

Bletchingdon Parochial Church of England Primary School

Weston Road, Bletchingdon, Kidlington, Oxfordshire, OX5 3DH

Inspection dates 10–11 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because:

- Although there have been significant recent improvements, teaching has not always provided sufficient challenge, leading to inconsistencies in pupils' progress over time.
- Standards are not yet high enough in Year 2 in reading or writing or in Year 6, particularly in mathematics.
- Pupils' spelling and speaking skills are not sufficiently well developed.
- Teachers have not had high enough expectations of the quality of pupils' written work or of their handwriting.
- Middle leadership roles are not yet fully effective, because several staff are very new.
- The progress of pupils supported by the pupil premium is similar to that of the others and so requires improvement.

The school has the following strengths:

- Provision and progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage is now good. The teaching of phonics (letters and their sounds) is now much more effective.
- Progress across the school has improved in the last year, with pupils making better progress in reading and writing.
- Pupils enjoy school and feel safe. Behaviour and attitudes to learning are now good.
- Governance has improved significantly. Governors are now very knowledgeable about pupils' achievement and the management of staff performance.
- Some aspects of assessment, particularly marking, are well established.
- Senior leaders, managers and governors have, in a short period, taken robust and effective action to tackle identified weaknesses so that a trend of improvement in teaching and pupils' achievement is now strongly evident.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed nine lessons, all of which were seen together with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, the school's senior leaders and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the 27 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a range of school documentation, including: records of school checks on the quality of teaching; the school improvement plan; and records relating to behaviour, attendance, safeguarding and the tracking of pupils' progress. He also looked closely at pupils' written work and listened to pupils reading.

Inspection team

George Logan, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Bletchington Parochial Primary School is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- There are currently four classes, three of which include all the pupils from two year groups. Early Years Foundation Stage children are taught in a separate Reception class.
- The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is broadly average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is slightly below average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in care and those from other groups) is well below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in English and mathematics.
- The school became a Church of England voluntary-aided school in April 2013, having previously had voluntary-controlled status. Plans for the school to move to larger, modern premises in late 2014 have been approved.
- The headteacher took up her post in September 2012. Both Key Stage 2 teachers joined the school in the current term.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching across the school so that pupils' progress is accelerated further, by:
 - ensuring that lessons provide a high level of challenge for all groups of pupils
 - setting higher expectations for the quality of presentation of pupils' written work
 - giving more emphasis to the development of pupils' speaking skills.
- Raise standards and strengthen achievement in all subjects across the school, so that more pupils make accelerated progress, giving particular priority to:
 - raising standards in mathematics in Years 3 to 6
 - implementing current plans to improve standards of spelling
 - ensuring consistent approaches to the teaching of legible, well-formed handwriting.
- Improve the leadership and management of the school by providing the induction and training necessary so that middle management roles are actively developed, and that these staff take a greater role in driving improvements, to the potential benefit of pupils' learning and well-being.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' progress has been inconsistent. While standards are broadly average by the end of Year 6 in reading and writing, although not in mathematics, pupils' progress across the school has not been fast enough in recent years. Above average standards at the end of Reception have, year on year, translated into stubbornly average, and occasionally below average, attainment at the end of Year 2. Low expectations and insufficient focus on pupils' progress have contributed to significant underperformance, particularly by more-able pupils.
- Last year, under new leadership, the momentum of pupils' progress increased considerably and was much stronger across the school in reading and writing, and in some year groups in mathematics. However, the progress made by Year 6 pupils in mathematics in their final year was only a little less than the total progress made in the previous three years, suggesting that they were more than one year behind when they entered Year 6. Despite much improved progress, pupils still have considerable ground to make up. The school recognises the need to accelerate progress still further, so that accrued deficits in learning are progressively eroded.
- Pupils are generally competent writers. However, written work indicates that poorly formed handwriting, past weakness in spelling and a lack of expectation of the quality and presentation of pupils' written work have together constrained their progress. Targeted input has already begun to raise standards in writing.
- Inconsistent teaching of phonics (the linking of sounds and letters) was a weakness at the last inspection. Decisive action and effective training have already addressed this issue. Pupils now have a systematic grounding in these key skills and, with additional support for older pupils, this is also contributing to improved reading skills. In 2013, all Year 1 pupils attained the expected standard in the phonics screening assessment.
- The achievement of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and supported by pupil premium funding is similar to that of the others and, as such, requires improvement. There were not enough pupils in any year group, known to be eligible for the pupil premium in 2012 or 2013, to comment upon their attainment in English and mathematics.
- Children enter Reception with skills at levels slightly below those found nationally, with a particular weakness in their speaking skills. Although the proportion reaching a good level of development was lower than the local authority average in 2013, children typically leave Reception at levels generally above those found nationally. Both provision and progress are now good. Various improvements have been made to address past weaknesses.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are supported well. There have been substantial improvements to the identification of individual needs, additional staff training, an effective programme of intervention teaching and rigorous monitoring of progress. This is ensuring that these pupils now make increasingly better progress.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Although the majority of lessons seen were good, too many lessons have failed, over time, to challenge pupils sufficiently, and the pace of learning has been too slow. While literacy and numeracy lessons now provide more challenge, there is more to do to ensure that this is the case across all subjects. Teachers do not yet consistently plan carefully enough for the full range of pupils in their classes.
- Staff do not give enough attention to the quality and presentation of pupils' written work, or to the tidiness and legibility of their handwriting.
- Overall, the checking and supporting of pupils' progress has improved. Pupils have individual targets to focus their efforts to improve and regularly evaluate what they have achieved. The marking of pupils' work mostly identifies what they need to do next to improve. Opportunities are provided for pupils to respond to marking.

- Increased awareness by staff, targeted support and more rigorous tracking of progress are contributing to better provision for the few pupils supported by pupil premium funding.
- In the better lessons, the pace of learning is brisk. In a successful literacy lesson, Years 5 and 6 pupils were challenged to develop creative story endings. The teacher's subject knowledge was good and she encouraged pupils, by way of example, to develop unexpected endings to traditional nursery rhymes. Pupils responded enthusiastically; their attitudes and learning were good.
- The teaching of reading is now generally effective. Guided reading sessions are tightly organised, with accurate pupil groupings and appropriate texts. As a result, they successfully develop pupils' interest and higher-order reading skills.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage benefit from consistently good teaching. Together with effective assessment practice and well-planned lessons, this ensures that their progress is now good.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour is good. There are few recorded incidents, with only one recent fixed-term exclusion. Staff expectations have risen. Effective procedures have been implemented and behaviour management is now consistent across the school, so that behaviour, attitudes to learning, and pupils' progress, have improved significantly. Low-level disruption is rare. Racist incidents seldom occur. Pupils feel safe and trust adults to resolve any difficulties. None of the parents and carers who gave their views indicated any concerns about behaviour.
- Pupils feel that bullying is not an issue. They understand that bullying may take many forms. Some pupils have trained as 'anti-bullying' ambassadors. They are aware of the risks relating to social networking sites. Pupils undertake responsibilities, as eco-warriors or school council members, which enable them to contribute to the community.
- Pupils have a good appreciation of risk. Year 6 pupils attend Junior Citizen training and understand how to keep themselves safe in various circumstances. Year 6 pupils are well prepared for secondary school.
- Attendance is above average. Pupils arrive at school punctually.

The leadership and management are good

- Since she joined the school, the headteacher has been uncompromising in her drive to improve teaching, learning and standards. A reorganisation of staffing, the implementation of effective performance management systems, a tracking system to inform staff about pupils' progress, a structured approach to the teaching of phonics, together with improved provision for pupils with special educational needs, have all contributed to significant improvements. Progress has improved for all pupils, and is now much faster.
- Staff changes have had an impact upon the effectiveness of middle leadership roles. The school is working to ensure that staff receive appropriate training to support new roles and enhance their effectiveness.
- The school's view of itself is accurate. The school improvement plan identifies appropriate priorities.
- The monitoring of teaching is rigorous. Identified weaknesses are tackled through the new performance management system. There is a close link between teachers' performance and pay progression. The school increasingly holds support staff, as well as teaching staff, accountable for pupils' progress.
- The curriculum is managed well. Clear policies and procedures support the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics. More effective teaching of phonics has enabled the school to address a key weakness. Although retained evidence was limited, pupils appear to have regular opportunities to write at length. They experience a wide range of visits, visitors and events,

including a residential trip for older pupils. There are several extra-curricular clubs. Although it is early to evaluate its impact, the school has a sustainable plan to improve the quality of sports coaching and pupils' health through the development of staff skills in coaching physical education, and to increase participation in after-school sports activities.

- Bletchington receives regular, good quality support from its local authority, through close, regular and effective engagement with a school improvement officer.
- School leaders closely monitor the impact of pupil premium funding. This funding is currently contributing to better gains in learning for eligible pupils.
- Pupils' good social and moral development permeates all aspects of school life. Improved links with the church are contributing to improved spiritual development. Community links and links with parents and carers are well established. As one parent said, 'The relief and gratitude I feel for the school and staff is one I could never repay. They are brilliant.'

■ The governance of the school:

- Governance is now good. Governors feel that they have raised their game considerably in the last year. Governors bring a wide range of relevant professional experience to the school and willingly undertake training to improve their skills and understanding. They acknowledge that they knew little about pupils' performance four terms ago, but now have a robust understanding of data. Recognising underlying weaknesses in the school's past performance, they have established a 'Raising Standards' committee. They now confidently check information relating to pupils' performance, comparing the school's performance with national data. They now hold school leaders rigorously to account. They ensure equality of opportunity, tackle discrimination and promote good relationships. Governors now have a good understanding of the quality of teaching. They ensure that pay and promotion are firmly linked to teachers' effectiveness and have supported the headteacher in tackling underperformance. They manage the budget well and carefully evaluate the impact of decisions about the use of pupil premium funding to close gaps in pupils' achievement. Governors ensure, along with senior leaders, that safeguarding arrangements meet national requirements. All other statutory duties are met.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	123115
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	426498

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	69
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sue Green
Headteacher	Louise Hatton
Date of previous school inspection	9–10 January 2012
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