

Wilburton CofE Primary School

Carpond Lane, Wilburton, Ely, CB6 3RJ

Inspection dates 5–6 February 2013

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

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because their progress is uneven across the school due to inconsistencies in how well they are taught.
- Teachers plan work that is sometimes too hard or too easy for some pupils. In some lessons, too much time is lost listening to the teacher talking. Teachers too readily accept pupils' occasional misbehaviour in lessons.
- Until recently, teachers' assessments of pupils' learning have not been regular or accurate enough. This has made it difficult for leaders to check progress and to see whether all groups are doing well enough.
- The school is improving steadily but the pace of change has been slowed significantly by staff turnover that has been beyond the school's control. Although teachers are being set sharp targets to help them improve, and there is more good teaching now than in the recent past, this has not been sufficient to ensure that all teaching improves quickly.
- The headteacher takes on too much. Responsibility for ensuring more rapid improvement and for monitoring teaching and learning is not shared widely enough.
- Governors do not do enough to hold the school to account.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils feel safe. They have good manners and are polite and courteous. They keenly take on responsibility.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are given calm and sensitive help and quickly become independent and confident.
- The headteacher is identifying the right priorities and has made a start to tackling them.
- Teachers get on well with the pupils. They make good use of modern technology to bring subjects alive.
- Parents and carers support the school well by helping their children with work at home.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed ten lessons, of which five were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspector made a number of short visits to lessons.
- Meetings were held with pupils, members of the governing body, members of staff and with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the 43 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). He also talked to some parents and carers at the end of the school day.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information about pupils' learning and progress, planning and monitoring documents, the school development plan, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and safeguarding documents.
- The inspector analysed 14 questionnaires from staff.

Inspection team

Mike Capper, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- Pupils are taught in four mixed-aged classes, with Early Years Foundation Stage children taught in a class with a small number of Year 1 pupils.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and who are supported at school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are broadly average. None of these pupils is educated off-site for any part of the week in alternative provision.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding in this school for those known to be eligible for free school meals) is below average.
- About one in ten pupils come from Showman Travelling families who live near the school for part of the year and spend the rest of their time travelling.
- There are breakfast and after-school clubs that are managed by the governing body.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There have been many staff changes since the previous inspection in 2008 and all but one of the teachers are new since then. The headteacher started in September 2011. In the last academic year there was a high level of staff absence and two classes had temporary teachers for half of the year.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by:
 - ensuring that teachers provide the right sort of challenge for all pupils and plan work that is not too hard or too easy for some
 - ensuring that teachers do not waste time at the start of lessons by talking for too long
 - ensuring that teachers tackle pupils occasional misbehaviour quickly so that it is not allowed to disturb learning
 - providing more training for teachers in Key Stage 1 on how to teach phonics (learning about letters and sounds).
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - sharing more widely responsibility for ensuring improvement, especially in teaching
 - developing the role of governors in monitoring the work of the school and holding leaders to account
 - strengthening procedures for assessing pupils' learning so that it is checked more regularly and gives a clear and accurate picture of their progress over time.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because progress is not consistently strong across the school. When children start school, most are working at the expected levels for their age. From these broadly average starting points, pupils make the expected progress most of the time. However, progress is uneven because pupils' differing needs are not always met well enough. Consequently, pupils' attainment in English and mathematics remains at broadly average levels across the school.
- The school does not promote equality of opportunity well enough by ensuring that all pupils make good progress. Until recently, provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs has not been monitored thoroughly enough. In lessons, there are occasions when these pupils rely too much on adult support to complete their work because it is too hard for them. They do best when being supported outside lessons individually or in small groups. At these times, work is well focused on developing basic skills in literacy and numeracy and their needs are met well.
- Across the school, pupils' literacy and numeracy skills improve steadily. By Year 6, most pupils read with a good level of confidence, although some less-able pupils struggle to understand what they are reading. Pupils write enthusiastically, especially when work is linked to history or science topics, but they do not always spell accurately.
- In numeracy, pupils' progress is improving because teachers are beginning to plan more imaginative work that challenges pupils to think like mathematicians. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 confidently explored the properties of symmetry by making shapes and using good mathematical vocabulary to explain what they were learning.
- There are no significant differences between the progress of boys and girls. Pupils from Showman Traveller families are given helpful work packs when they are away from school. This helps to ensure that they make the same steady progress as others.
- The small group of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium improve their literacy and numeracy skills quickly because it is used well to provide intensive support. Consequently, these pupils usually attain as well as others by the end of Year 6.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make good progress in developing personal and social skills, quickly becoming independent and confident.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because there are occasions in lessons when pupils do not learn quickly enough. This happens when work is too hard or too easy for some pupils. In these lessons, there is insufficient challenge for the most-able and the less-able pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who rely on adult help to complete their work.
- On too many occasions, teachers spend too long talking at the start of lessons. When this happens some pupils misbehave and do not always listen well enough, slowing the pace of learning.

- The teaching of phonics is not consistently strong across the school. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, adults introduce skills systematically but this is less evident in Key Stage 1, where some have insecure subject knowledge.
- There are some good features to teaching, as well as some recent improvements. A focus on developing the quality of marking and target setting has proved beneficial, especially in Key Stage 2, where pupils are increasingly knowledgeable about how to improve their work.
- Throughout the school, relationships between adults and pupils are good. Recent support means that teaching is becoming more engaging, especially in Years 3 and 4, where teaching is challenging and pupils are expected to think for themselves.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, adults check learning carefully and use this information well to plan what to teach next. Good use is made of the outdoor area to support learning. For example, children quickly improved their speaking skills as they searched outside for hidden treasure.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils are keen to learn but do not always behave well enough in lessons. When teaching does not engage them fully or is dull, pupils fidget or are silly. Older pupils, in particular, do not always work quickly enough and they are inattentive when adults are talking.
- Rates of attendance are broadly average. While most pupils attend school regularly, those from Showman Traveller families miss school more often when they are travelling. The school works well with these families to minimise the impact of this on their children's learning and they attend regularly when they are not travelling.
- Pupils feel safe at school and move around the school sensibly most of the time. They are confident that there is very little bullying and that when pupils 'fall out' it is tackled quickly by adults. Pupils talk knowledgeably about some of the dangers they may face in later life, including how to avoid cyber-bullying.
- The school successfully ensures that there is no discrimination. Pupils from different backgrounds play together happily at playtimes and support each other well in lessons.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children play together happily and sensibly select where they are going to work. They persevere well and show good concentration.
- In Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils behave best when lessons are fun and engaging. In an English lesson in Years 5 and 6, pupils were enthralled and behaved well as they watched a video of a speech.
- Pupils behave well at the breakfast and after-school clubs. Activities give them a happy start or end to the school day.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- In the last year, there have been high levels of staff absence. This has hindered the impact of new leaders on improving the school and tackling the dip in attainment that started prior to the arrival of the current headteacher.

- The headteacher is identifying the right priorities, and has made a start in tackling the main weaknesses, securely demonstrating that she has the capacity to improve the school. For example, recent work has already improved pupils' progress in mathematics and provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, the headteacher takes on too much. Other leaders are relatively new to their posts and they do not yet have sufficient involvement in monitoring lessons so that they can play a bigger part in driving improvement, especially in teaching.
- Leaders know that they did not pick up quickly enough that teachers do not assess pupils' attainment regularly or accurately enough. This means that, until recently, there has not been a clear enough picture of where improvement is needed. Nonetheless, the headteacher has a clear picture of where teaching is stronger or weaker and the process for reviewing teachers' performance holds them to account for their work. The headteacher ensures that salary progression is appropriately linked to the progress made by pupils and is tied to the meeting of agreed targets.
- The use of the pupil premium is carefully checked. The school closely tracks the progress of eligible pupils and funding has been used to good effect to provide additional small group or individual support to accelerate progress. Good use is also made of additional funding to ensure that eligible pupils have equal opportunity to participate in all school activities.
- The local authority has supported the school intensively over the last eight months. This has already helped to improve teaching. The additional training they are providing for staff is sharply focused on the right priorities.
- Most parents and carers are pleased with recent improvements and are positive about the way the school is developing. They support the school well by hearing their children read and ensuring that homework is completed.
- The curriculum soundly supports the development of basic skills and it suitably promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, pupils are encouraged to write their own prayers and are given good opportunities to take responsibility.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance requires improvement. The governing body has recently carried out an audit of their skills and have rightly identified that further training would be beneficial. They know that, until recently, they have provided too little challenge to leaders. Although recent information provided by the headteacher and the local authority means that they are more realistic than they were about the school's performance in comparison with others, governors are over-reliant on information provided by school leaders. They do not yet do enough to check the school's performance or the quality of teaching for themselves. Governors keep a tight rein on the budget, ensuring that the pupil premium is correctly used to benefit eligible pupils, as seen in the narrowing of the attainment gap between those pupils and their peers. They also ensure that there are close links between rewards and performance when reviewing the work of leaders. Governors place a high priority on keeping pupils safe and ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.

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	110804
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	403130

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	116
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Imogen Axton
Headteacher	Katharine Bultitude
Date of previous school inspection	30 January 2008
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