding has failed to accelerate the progress of disadvantaged pupils sufficiently. Leaders have failed to make close enough checks on expenditure to know which strategies are not effective in helping pupils to catch up.
- Leaders have not been effective in addressing the declining standards in key stage 1 writing and mathematics. Senior leaders have not provided middle leaders with training on checking standards in their subjects effectively. As a result, middle leaders are unable to support teachers and ensure that pupils are provided with the learning they need to make better progress.
- Leadership of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is weak. Leaders do not evaluate effectively the quality of education these pupils receive. Leaders do not have a realistic understanding of the success of any support provided to these pupils. Consequently, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities do not make sufficient progress.
- Leaders make effective use of the sport premium to provide a vast range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils report that they enjoy the 'Enrichment Week', with activities such as rowing, climbing and archery. Nevertheless, there is little evaluation of the impact of these activities on pupils' sporting abilities and physical fitness over time.
- At times, the curriculum is planned well and pupils are inspired and enthused; their interests are developed. For example, the enterprise project for Year 6 pupils provides them with skills of a practical nature as well as good financial and entrepreneurial understanding.
- Opportunities for pupils' spiritual, social and moral development are well established, and this is a strong feature of the school's work. For example, pupils understand democracy, are tolerant of each other and have a good understanding of different faiths and religions. Younger pupils look forward to taking on additional responsibilities in Year 6.
- Parents praised the headteacher for her positive relationships with children and themselves. Families value the pastoral support that the school provides. This has been

a significant factor in improving pupils' attendance at school.

Governance of the school

- Over time, governors have not held school leaders to account sufficiently for the decline in standards. There has been a period of instability and change in governance since the previous inspection. This has impeded governors' effectiveness. Until very recently, leaders have provided governors with limited information to evaluate the school's performance accurately.
- Governors have not ensured the effective use of additional funding for those who have SEN and/or disabilities or those who are disadvantaged.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have ensured that the school has a strong culture of safeguarding. Staff are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and have a clear understanding of what to do if they are concerned about a pupil. The school works effectively with outside agencies, and with parents, to support pupils and their families. Parents appreciate the support they have received from the school to enable their children to attend, such as breakfast club facilities and the use of a minibus to collect pupils.
- The school's systems ensure that staff are recruited safely. Staff and governors have been trained in safer recruitment. All staff and governors have updated training in safeguarding regularly and understand their responsibilities. However, staff do not have a good enough understanding of radicalisation, extremism, substance abuse or the involvement of gangs on pupils' welfare.
- Pupils report that they feel safe in school. They understand the school's systems to keep them safe and they talk confidently about how to keep themselves safe online. They know that adults in school would help them if they were worried or concerned.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- Teachers' expectations of what pupils should achieve are typically too low. This is compounded by inaccurate assessment of pupils' attainment. As a result, too few pupils make the progress they are capable of.
- Teachers do not routinely plan learning that matches pupils' needs. As a result, pupils find it difficult to maintain positive attitudes towards their learning. Too often, the resulting low-level disruption goes unchallenged by class teachers.
- Teachers have an overgenerous view of the standards pupils are achieving, particularly those of the most able. Too often, across the school, the most able pupils revisit learning that they already know and are not sufficiently challenged to reach the higher standards they should.
- In mathematics, pupils' understanding of calculations is well developed. However, until recently, teachers did not provide pupils with work that developed their reasoning skills and ability to solve problems. The least able pupils rarely move on to these activities in

their learning as teachers have low expectations of their capabilities.

- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are not taught effectively. Teachers do not take their individual needs into account when planning learning. Too often, pupils are given the same learning as other pupils, which they find too hard and do not understand. Additionally, the support these pupils receive is not focused effectively on their needs. Consequently, pupils' learning stalls.
- Teachers have not ensured that pupils have a secure understanding of grammar, punctuation and spelling patterns. In addition, although pupils' improved phonic knowledge is supporting their improved reading, too few pupils apply their phonic knowledge to their writing.
- Despite these weaknesses, teaching is effective in supporting pupils' love of reading. Teachers ensure that pupils read texts in different writing styles and by a wide range of authors. Some teachers' questioning and activities are improving pupils' ability to infer meaning. As a result, standards in reading are often much higher than in writing and mathematics.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils' understanding of themselves as successful learners is limited. Some pupils' achievement stalls because they are overly dependent on the support of adults. This is because teachers do not ensure that other adults provide the precise level of academic support that some pupils need.
- The school provides well for the physical and emotional well-being of pupils. The pupils appreciate the support they receive in 'the den' as it enables them to develop their personal skills and emotional well-being.
- Pupils feel safe in school. They are aware of how to keep themselves safe in the wider world, including staying safe online. Pupils report that there are very few incidents of bullying. When they occur, they are dealt with effectively by teachers and school leaders.
- The school's caring ethos is evident in the positive relationships between pupils and adults. Pupils who require additional support with their social and emotional issues develop their personal and social skills because of the effective guidance and nurturing by staff. Pupils and parents appreciate the actions taken by leaders and staff to support these aspects.
- The breakfast club provides a safe and friendly environment for pupils to start the day and be ready to learn. This is especially beneficial for disadvantaged pupils, for whom the school provides transport to school, which has improved attendance.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Where teaching is weak, pupils' low-level disruption distracts others from learning and hinders pupils' progress.
- Until recently, there has not been sufficient emphasis on leaders tackling and making checks on pupils' poor behaviour. As a result, those who continue to demonstrate low-level distracting or off-task behaviours or present with more challenging behaviour have not improved. There has been no decline in the number of incidents of poor behaviour.
- Pupils are usually friendly, polite and courteous when moving around the school. Pupils say that they value the school's caring ethos.
- Pupils play energetically in the playground. They feel safe and say that other pupils are usually kind. They feel that bullying does sometimes happen; however, they report that any issues are resolved by adults.
- Attendance continues to improve and has been above the national average for three years.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics has declined in recent years and represents weak progress from their starting points.
- Boys' outcomes are lower than those of boys nationally. Current work in books shows that boys are still not catching up at the same rate as the girls.
- The most able pupils do not receive work that challenges them or deepens their understanding. Historically, too few of the most able pupils have reached the highest standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Although there are some early signs of improvement, this is fragile. Pupils' books show that far too many pupils continue to be presented with activities that are too easy for them.
- Lower-ability pupils cannot read or write as well as they should. They do not make sufficient progress in their knowledge, understanding and skills.
- Too few disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, make sufficient progress. The funding is not used well enough to support disadvantaged pupils' academic development. Their progress, although improved in recent months, is too slow.
- Learning activities and additional support for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are not matched closely to their individual needs. There are signs that more pupils are catching up this year, but it is not enough to compensate for their previous underachievement.
- The proportion of pupils who reached the required standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has risen consistently in recent years to be above the national average in 2016 and 2017. However, although still above the national average, the proportion of pupils reaching the required standard has declined this year. Too many pupils make weak progress.
- The proportion of pupils reaching expected standards in reading is at least in line with

national averages at the end of key stages 1 and 2. Pupils apply their strong phonic knowledge to their reading and become keen readers.

Early years provision

Inadequate

- Children do not make the progress of which they are capable during their time in Reception. In addition, too few leave the Reception Year with the skills required to make a successful start in Year 1.
- Teachers' expectations are too low. The activities planned for the children do not meet their needs because they lack challenge. Too few of the most able children make sufficient progress.
- The leadership of early years is weak. Leaders' current plans for improvement are not precise enough and do not demonstrate the urgency needed or a good understanding of the actions that need to be taken to improve children's outcomes. As a result, leaders' support to improve the quality of teaching is not bringing about change quickly enough and children are not achieving as well as they could.
- Teachers' understanding of what children can and cannot do is poor and at times inaccurate. Consequently, teachers do not plan learning that ensures that children, including disadvantaged pupils, make the progress they should. As a result, children do not maintain their interest in the activities planned.
- The teaching of phonics in Reception is not ensuring that children gain a good understanding of letters and the sounds they make. Children are unable to blend letter sounds together successfully to be competent readers. Teachers do not adequately support children to apply their phonic knowledge, and so children make little progress in writing.
- Teaching staff do not provide sufficient guidance or support to help children develop their early reading and writing skills. Consequently, too many children are ill-prepared for Year 1.
- Frequently, children do not show positive attitudes towards learning. Teaching staff have not established high enough expectations of children's behaviour. Children do not listen to each other or adults carefully or behave well.
- The early years setting is safe and secure. Safeguarding arrangements are effective.
- Parents are increasingly involved in their children's education and value the school's communication with them.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 115699 |
| Local authority | Gloucestershire |
| Inspection number | 10048968 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 207 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Jacqui Powell |
| Headteacher | Gina Thomson |
| Telephone number | 01453 764705 |
| Website | www.st-matthews.gloucs.sch.uk |
| Email address | head@st-matthews.gloucs.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 7 February 2018 |

Information about this school

- St Matthew's Church of England Primary School is a smaller than the average-sized primary school. The current headteacher took up post in September 2015.
- The proportion of girls attending the school is well below the national average.
- The majority of pupils are from a White British background.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is broadly average. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school provides both a breakfast club and after-school care which were part of this inspection.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning across the school. Most observations were undertaken jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' current work in books across the curriculum and carried out learning walks across the school.
- Meetings were held with governors, middle leaders and pupils. The lead inspector met with the 'challenge and support partners' from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 56 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and had informal discussions with parents when they brought their children to school.
- Inspectors took account of 17 responses to the staff questionnaire and 15 responses to the pupil questionnaire. The inspectors talked with pupils at break and lunchtime, as well as during lessons.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of school documents, including the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, school policies, governors' minutes of meetings and the school's assessment systems and monitoring records.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of safeguarding evidence, including the school's single central record and behaviour and incident logs.

Inspection team

Paul Smith, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Geraldine Tidy

Ofsted Inspector

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