

# St Philip's C of E Aided Primary School

Vinery Way, Cambridge, CB1 3DR

**Inspection dates** 28–29 November 2012

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Too few pupils achieve what they are capable of. They reach standards that are broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Standards and achievement in writing are not high enough. Work in pupils' books shows that some pupils do not have a good enough grasp of basic skills of spelling, punctuation and handwriting.
- Some teachers do not provide enough guidance to pupils about how they can improve their writing.
- School leaders do not carry out rigorous checks on pupils' work in books frequently enough to identify and address weaknesses.
- A few leaders do not make enough use of assessment information to plan their actions for improvement.

### The school has the following strengths

- The school provides a warm and welcoming environment in which pupils feel safe and valued. Pupils behave well and they show respect for adults and for each other.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- The school has reversed a declining trend in reading attainment and had some success in improving pupils' achievement in mathematics.
- Teaching in lessons is usually lively and captures pupils' interest and attention.
- Leaders have addressed most issues from the last inspection showing that the school is capable of continuing to make improvements.
- Parents and carers are very positive about all aspects of the school.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 19 lessons taught by 12 teachers, listened to pupils read and scrutinised their work. Five lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, members of the governing body, pupils and parents and carers. The lead inspector also met with the local authority adviser.
- Among the documents scrutinised were pupil assessment and tracking information, school development planning, minutes from the governing body and documentation relating to safeguarding pupils.
- Inspectors took account of the 53 responses to the Parent View online survey to establish the views of parents and carers.

## Inspection team

Joy Considine, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Isobel Randall	Additional Inspector
Paul Burton	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Although the majority of pupils are of White British heritage, the proportion from minority ethnic groups is larger than average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is broadly average, as is the proportion of pupils who are supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for support through pupil premium (additional funding allocated by the government) is above average. These are pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There have been significant changes to the teaching team since the previous inspection.
- There is provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Nursery and Reception classes.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the teaching of writing across the school by:
  - ensuring that pupils consolidate basic skills of spelling, punctuation and handwriting to enable them to write fluently and legibly by the end of Year 6
  - providing guidance and opportunities for pupils to correct and edit their writing
  - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils should achieve in writing.
- Improve leadership and management by:
  - improving procedures for checking the quality of teachers' work by carrying out more regular and thorough scrutiny of pupils' work and then informing teachers of points for development
  - ensuring that all leaders understand assessment information so that they are better able to draw up action plans to target areas of weakness
  - ensuring that governors have better information about the school's performance so that they are able to question leaders rigorously about school improvement.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- The progress that pupils make is in line with the progress that pupils make nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards are average at the end of Year 6. A few pupils, particularly those from minority ethnic groups, make good progress in reading and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve at similar levels to their classmates. Recent actions to accelerate their progress are beginning to show signs of improvement with some pupils making good progress. Pupils who receive additional support through the pupil premium benefit from programmes to improve their reading and writing skills. These programmes are led by teachers, who provide support for individual pupils, on a one-to-one basis.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are below those expected for their age, although they vary from year to year. They make good progress in most aspects of their development. They get on well together and they share and take turns. Many count confidently to 10 and beyond and read and write simple sentences.
- Pupils' communication skills are good. They speak clearly and enjoy sharing ideas and contributing to classroom discussions. They respond to teachers' questions and they have a wide range of vocabulary to express their views.
- Many pupils are not sufficiently confident to write fluently and at length because their basic skills in handwriting, spelling and punctuation are not as good as they should be. Their handwriting is poorly formed and the presentation of their work is often untidy. There are not always enough opportunities for pupils to write at length in lessons because they are provided with too many worksheets.
- Pupils enjoy reading and they happily talk about their books and their favourite authors. They have developed a wide range of skills that they use to tackle unfamiliar words and predict what might happen in a later part of the story. The school has successfully reversed the recent decline in standards in reading at the end of Year 2.
- A stronger emphasis on mental arithmetic has improved pupils' achievement in mathematics. They apply number facts to solve problems, some of which involve fractions and decimals. In one Year 6 lesson, pupils used their knowledge of different types of angles to describe properties of triangles in preparation for more complicated work on perimeter and area.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- During the inspection, lessons seen were mostly lively and captured pupils' interest. Although some good and outstanding lessons were seen during the inspection, this is not shown in pupils' books or their assessment information. This is because the independent activities provided by teachers did not allow pupils to practise their writing skills sufficiently for them to make good progress. Scrutiny of pupils' work showed that some teachers have too low expectations of what pupils should achieve in writing.
- Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff observe and record their achievements and they use this information to plan activities that are well matched to their

developmental needs. There is a good balance of activities that are led by adults and those that children select for themselves. Children make good use of both the outdoor area and the classroom. Both are well provided with good quality resources and equipment.

- Lessons are usually well planned with clear learning tasks so that pupils understood what they were expected to learn. Most teachers referred to previous learning so that pupils could link ideas together. In the majority of lessons, teachers showed that they had good subject knowledge.
- Teachers are skilled at asking searching questions that made pupils think and work hard. They provided pupils with time to respond and challenged them to give more in-depth answers to develop their understanding further. This also allowed them to assess how well pupils had understood what they were teaching.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are good and this inspired pupils to behave well. Occasionally when teacher explanations were too long, pupils became fidgety and started to talk about things that were not connected to the lesson.
- In most lessons, teachers made good use of time and resources and this helped to maintain a brisk pace to lessons. Usually, teaching assistants were well deployed and gave good support to pupils who struggled. In one lesson, a teaching assistant helped a pupil to sound out letters carefully to help him to read.
- Teachers mark pupils work regularly but not all teachers provide enough guidance to pupils about how they can improve their basic writing skills. Common errors go unchecked and pupils do not have the chance to correct and improve their work.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Pupils have positive attitudes to school and they behave well in lessons and when moving around the school. They are polite and friendly and show consideration and respect for each other and for adults. Pupils get on well together regardless of background and will often go out of their way to ensure that all pupils are included in playground games and activities. This reflects the promotion of their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
  - In discussions, pupils said they usually behave well and that adults are always on hand to sort out any minor disagreements that occasionally arise. They said that they understood different forms of bullying such as name calling and cyber bullying and that they understand the difference between bullying and occasional falling out with each other. Pupils say there is no bullying and records kept by the school would suggest that incidents of poor behaviour are rare. There have been no exclusions in recent years.
  - Pupils say they feel safe and that adults care for them. They have a good understanding of dangers associated with tobacco and substance abuse and the need to keep themselves safe. Visits by the police and the Fire and Rescue Service have provided additional information to pupils about how to stay safe.
  - The school has taken successfully action to improve pupils' attendance and punctuality, despite the small minority of pupils who are persistently absent or late for school.
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**The leadership and management requires improvement**

- School leaders do not systematically carry out checks of pupils' work in their books to identify where improvements are needed. Teachers have not been asked how they are tackling some weakness in the quality of pupils' writing.
  - School leaders are ambitious and they have brought about improvements since the previous inspection. Pupils' achievement in reading and mathematics is improving, particularly by the end of Year 6. Senior leaders regularly check the quality of teaching and this has led to a higher proportion of lessons that are good with none that are inadequate. There are better systems to track pupils' progress so that school leaders know that the remaining gaps between pupils' achievements are closing. This shows that equality of opportunity underpins the school's values.
  - School leaders have a broadly accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Their action plans for improvement have focused on raising achievement in reading and mathematics and consequently the previous focus on writing has been lost. Not all leaders have a strong enough grasp on analysing assessment information and so they are not clear enough about what needs to be done.
  - The planned programme for professional development has enabled staff to benefit from guidance and support from both the local authority and a partner school with which staff meet regularly to share expertise. School leaders and staff have responded positively to the level of support provided by the local authority and consequently pupils' achievement in mathematics has improved. Staff training needs are identified through regular appraisal which is also linked to salary and pay progression.
  - Activities are well matched to the needs and interests of pupils and provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their reading and mathematical skills. They are taught through a 'topic' approach where teachers link subjects together to increase pupils' understanding. They are enriched further through a variety of visitors and visits to local places of interest. During the inspection, pupils in Years 1 and 2 enjoyed a trip to Duxford Museum. The wide range of additional activities, including sports, dance and music makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
  - Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are good. All adults who visit school are carefully checked and systems for protecting pupils meet all requirements.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - Governors visit the school regularly and they have a satisfactory understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They are provided with information about how well the school is performing, and use this to question leaders about their work. They are aware of recent improvements, but the information they receive is not always clear enough about specific aspects of the school's work which need to be looked into in more depth. The governors ensure that suitable arrangements are in place for reviewing the performance of the headteacher and staff and for making sure that teachers' salary progression is linked to improved teaching. The governors check that the school meets all statutory responsibilities and that finances are managed effectively. They challenge school leaders to be certain that the pupil premium is used to provide good support for disadvantaged youngsters.
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## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	110840
<b>Local authority</b>	Cambridge
<b>Inspection number</b>	405307

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	317
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Barney Leeke
<b>Headteacher</b>	Siobhan Rouse
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 September 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01223 508707
<b>Fax number</b>	01223 508708
<b>Email address</b>	office@stphilips.cambs.sch.uk

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