

Onny CofE (A) Primary School

Onibury, Craven Arms, Shropshire SY7 9AW

Inspection dates

12–13 March 2019

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
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

- Leaders and governors have not maintained the standards of education that were in place at the time of the previous inspection.
- In recent years, teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve have been too variable. Consequently, pupils' progress has been well below average and attainment has been low. Too few pupils achieve the standards expected for their age, especially in writing and mathematics.
- New approaches to teaching phonics, spelling, grammar and mathematics have been introduced. It is too soon to see the full impact of these on pupils' outcomes.
- Leaders have not ensured that their expectations about teaching are clear and applied consistently across the school.
- Some lessons are not well matched to pupils' needs, being too hard for some and lacking challenge for others. When this happens, it slows the progress pupils make and can lead to pupils losing concentration.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. However, some subject leaders' roles are not well developed and there is not a clear picture of progress in each subject across each year group.

The school has the following strengths

- Governors, leaders and staff have created a highly inclusive school with a positive Christian ethos and welcoming environment.
- Governors and leaders are now fully aware of the areas requiring improvement. They are taking appropriate action to address these.
- Pupils are very well cared for. They are safe and enjoy coming to school.
- Pupils' behaviour is generally good and there are strong pastoral systems in place to help pupils who need social and emotional support.
- Vulnerable pupils, such as those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those eligible for the pupil premium, receive personalised and carefully planned packages of support.
- The early years provides children with a warm and nurturing environment. This helps them to make a positive start to their school life.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve outcomes for all pupils by increasing rates of progress in all year groups and in all subjects, but particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - ensuring that all staff have high expectations for what the pupils can achieve
 - embedding the new approaches to teaching phonics, spelling and grammar to improve writing skills
 - continuing to strengthen the teaching of mathematics
 - ensuring that tasks are matched well to pupils' learning needs.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that leaders are clear in the approaches to teaching to be used by staff
 - ensuring that there is greater consistency in the quality of teaching across the school
 - developing the role of subject leaders to ensure that there is effective planning for progression across all year groups
 - ensuring that governors develop a focused action plan to strengthen their effectiveness in holding senior leaders to account.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders and governors have not maintained the standards of education that were in place at the time of the last inspection. While they were initially slow to respond to this decline, governors and the new senior leadership team now have a clear understanding of the areas that need to improve. They have started to take effective action to address weaker areas and there is evidence in pupils' books that current pupils are making stronger progress than has been the case in the recent past.
- Leaders acknowledge that, over time, there has been too much variability in the quality of teaching across the school. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not consistently high enough. Leaders have not made clear their expectations about teaching nor checked well enough to see that they are applied across the school.
- Senior leaders have recently strengthened systems to assess and monitor pupils' progress in English and mathematics. As a result, governors, leaders and teachers better understand how well pupils are doing in these areas. Leaders and teachers now make use of this information to adapt future planning.
- New approaches to the teaching of English and mathematics have been introduced. Together these changes are starting to have a positive impact on the standards of pupils' work across the school.
- The school's curriculum, which is linked to the requirements of the national curriculum, is based around a two-year, rolling programme of topics. This is regularly reviewed as class structures change. However, not all subjects are equally well taught. For example, music provision is strong. All pupils learn two musical instruments during key stage 2, building on pupils' knowledge of musical theory and practice begun in key stage 1. On the other hand, leaders have identified that the teaching of French is an area that needs to be improved.
- Some aspects of the curriculum are organised through whole-school topics such as a project to commemorate the centenary of the First World War. Others are taught through class-based, cross-curricular topics, such as 'rainforest', or individual subject areas. While the curriculum is broad and balanced, senior and subject leaders do not have a comprehensive overview of the learning that takes place in each subject and in each year group, except in English and mathematics. As a result, they do not have a clear picture of the progress pupils are making or any gaps in their knowledge.
- Support for pupils with SEND is a strength of the school. The school provides effectively for pupils with a wide range of needs. Pupils' needs are identified quickly and are addressed in a variety of ways, including extra support in class and specialist interventions from both school staff and external agencies. The special educational needs coordinator is highly knowledgeable about each pupil, ensuring that plans are personalised to their needs. Staff receive appropriate training to help them meet the needs of individual pupils and additional funding is used effectively. The school works closely with parents and carers, who appreciate the information and support that they receive about their child's progress.
- Leaders and governors have created a highly inclusive school that welcomes all pupils,

regardless of their needs or background. Together with the rest of the staff, they are passionate about ensuring that pupils develop resilience and a positive 'can do' attitude to their learning.

- The school supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education effectively through a wide range of activities, such as theatre trips, arts projects, residential trips and raising money for charity. Activities are closely linked with the school's Christian ethos. Pupils are respectful and friendly to each other. They have an age-appropriate understanding of fundamental British values, such as democracy and tolerance. Pupils learn about a range of different faiths and cultures. For example, some key stage 2 pupils talked to the inspector about their work on Islam and Judaism. Leaders encourage discussion about moral 'big questions' and deal sensitively with current affairs and events which may worry or impact on the pupils. As a result of these opportunities, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- School leaders are aware of the academic and social and emotional barriers to learning that disadvantaged pupils face and they appropriately target the use of the pupil premium funding to address their needs.
- The primary physical education (PE) and sport funding is used effectively to improve pupils' participation in and enjoyment of sport. Specialist coaches lead some PE lessons in school, run after-school sports clubs and provide professional development for staff. This is helping to improve the quality of PE provision across the school. All pupils in key stages 1 and 2 have access to swimming lessons during the year.
- The great majority of parents are positive about the work of the school. They particularly value the commitment shown by staff to ensuring that all pupils are well looked after in school. As one parent said, 'Pupils are encouraged to learn in a safe, friendly and supportive environment'.
- The school works effectively with a wide range of external agencies. Leaders value the advice that they receive, for example from the advisory teacher for Gypsy, Roma, Traveller children. The school is responding well to guidance provided by their school improvement partner and the local authority.

Governance of the school

- Governors are very proud to be associated with the school, particularly in relation to the school's welcoming ethos and culture. They are clear on the school's current strengths and weaknesses and they are committed to working with school leaders to address the school's priorities. Governors are supportive of the recent changes that have been made to raise standards in English and mathematics.
- Governors bring a broad range of professional skills and experiences to the role. This helps them to fulfil their statutory responsibilities effectively. They have benefited from training provided by the local authority to increase their understanding of the school's data. This is enabling them to support and challenge leaders more effectively than in the past.
- Each governor is linked with a curricular subject or aspect of the school, such as safeguarding. These links are helping governors to strengthen their understanding of the workings of the school. However, this information is not always shared effectively

to strengthen overall governance. Historically, governors have not been fully effective in holding leaders to account for outcomes and the quality of teaching.

- Governors have a clear overview of how additional funding is used to support disadvantaged pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Keeping children safe is central to the work of the school and leaders have created a culture where all staff know that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. As a result, the school is a safe environment for pupils and they are well cared for at all times.
- All staff have regular and appropriate training to understand their responsibilities in keeping pupils safe and they are vigilant in looking out for indicators of risk or harm.
- The safeguarding team maintains the required confidential records and, when appropriate, the team shares information with relevant external agencies. Leaders follow up concerns with these agencies as necessary.
- Leaders ensure that appropriate checks are carried out on all adults appointed to work at the school.
- Pupils spoken to said that they feel safe in school and know that the adults are there to look after them. Pupils learn how to keep safe, for example when online, and through visits from external agencies such as the police, Network Rail and the NSPCC.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment has been too unreliable to ensure that pupils make the progress in English and mathematics of which they are capable. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve have been too variable and approaches to teaching have been applied inconsistently within and across subjects.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and classrooms are generally positive environments in which to learn. However, sometimes the level and demand of the work set does not match the specific needs of the pupils. For example, activities can be too challenging for some pupils while being too easy for others. This can result in pupils losing focus and making less progress than they could have done.
- The school's policy for giving pupils feedback is not clearly understood by pupils and is not routinely applied by staff. For example, leaders' expectations about how errors in spelling or number and letter formation should be addressed are not consistently followed.
- Leaders have introduced a new approach to teaching phonics. Phonics sessions are engaging and pupils apply their phonics skills to read and write new words with increasing confidence. Pupils enjoy reading and, across the school, more pupils are regularly reading high-quality, age-appropriate texts. 'Special' whole-class reading books are used as a basis for written work and are often linked to the current class topic.

- Last academic year, leaders and teachers recognised that progress for some pupils was being held back because their basic skills were not strong enough. In writing, teachers have taken steps to improve pupils' handwriting. Pupils are now able to write more fluently and the quality of presentation has improved. In mathematics, pupils are developing more swift and accurate recall of number facts, including multiplication tables, to support them when completing calculations.
- This academic year, new approaches have been introduced to support the teaching of spelling and grammar. These, along with a refreshed approach to the teaching of writing, are starting to have a positive impact on pupils' outcomes. This can be seen in many pupils' books in terms of the quality of written work but it is not yet consistent across different subjects.
- Pupils' poor mathematical outcomes are being addressed through a new approach to the teaching of mathematics. This is raising teachers' expectations of what pupils should be achieving. Teachers are increasingly consolidating pupils' learning by making the links between mathematical activities explicit and revisiting prior learning at the start of lessons. This is helping to build pupils' confidence. Pupils' improving number skills mean that they are better able to apply their knowledge to solve mathematical problems reliably. However, these approaches and higher expectations are not yet consistent across all year groups.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is generally good and, consequently, they teach most concepts securely, using subject-specific vocabulary correctly. Training and support are helping teachers and teaching assistants to maximise the impact of the new approaches to English and mathematics. Teachers also work with colleagues in other schools to share expertise.
- Teaching assistants are used effectively across the school to support pupils' academic and social and emotional needs. They work flexibly to provide one-to-one or small-group support. Good use is made of space throughout the school for intervention sessions or to provide space for pupils who require some time out.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils are polite, happy and confident. They generally show positive attitudes to learning and they are proud of their school.
- The pastoral support available to pupils and their families is a strength of the school, with staff offering programmes to support a range of social and emotional needs. There is clear evidence that these have had a beneficial impact on a number of pupils and enable them to engage positively in lessons.
- Around the school, there are a wide range of displays to support pupils' learning and celebrate their achievements. Regular celebration assemblies acknowledge pupils' successes, whether they are for academic achievement, effort or behaviour.
- Pupils have opportunities to contribute to school life and the wider community, for instance through the school council or by taking part in events to raise money for

charity.

- Pupils demonstrate a high level of tolerance for one another. For example, pupils have an awareness that some of their classmates have additional needs and might need extra support. One older pupil summed this up by saying, 'You are always welcome here, whoever you are.'
- Pupils learn how to stay healthy and spoke to the inspector about the importance of healthy eating and keeping active. They also had an age-appropriate understanding of the importance of mental health and having a 'can do' attitude.
- Pupils who attend the school's breakfast and after-school clubs are well looked after and have access to a range of games and activities. There are effective systems in place to safeguard pupils on arrival and departure. Pupils socialise well with adults and each other.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Leaders, staff and pupils are clear on the school's approach to managing behaviour, which is increasingly effective and focuses on motivating the pupils to behave well. Each class has determined their own reward and sanction system in conjunction with their class teacher. Pupils spoken to were clear on how the system worked in their class and felt that it motivated them to behave well. Pupils felt the systems were fair. Adults actively model the high standard of behaviour expected from pupils and reinforce positive behaviour in class and around school.
- Behaviour in classrooms is generally of a high standard, with most pupils being keen to learn. Sometimes pupils lose focus or become distracted if the level or the pace of the lesson is not right for them and this can have an impact on the progress that they make. Adults provide effective support for pupils who struggle with self-control.
- In recent months, the introduction of staggered breaktimes and lunchtimes, along with additional play equipment, has led to fewer behaviour incidents at unstructured times. No poor behaviour was seen during the inspection.
- Pupils understand what bullying is and the various forms that it may take, including cyber bullying. They are clear that incidents of bullying in school are rare and they are confident that an adult will deal with any concerns quickly once they become known.
- While most pupils attend school regularly, overall attendance is below the national average. However, leaders carefully track every pupil's attendance and understand the circumstances behind their absences, working closely with families and external agencies to improve attendance when it falls below an acceptable level. They contact parents on the first day of absence, to help ensure that pupils are safe and not at risk of going missing from education.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- This is a small school with small numbers of pupils in each cohort. This means that published data can vary considerably from one year to the next based on the performance of one or two pupils. Even so, standards have fallen since the previous inspection and, over time, underachievement has been widespread.
- Historically, progress across key stage 2 has been significantly below the national average in writing and mathematics and the proportion of pupils attaining the standards expected for their age has been low. No pupil has achieved the higher standard expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Attainment in mathematics has been particularly low at the end of both key stage 1 and key stage 2.
- Outcomes in the Year 1 phonics screening check have been variable over time.
- Leaders acknowledge that, over time, outcomes have been poor. Historically, there has been a strong and successful focus on ensuring that pupils are socially and emotionally ready to learn. There is now a much greater focus on academic progress.
- Evidence indicates that the picture for current pupils, including those with SEND and those who are disadvantaged, is improving. Leaders have developed a tracking system to use across the federation that allows close monitoring of progress and helps to identify barriers to learning. This supports leaders and teachers to plan the next steps for each pupil and to check on the success of these.
- Leaders track pupils' progress on a termly basis. Leaders and teachers are now clearer on the standards pupils should be reaching and the need for pupils to make strong progress to achieve well. Opportunities for comparing standards with local schools are helping teachers to make accurate judgements about pupils' achievements.
- Evidence in books and from standardised tests shows that many pupils are making stronger progress than has been the case in the past. More are now working at the standards expected for their age. However, this does not apply equally to all subjects and year groups. There is more to do to secure consistently good progress across the school.
- Interventions for vulnerable pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, are closely matched to pupils' needs and the impact of these is carefully tracked. Evidence for current pupils shows that more are making good progress from their starting points than previously.
- The initial impact of the new approaches to teaching in English and mathematics can be seen in pupils' work. For example, pupils in key stage 1 are making strong progress with their writing. It is too soon, however, to see a sustained impact on pupils' outcomes.

Early years provision

Good

- Children come into the early years with knowledge and skills a little below those which are typical for their age. Over the last four years, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development has declined and is below the national average. However, this headline figure masks the personalised provision that is in place, and which effectively supports vulnerable children, including those with SEND, to be well prepared

for their transition into Year 1.

- The early years lead, who took up post at the start of the current academic year, has high expectations for what each child can achieve. She knows all the children's needs very well and has identified specific next steps for each individual. These are shared with staff to ensure that all adults are focusing on the right priorities for each child. This is leading to children making stronger progress than has been seen in the past. She has a clear plan to develop the provision further and staff have already benefited from externally provided training on a range of relevant topics.
- The children are very well cared for and they are confident and eager to join in activities. Children's behaviour is good and they show respect for each other. Both Nursery and Reception children play cooperatively, sharing resources and discussing their activities.
- Children respond well to instructions from adults. The children, including the youngest nursery children, know and follow clear routines so that little learning time is wasted.
- Safeguarding procedures are effective and welfare requirements are met fully. Resources and systems are adapted on the two days that two-year-olds are in the provision. This is to ensure that the activities on offer are safe for younger children and that there are sufficient members of staff to cater for their needs.
- In Reception, the teaching of early literacy skills through phonics is increasingly effective. However, the new programme for teaching phonics was not introduced promptly at the start of the year. As a result, some children have not made as much progress as they could have done. Children are accurately taught how to recognise the sounds that letters make and blend these together to make words. Children are beginning to write independently.
- The curriculum is well planned to cover a broad range of activities. Topics are adapted to meet children's interests. For example, in Reception, a topic on animals is focusing on wild animals and meerkats in particular, which hold a fascination for the children. The class teacher is reading a book about meerkats with the children, in preparation for a forthcoming trip to a safari park.
- The early years learning environment, indoors but especially outdoors, is well resourced and effectively supports all areas of learning. Children also benefit from weekly forest-school sessions. Reading areas are 'low key' and do not obviously promote a love of books within the early years classrooms.
- The early years staff are welcoming and encourage regular communication with parents. This includes 'stay and play' and transition sessions to help build confidence and ensure that the children settle quickly. Staff record children's progress in learning journals that they regularly share with parents. Parents are encouraged to contribute to these journals by adding their own examples of achievements. A toddlers' group takes place weekly, to build relationships with parents and younger children.

School details

Unique reference number	123560
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	10082195

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	98
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Leah Hughes
Executive Headteacher	Penelope Knight
Telephone number	01584 856 320
Website	www.stmichaelsfed.shropshire.sch.uk/
Email address	adminonny@stmichaelsfed.shropshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	25–26 February 2015

Information about this school

- Onny CofE (A) Primary is part of St Michael's Federation. The federation is made up of two small village schools that work closely together. They are led and managed by an executive headteacher, one leadership team and a single governing body. The school is managed on a day-to-day basis by a lead teacher.
- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school, although pupil numbers have increased since the last inspection. Pupils are taught in one of four mixed-age classes.
- A Section 48 inspection to evaluate the distinctiveness and effectiveness of Onny CofE (A) Primary as a Church of England school took place in November 2014.
- The great majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. An increasing proportion of pupils are from the Gypsy, Roma, Traveller community. Currently no pupils speak English as an additional language.

- The proportion of pupils with SEND is well above the national average, as is the proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is lower than the national average.
- Nursery children attend on either a part-time or a full-time basis. Children in Reception attend full time.
- The school offers breakfast and after-school clubs. This provision is managed by the governing body.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector made visits to lessons in all classes. Many of these visits were undertaken jointly with a member of the senior leadership team.
- The inspector met with pupils and listened to some Year 1 and Year 3 pupils read. She looked at examples of pupils' work and spoke to pupils formally and informally. The inspector observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime, lunchtime and around the school, as well as in lessons. She also observed pupils at breakfast and after-school club.
- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, the senior leadership team and members of staff. The inspector met with four governors, including the chair of the governing body. The inspector also met with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector scrutinised a wide range of documentation. This included the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, records relating to safeguarding and attendance, minutes of meetings of the governing body, school performance data and the school's website.
- The inspector considered parents' opinions through 32 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 19 free-text responses. The inspector also spoke to some parents before school on each day of the inspection.
- Eleven responses to the staff questionnaire were considered as part of the inspection.

Inspection team

Catherine Crooks, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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