

West Ashton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Bratton Road, West Ashton, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 6AZ

Inspection dates 1–2 March 2016

Overall effectiveness **Inadequate**

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders' actions to improve the weaknesses identified during the previous inspection have not been successful.
- The school does not have the leadership capacity to make the improvements needed.
- Despite the significant changes of staff, the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes have declined since the previous inspection and now require improvement.
- Teaching does not inspire pupils, as teachers' expectations are too low. Teachers do not implement the school's marking policy consistently. As a result, pupils are not learning how to improve the quality of their work.
- Teachers with subject leadership responsibilities are not making an effective contribution to the school's improvement priorities.
- The early years leader's understanding of how to promote children's learning is inadequate.
- Pupils, including the most able, do not make good progress from their starting points and achieve standards in line with their full potential.
- The behaviour of a few pupils impedes the learning of others.
- Attendance is lower than average and some pupils are often late for school, which has a negative impact on their learning.
- Governors have not challenged leaders robustly enough to bring about the improvements needed.
- The school website does not include all the information required to meet the government's statutory requirements.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils are very well cared for and feel safe.
- Some of the subject specialist teaching is very effective at inspiring pupils to learn.
- The school's work to support pupils with special educational needs is increasingly effective.
- Parents have high regard for the school.

Full report

In accordance with 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?

- Ensure that all groups of pupils, including the most able, make good progress each year so that standards rise across the school.
- Strengthen the quality of the early years provision so that children are well prepared for Year 1 by:
 - ensuring that the early years leader demonstrates the skills and leadership needed to raise standards
 - improving the quality of teaching so that children are highly motivated and eager to learn
 - transforming the classroom and outdoor space into a lively and vibrant learning area.
- Improve the quality and effectiveness of teaching across the school by:
 - increasing teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - ensuring that pupils benefit from high-quality lessons that encourage and inspire them to learn
 - providing pupils with regular feedback so that they know and understand how to improve their work
 - using assessment information to match work accurately to pupils' abilities
 - ensuring pupils behave well in lessons and make good progress
 - supporting pupils to take greater ownership for the quality and presentation of their work.
- Strengthen the effectiveness of the school's leadership and management, including governance, by:
 - building the leaders' capacity to implement and secure the school's improvement priorities
 - holding to account those charged with improving the school's overall effectiveness
 - ensuring that all school leaders contribute fully to the improvement priorities and thereby improve the quality of teaching and raise standards
 - monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of actions being taken to ensure that the improvement priorities are bringing about the intended outcomes
 - developing governors' capacity to challenge school leaders and better support improvement.
- Raise parents' awareness of their responsibility to ensure that pupils arrive on time and attend school regularly.
- Ensure that the information published on the school website fully meets the statutory requirements.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is inadequate

- School leaders have not ensured that the areas identified for improvement during the previous inspection have been tackled successfully. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning is not of a high enough standard and pupils do not make consistently good progress as they move through the school.
- Although leaders and governors have a reasonably accurate view of the school's strengths, their self-evaluation about the effectiveness of the school's leadership and management is overgenerous. The fact that the school is receiving considerable support from the local authority demonstrates clearly that the school leaders do not have the capacity to secure the improvements needed.
- The headteacher has not focused sufficiently on leading the school's improvement initiatives. In her words, she often finds herself 'fire-fighting' to ensure the school is able to function. As a consequence, she has not been able to devote sufficient time to ensuring that the quality of teaching improves and that pupils receive the quality of education she wants to provide.
- Teachers with subject leadership responsibilities do not provide enough support to the headteacher in leading the drive to strengthen the quality of teaching. For example, subject leaders have not taken responsibility for ensuring that the quality of teachers' marking is good in their respective subject areas. They have produced improvement plans for their respective subjects that relate to the overall school improvement priorities. However, the intended benefits, as stated in their plans, do not focus sharply enough on improving pupils' outcomes.
- The school's deployment of its extra government funding for disadvantaged pupils is producing mixed results. Governors have not monitored the spending closely enough and do not know if it is supporting these pupils to make rapid progress and achieve in line with other pupils.
- Teachers have received a range of training opportunities and had opportunities to visit other schools to observe teaching in other settings. Although these professional development opportunities are appreciated, they have yet to enhance the quality of teaching across the school.
- The special educational needs coordinator works closely with the headteacher to ensure that appropriate support programmes are in place for pupils with special educational needs. Since her appointment, she has reviewed how pupils are assessed to determine their level of need. As a result, there has been a steep reduction in the number of pupils identified as requiring specific intervention activities. Teaching assistants are now being deployed to better support pupils' learning. In addition, the regular reviews to assess the impact of each pupil's support programme are making a positive difference to their rate of learning. However, the special needs coordinator is fully aware that a great deal of work is still required to ensure that all pupils with special educational needs do well.
- The school's curriculum is enhanced by visiting subject specialist teachers who enthuse pupils by bringing learning to life. Beyond this, although the overall range of subjects taught is appropriate, the teaching rarely excites pupils and makes learning fun. However, the range of after-school clubs is boosting pupils' participation levels and providing them with greater opportunities to benefit from new experiences that would not otherwise be available.
- There is a strong and appropriate focus on teaching religious education in line with the school's Christian values. Assemblies focus on supporting pupils' personal development by exploring appropriate themes such as 'friendship', which help pupils to think about how they work and socialise together. This approach also helps to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils also learn about other faiths and cultures, such as Sikhism. However, when speaking with the inspector, pupils were not able to talk with great confidence about other religions.
- Staff identify appropriate opportunities to promote British values through their teaching. For example, to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of democracy, they participate in the Youth Parliament's initiatives and hold elections to appoint nominated candidates to the school council.
- The additional funding to support and improve the quality of the school's physical education lessons is being used appropriately. Pupils enjoy the opportunity to participate in a wider range of sports than previously and gain competitive experience.
- Many parents are very strong advocates for the school and comment about the very high regard in which the headteacher is held. Several explained that they had made a deliberate decision to send their child to this school and told the inspector about how pleased they are that pupils new to the school settle quickly and make friends. Many parents appreciate the regular newsletters that keep them informed of developments and events being planned. Similarly, the school website provides a range of useful information but some of it is out of date and not totally compliant with statutory requirements.
- Following this inspection, the school may not recruit newly qualified teachers.

■ The governance of the school

- Governors have not shown the leadership needed to ensure that the school has the capacity to secure future improvement. They have not fully grasped the issues faced by the school. As a result, they have not taken swift action to rapidly improve matters. They are over-reliant on others for information about the school's performance and do not take enough responsibility for analysing the available data themselves to identify areas that need improvement. They are not robust enough in their questioning of the headteacher or other leaders to assess the impact of the school's efforts on improving teaching and raising standards. For example, despite being aware that the school's website was not compliant, they have not acted swiftly to put things right.
- Governors have acted quickly in response to the recent governance review and produced an action plan that identifies how they intend to improve the effectiveness of their work.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. This is a safe school. Staff know pupils very well and take good care to ensure their safety. The headteacher, as the school's designated safeguarding lead, ensures that staff are trained regularly and updated on key safeguarding issues, including the government's 'Prevent' duty. Staff are vigilant regarding any child protection issues and know the procedure to follow should they have any concerns. The school is secure and monitored closely. Visitors are welcomed by a professional team in the office who ensure that the signing in process is managed efficiently. The school grounds are monitored via the school's CCTV to ensure that pupils are safe when outside. Parents are pleased with the care taken by staff to ensure pupils' safety. All those who responded to the Parent View survey are confident that their child is kept safe while at school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

requires improvement

- Despite some recent improvements during this academic year, senior leaders recognise that the overall quality of teaching has declined since the previous inspection and is currently not good enough to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress.
- In some classes, teachers do not have a secure understanding of the age groups they are teaching. The school's monitoring records identify that these teachers are not challenging pupils sufficiently to achieve their full potential.
- Teachers do not have high enough expectations of all the pupils they teach, including the most-able pupils. They do not routinely insist that pupils complete high-quality work, with the result that some do not always try hard enough.
- Teachers have recently reviewed the school's marking policy. Staff meetings are being used to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of teachers' marking and ensure that all staff are implementing the policy correctly. However, when looking through pupils' books it is clear that some teachers are not complying with the school's policy. In addition, pupils are not always able to read teachers' comments because the handwriting is not neat enough. In these situations, the value of the commentary is lost as the pupil is unable to act upon the advice provided.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work together well to support pupils' development. Teaching assistants often work with pupils who need extra help to learn. In some situations, teaching assistants monitor pupils' development and record their progress. As a result, pupils are able to focus on their work and complete the activity in the time allocated.
- Pupils speak very positively about how much they enjoy some of the lessons led by visiting subject specialist teachers, such as art and music. During the inspection, older pupils really enjoyed talking in French about the weather and learning how to tell the time. Throughout the lesson, pupils responded eagerly by answering questions in French. The teacher's passion for her subject shone through and, on the odd occasion when an individual pupil's interest began to wane, she quickly and skilfully re-engaged them in the learning activity.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Staff at the school know each individual pupil and take great care to ensure their safety and well-being. As a result, pupils feel confident that they can discuss any concerns with an adult at the school and the matter will be dealt with appropriately.
- Parents are confident that staff work hard to help pupils do well. In essence, the school provides a safe

and caring environment for pupils to learn together.

- Pupils benefit from the many opportunities to take on responsibilities around the school. Older pupils act as buddies for children in the Reception Year. They also organise the hall ready for the school's daily act of worship. Pupils elected to the school council are proactive at seeking ideas to bring about playground improvements. In addition, pupils enjoy initiating fund-raising events, such as running cake and craft stalls to support their nominated charities.
- Pupils recently participated in revising and reducing the number of school rules so that they are easily understood and remembered and can be applied to a broad range of situations.
- The increasing number of opportunities for pupils to participate in a wide range of clubs and sports is helping to boost their physical and personal development.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Although the majority of pupils behave well in lessons and around the school, a few do not, which results in the pace of learning slowing as adults deal with the low-level, off-task behaviour.
- Pupils told the inspector that, on occasion, some pupils in the older class do not behave appropriately and act differently for different teachers, which they find frustrating.
- Pupils want to do well and achieve good results. However, pupils' work is not always of a high enough standard, as pupils do not routinely know what is expected of them.
- Pupils enjoy school but the overall level of attendance is below the national average and some pupils regularly arrive late for school. The school is aware that pupils with poor attendance records do not always make the progress expected, as there are gaps in their learning.
- Pupils describe the school as being very friendly and they are pleased that there are very few incidents of bullying. Pupils are also confident that because the staff know everyone very well, any inappropriate bullying incidents would be dealt with and quickly resolved.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Although the standards at the end of both key stage 1 and key stage 2 are broadly in line with the national average, they have declined since the previous inspection.
- The progress and performance of different groups of pupils, including the most able, is not consistent. There are gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding, which impedes their progress in achieving their full potential.
- Children in the Reception Year are not well prepared for the start of Year 1. For the last three years, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development has been lower than the national average. These low results have a negative impact on pupils' progress as they move through Year 1 as the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check remains lower than the national average. (Phonics refers to letters and the sounds that they make.)
- The achievement of disadvantaged pupils is variable. Some do well, make good progress and attain in line with other pupils in their year group, but others do not.
- The recent changes that have been introduced to support pupils who have special educational needs or disability are having a positive impact as increasing proportions are making the progress expected. However, there are still a few boys with special educational needs who are not catching up and achieving high enough standards.
- Pupils make good progress in French and art. They are enthused by the teaching and show strong determination. The high quality of artwork on display demonstrates the pupils' abilities and skills in this subject.
- Parents are pleased with the progress their children make. Those who spoke with the inspector were full of praise for the school and, in particular, the determination and effort put in by staff to help those pupils who find learning difficult to succeed.

Early years provision

is inadequate

- Children in the Reception class do not make enough progress from their starting points. Although most children join the Reception Year with skills that are at least typical for their age, the quality of teaching is not of a high enough standard and does not enable them to make the progress expected. Last year, just over half the year group achieved a good level of development and, although this was an improvement on the previous year, it was still well below the national average.

- The early years classroom and outdoor space do not provide a stimulating area that successfully promotes children's development.
- The early years leader is new to the role and has little prior experience of working with children of this age. As a result, she is receiving a significant amount of support from external professionals. However, many of their recommendations have not been implemented successfully and little improvement in the early years provision was noted during the inspection.
- During the inspection, children were engaged in a variety of activities but little learning was observed to be taking place. Adults work with small groups of children, but the management of the different activities is not always clear. Children working independently are not always engaged productively and, as a result, wander between different activities.
- Adults know each individual child well. They take care to ensure that children experience a variety of learning experiences and that they are safe.
- The school's arrangements for children starting school work well. Staff make home visits to support the transition into school and to begin building relationships with families. Most children have attended a Nursery or pre-school setting before joining the Reception Year. As a result, most children are well prepared for starting school.

School details

Unique reference number	126417
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	10003864

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	80
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ellie Green
Headteacher	Samantha Nash
Telephone number	01225 754 354
Website	www.westashton.wilts.sch.uk
Email address	head@westashton.wilts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	5–6 July 2011

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is below average. This additional source of funds is provided by the government to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are in the care of the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is much higher than average.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has experienced significant changes in staffing, including the appointment of the current headteacher.
- Following the recent resignation of the chair of the governing body, the local authority has supported the governing body by seconding an experienced governor to take on this responsibility.
- Children in the Reception Year are taught alongside a small number of Year 1 pupils. The remaining Year 1 pupils and all the other year groups are taught in mixed-age classes.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 10 lessons and saw the work of five teachers. The headteacher accompanied the inspector during six of these visits to lessons.
- The inspector made observations around the school at breaktime and he attended an assembly. He also observed the arrangements for pupils as they arrived at the start of the school day.
- The inspector talked with individual pupils and groups of pupils. He also looked at a wide range of pupils' work, both in their books and on display.
- The inspector met with four governors, including the chair of the governing body. He also held meetings with the headteacher and school staff, including the teaching assistants and the lunchtime team.
- The inspector talked with parents at the start of the school day and met with three representatives from the local authority.
- The inspector reviewed a wide range of school documentation, including the school's development plan, minutes of the governing body meetings and reports about the school's effectiveness. A wide range of the school's safeguarding documentation and records was also scrutinised.
- The inspector took account of the views expressed in the 32 online responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire, the one staff questionnaire and 15 responses from pupils.

Inspection team

Ken Buxton, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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