

Carterton Primary School

Burford Road, Carterton, Oxfordshire OX18 3AD

Inspection dates

19–20 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

- Considerable leadership change including a recent de-federation process have resulted in a decline in the standards of teaching and pupils' attainment.
- The new governing body, supported by the local authority, has taken swift action to resolve federation and leadership issues. Governors know the aspects the school needs to improve. Their actions are helping to secure consistency in senior leadership but the systems enabling them to hold leaders to account are not yet secure.
- Until recently, senior and middle leaders' skills were not being used well enough. Although they were given responsibility, they did not have the opportunity to fulfil their roles. Under the guidance of the local authority, the skills of senior and middle leaders are now being used effectively. This is leading to improvements in their areas of responsibility.
- Teaching is not yet good. Recent developments have ensured that teachers now know how to improve their practice. As a result, the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics has improved in some classes. However, it is not consistent across all classes and subjects.
- Assessment information is not always used effectively to enable pupils to make strong progress. Too many pupils are given work that is either too hard or too easy.
- Progress is strengthening in some classes and year groups. However, lessons do not consistently build on pupils' skills and knowledge. Currently, many pupils are not making the strong progress they are capable of, particularly the most able.
- The quality of teaching and pupils' progress in subjects other than English and mathematics is too variable.

The school has the following strengths

- Governors are ambitious. Their actions have strengthened the school so it is now well placed to make improvements.
- Pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare are good. They have very good attitudes to their learning and are proud to be part of the school.
- Children in the early years make good progress, reflecting the consistently good teaching and care that they receive.
- Parents are very supportive. They have great faith in the school and support the new governing body's actions and ambition.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - embedding strong leadership at all levels, so early improvements are continued
 - developing a robust monitoring system to improve the quality of teaching and learning
 - implementing robust systems and processes by which the governing body is able to hold leaders to account for their areas of responsibility.
- Improve teaching so that is consistently good or better by:
 - ensuring that teachers plan tasks and activities based on what pupils already know and understand
 - provide effective challenge and stretch for all pupils, particularly the most able.
- Improve pupils' attainment and progress so that:
 - more pupils make strong progress and meet the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics
 - pupils develop strong subject-specific skills and knowledge across the curriculum
 - a larger proportion of the most able pupils achieve the higher standards in all subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The school has experienced many changes of leadership since the previous inspection. These changes, alongside a recent process of de-federation, have been frustrating for the whole school community and have led to a decline in standards. One parent commented, 'We have stuck by the school because the teachers work so hard for the pupils. We just want a new start.'
- The new governing body, which includes a number of parents, has attracted much support from other parents and the staff. As a result of the robust action they have taken and the changes they are in the process of making, there is a shared vision for the school. Despite the lack of continuity in the school's leadership, the importance of pupils' personal development has remained strong. Pupils readily embody the school's values of community, mutual respect and care.
- The leadership of teaching, learning and assessment has not been coherent over time. As a result, the procedures for monitoring teachers' effectiveness have lacked rigour. Until recently, teachers did not receive useful feedback about how to improve their practice in the classroom. Recently, senior and middle leaders, with the support of the local authority, have begun to provide useful advice and support to help teachers improve their teaching. This is beginning to bring about improvements in teachers' planning of lessons to meet pupils' learning needs, but there is some way to go.
- The planned curriculum is broad and balanced. It is organised into themes which capture pupils' imagination. Each topic follows a shared class text, providing a starting point from which pupils' writing skills are developed. Pupils enjoy these lessons and are motivated to learn. However, some weaknesses in teaching mean that, in some subjects, activities do not enable pupils to effectively develop their skills and knowledge in particular areas. Pupils appreciate and enjoy the extra-curricular clubs, such as football and hockey, which are well attended by pupils.
- Funding to support disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is appropriately targeted. Work seen in books and when visiting lessons shows that the progress of these groups of pupils is improving. Funding for pupils with SEND supports a number of effective interventions that take place outside the classroom, targeted at those pupils who find learning more difficult. This specific support is helping pupils to catch up.
- A structured approach to the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development across the school provides good opportunities for pupils to discuss ideas and develop their understanding. Pupils are encouraged to share their own views and with friends and family. For example, the topic 'Me and My Community' was first introduced in a whole-school assembly and followed up in every class. Then pupils took home the results of their learning to discuss different people's points of view with their parents.
- The physical education (PE) and sports funding is used effectively to widen the opportunities for pupils to take part in sports at lunchtime and after school, resulting in an increased number of pupils attending. Pupils like the different opportunities to take exercise and particularly like the 'Mini-Marines' day when they used an assault course.

Teaching staff receive training to develop their PE skills, ensuring that there is a legacy of expertise in the school.

Governance of the school

- Governors have been courageous in taking action beyond what it is typically the scope of their role. They have separated the school from the federation, rightly identifying that it had not helped their school to become more effective over time. One governor described their actions as 'bringing the school back to the community'. They have worked very closely with the local authority to reconstitute into a functioning governing body.
- Governors have rightfully prioritised effective financial management and the recruitment of a new headteacher as crucial the starting points upon which to build further. They are in the process of developing an action plan, overseen by the local authority, to make sure that the recent improvements in teaching and pupils' outcomes continue.
- Governors are revising the existing systems to better hold leaders to account. They have a very clear vision of how they want these to work. They are well placed to make informed decisions about future salary increases for leaders and staff.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All staff receive annual child-protection training and are confident of the correct procedures to follow if they have a safeguarding concern about a pupil. There are recognised procedures for recording concerns and these are appropriately followed up with outside agencies, if applicable. Governors received safeguarding induction training as part of their reconstitution, have appointed a safeguarding governor and taken control of the school's single central record to ensure that it is fully compliant. With this in place, they ensure that all adults working in school are suitably vetted to keep pupils safe from harm.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has declined over time. As a result, over the last three years, pupils have made less progress than they should in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Recently, teaching has begun to improve but it is still too variable across the school. Some teachers plan lessons which do not fully take into account what pupils already know and understand. As a result, pupils of all abilities are often presented with tasks and activities that are either too hard or too easy. When this happens, progress in lessons slows because some pupils do not understand what to do and others are not learning new skills. The most able pupils are 'coasting' because work does not sufficiently challenge them to develop and deepen their knowledge and understanding.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is good. They routinely use subject-specific language, particularly in mathematics and phonics, developing pupils' knowledge. Lessons are mostly well structured and make good use of apparatus to support pupils'

understanding. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson, pupils were using counters and three circles to calculate one third of a number such as 12. They could successfully divide the counters into the three circles to find the right answer.

- Mathematics teaching is improving. This reflects the recent focus by the mathematics lead to develop opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills in unfamiliar contexts. Number is mostly taught well. Pupils have a good basic understanding of number, including fractions and decimals. Some teachers now provide pupils with more opportunities to apply their knowledge to problems that require a deeper level of understanding. However, this is not consistent across the school, and some pupils, particularly the most able, are missing opportunities to deepen their learning.
- Pupils' writing is improving, with some evidence of strong progress seen in books, particularly in those of older pupils. However, there are too many occasions when pupils' written work is very short, so they do not develop their ideas or extend their learning. This results in pupils of all abilities achieving less than they could over time.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to reading. Phonics is well taught in key stage 1, enabling pupils to build on these skills as they progress through the school. When inspectors listened to older pupils read, they repeatedly used their knowledge of phonics to decode unfamiliar words. Teachers have begun to provide pupils with more opportunities to use their comprehension skills and examine texts more deeply. As a result, where this is done well, pupils have a better understanding of what the writer is trying to convey.
- Teaching in subjects other than English and mathematics is variable. In science and computing, where leaders have focused on improving practice, teaching now meets pupils' needs well. However, in other subjects such as history and geography, teaching does not enable pupils to develop their skills and knowledge over a sequence of lessons.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils' personal development is very important to school leaders and parents. One parent commented, 'The teachers do everything they can for these children and they look after each other so well.' Pupils are proud to be part of the school and enjoy the many opportunities to take responsibility and influence the decisions that affect them. For example, as members of the school council, learning buddies or house captains, pupils work to make the school a better place to be. Younger pupils look up to the older pupils and speak with conviction about the contribution they can make to Carterton Primary School.
- Pupils are very well cared for in the safe and nurturing learning environment. Service pupils, who make up about one third of the school's population, receive excellent support from the school's own service family's worker. There are excellent induction procedures when pupils arrive at the school and equally effective preparations are made to prepare them for leaving.

- Staff and parents say that pupils are kept safe. Pupils say that they feel safe because there is always somebody they can talk to. The nurture room, which is open to all pupils, provides a safe place if pupils are concerned or worried. Pupils have a good understanding about how to stay safe when using the internet. They have regular lessons on how to do so. 'If something comes up on your computer at home and it doesn't look right, it probably isn't, so tell an adult,' was a comment made by one of the older pupils.
- Pupils appreciate that taking regular exercise and eating a healthy diet is important for their well-being.
- Pupils show respect towards others and accept that people are free to have different points of view. Pupils and parents say that instances of bullying are rare and agree that if it does happen, staff can be trusted to act quickly and fairly.
- Pupils have excellent attitudes to their learning and enjoy coming to school. They particularly like the opportunities they are given in lessons to discuss their ideas with one another. This is reflected in improved overall attendance, which is now closer to the national average.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils, staff and parents strongly agree that pupils behave well, treating one another with care and respect. Behaviour in lessons is almost always good. Pupils work hard and try their best. There are times when a few pupils lose focus, but this is generally when learning tasks do not sufficiently meet their needs.
- Pupils welcome visitors with a smile and are keen to talk about their learning. They have good manners and younger pupils, in particular, are very good at listening to one another and taking turns when talking.
- Pupils understand the school's behaviour policy. They work hard to gain rewards and are very proud when they earn enough rewards to have tea with a senior leader. British values are taught alongside the school's own values such as tolerance. Pupils particularly liked learning and finding out about democracy when the local Member of Parliament visited.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- In 2018, pupils' attainment and progress at the end of key stage 2 were below the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Outcomes for current pupils are improving in most classes. All groups of pupils are achieving better in reading, writing and mathematics. However, over time, pupils in all ability groups have fallen behind in their learning and need to catch up quickly. This is particularly the case for the most able pupils, who do not always reach the standards of which they are capable.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND are making stronger progress in their learning. Teaching assistants offer good support in class and deliver a range of effective programmes to help these groups of pupils catch up if they fall behind in their

learning.

- The proportion of pupils in Year 1 who achieved the expected standard in the phonics screening check in 2018 was similar to the national average. Information provided by the school and confirmed by the work seen in pupils' books illustrates that current Year 1 pupils are on track to achieve as well.
- Outcomes in subjects such as science and computing are improving as a result of better teaching. However, this is not the case in all subjects.

Early years provision

Good

- Children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes as a result of consistently good teaching. The secure atmosphere created in both settings helps children develop confidence so that they settle quickly. Through induction visits prior to children starting school, children and parents are well prepared and know what to expect.
- Planning is detailed and begins with what the children want to learn. Teachers have a good understanding of how young children learn and provide a good balance of activities which are adult-led and those which children can choose from, and do on their own.
- Teachers focus on developing children's early language skills from the beginning of Nursery to the end of Reception Year. They take every opportunity to build up children's vocabulary and encourage them to speak in full sentences. This is reinforced when children are writing. During one lesson, a group of children wrote down the names of animals in preparation for a visit to a farm, the following day. The teacher quickly identified which animals the children knew and then provided them with new animal names such as 'goat'.
- Teachers provide good opportunities for children to develop their early number skills, using rhymes and repeated opportunities to practise counting throughout the day. In one Reception lesson, the most able children were successfully doubling numbers, using some concrete apparatus to support their understanding. Their learning was further extended when the teacher asked them to explain how they arrived at their answers and what would happen if they added one more.
- Early reading is developed through effective phonics teaching in which children build on the sounds they already know. These sessions are followed up by children being given the opportunity to write letters, representing sounds. In one session children were learning the 'ch' digraph, writing a word that contained it.
- Teachers have high expectations of behaviour. Children quickly become familiar with the Nursery routines and these are reinforced further when they move into Reception. Children are given increasing opportunities to work in the outside areas to encourage independent learning. Staff provide children with high-quality learning activities, setting up areas to capture their imagination and develop their thinking skills further.
- Leadership of the early years is effective. There is a cohesive approach across both Nursery and Reception, so children know what is expected of them and become increasingly confident over time. All early years staff take an active part in planning and assessing children's progress. This is reflected in the good-quality learning journals

that record children's notable milestones.

- Early years staff are appropriately trained and all welfare arrangements are in place to ensure that children are safe. Three members of staff have a qualification in paediatric first aid. Parents appreciate the high standards of care and their partnership with early years staff throughout their children's time in the setting. 'You are made to feel so welcome. The children love it and the staff can't do enough for you,' was a comment that encapsulated the views of many parents.

School details

Unique reference number	123015
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10058184

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	304
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nick Johnson
Teacher in charge	Rachel Claridge
Telephone number	01993 842502
Website	www.carterton-pri.oxon.sch.uk
Email address	head.2252@carterton-pri.oxon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	19–20 May 2015

Information about this school

- Carterton School is an average-sized primary school situated close to RAF Brize Norton. Approximately one third of pupils are from service families.
- The school has recently de-federated from a group of three schools. A new governing body took over responsibility for the school in January 2019.
- A headteacher was appointed by the previous federation in September 2018 and will be leaving at the end of this academic year. She was not present during the inspection.
- The school has a Nursery, two Reception classes, two Year 1 classes, two Year 2 classes, one class of Year 3 pupils, one class of Year 4 pupils, one mixed class of Years 4 and 5 pupils and one Year 6 class.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below the national average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The proportions of pupils who are disadvantaged and of those with SEND are in line

with the national averages.

- A small number of pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The local authority has effectively supported the school working with the governing body and middle leaders.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited lessons in all year groups to observe pupils' learning. In some lessons they were accompanied by senior leaders.
- Discussions were held with senior leaders, members of the new governing body, staff, pupils, representatives of the local authority and a group of parents.
- Inspectors examined a wide range of documentation, including that related to: safeguarding; pupils' attendance and behaviour; school improvement planning; the school's own assessment information; the monitoring of teaching; minutes of the governing body's meetings; the local authority's reports; and policies.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils informally during the day and observed them during playtime, lunchtime and at breakfast club.
- Inspectors listened to pupils from Year 2 and Year 6 read and met formally with a group of pupils to discuss their learning, behaviour and safety. They looked at pupils' books, displays of pupils' work and the school's assessments of the progress made by pupils.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents by meeting with a group of parents and by taking account of 34 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, including 20 free-text comments.
- Inspectors also took account of 22 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and 14 responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Bill James, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Catherine Davies	Ofsted Inspector
Simon Francis	Ofsted Inspector

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