

West Alvington Church of England Primary School

West Alvington, Kingsbridge, Devon, TQ7 3PP

Inspection dates 6–7 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	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		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- The quality of teaching is not consistently good enough to ensure that all Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress in writing and mathematics.
- In lessons, time is not always used to maximum effect. When this is the case, some pupils become a little bored and restless and this reduces the progress they make.
- Teachers do not always use the assessments they make during the course of a lesson to adapt their teaching to meet the emerging needs of their pupils.
- Pupils' undeveloped thinking, listening and speaking skills are a barrier to their ability to learn.

The school has the following strengths:

- Strong and determined leadership by the new headteacher and head of school is ensuring that the school is improving very rapidly. School self-evaluation is accurate and actions taken are well judged. Governance has very successfully supported the move to the new federation. The school is demonstrating that it has good capacity to continue this improvement.
- Work to improve teaching and progress in reading has been successful and pupils are now making good progress and achieving well.
- Children in the Reception Year make good progress, as do those in Years 1 and 2.
- Significantly strengthened provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs has very successfully ensured that these pupils achieve well.
- Pupils feel safe and secure in school. Their welfare is given high priority and procedures are successful in ensuring this.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with half-a-day's notice and took place over two days.
- Meetings were held with staff, groups of pupils and four governors. A meeting was held with a representative from the local authority.
- A range of evidence was reviewed including: the school's improvement plan; the school's data for tracking pupils' progress; the work pupils were doing in their books; and a range of the school's documentation, including that relating to safeguarding.
- The inspector observed teaching and learning in 10 lessons, seven of which were joint observations with the headteacher, listened to a group of pupils read and made some short visits to other lessons.
- As there were fewer than 10 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), the inspector took into account the informal opinion of parents and carers in the playground, as well as seven responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Rowena Onions, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a much smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional government funding, which in this school is for those pupils eligible for free school meals) is above the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported at school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- Almost all the pupils are White British. All the pupils speak English as their first language.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Pupils are taught in three mixed-age group classes, with Years 1 and 2 pupils being taught with children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are taught in two classes in the morning and all together in the afternoon.
- Since the last inspection, the school has been through a period of instability during which there was a significant number of staff changes, including a period of temporary headship.
- In September 2012, the school joined Charleton and Thurlestone Church of England Primary Schools in the Kingsbridge Area Church Schools Federation. The three schools share a headteacher and a newly appointed governing body. The headteacher has been leading West Alvington since the federation and thus has been in post for less than a year. A new head of school (a senior teacher) was appointed in January 2013 and one other teacher is also newly appointed this year.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency of teaching, particularly in writing and mathematics, so that it is at least good by April 2014 by:
 - ensuring that pupils are learning at a good speed during all parts of lessons
 - more closely meeting pupils' developing needs by using assessment during lessons to adapt what is being taught and the activities pupils are asked to do.
- Improve pupils' attitudes to learning in class by:
 - developing their ability to think, listen and speak
 - ensuring lessons are lively and interesting throughout
 - helping pupils to understand the contribution they can make to successful learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Despite school improvement initiatives having a very positive impact on raising achievement, not all Key Stage 2 pupils are yet making good progress in writing and mathematics. Time in lessons is not always used to best effect and sometimes pupils are not learning as much as they should. Consequently, they do not achieve as well as they should over time in writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' thinking, listening and speaking skills are currently below the standards expected. This lack of skill reduces their capacity to learn because they do not quickly understand and process new ideas and they sometimes lack the ability to concentrate on what they are being taught. The school has recognised this and initiatives to make improvements are already underway.
- Overall, children enter the school with attainments that are below expectation for their age. During the Reception Year, they are helped to gain both social and educational skills. They learn to play productively, for example when they followed a whole class discussion by independently playing at being knights and princesses. In this way they were developing their ability to play together, as well as their imaginations and vocabulary.
- Standards and progress in Years 1 and 2 had drifted down over the last two years. This decline has now been very effectively halted and progress has risen well. Pupils gain from very regular practice in basic skills, such as in the development of phonics knowledge (the link between letters and sounds).
- School improvement work has been carefully prioritised to ensure that it has maximum impact. Reading was identified as the greatest priority and work to improve the teaching of reading has been successful. Pupils now make good progress throughout the school. After a significant dip, reading standards in Year 2 are now average. Those in Year 6 are above average.
- There have been very successful efforts to develop support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Additional intervention programmes have resulted in greatly accelerated progress for some of these pupils and all are progressing well. Pupils who are eligible for additional funding (the pupil premium) make at least as good progress as other pupils. Although the very small numbers involved make direct comparison difficult, overall there is no significant difference between the attainment in English and mathematics of this group and that of others.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- There is too much variability in the quality of teaching pupils receive. Although much is good or better, there remains a proportion that requires improvement.
- Time is not always used to best effect. This is often linked to pupils being expected to sit and listen to the teacher for longer than their current listening skills allow to be useful. When this is the case, pupils become bored and restless and their concentration drops.
- Although teachers use assessment well to plan lessons that are at a suitable level for the range of pupils in their class, they are not as good at using the information from assessments during lessons to adapt their teaching to emerging needs. This sometimes results in unnecessary repetition of work or explanations or, on occasion, too little attention to whether all the pupils understand the vocabulary teachers are using. Pupils comment, for example, that they do not always understand the vocabulary used in the objective for the lesson and thus cannot focus their efforts.
- As a result of the school's development work, teachers are paying good attention to setting activities that require pupils to use thinking, speaking and listening skills. Although teachers are currently at different stages of success in doing this, there are examples of strong practice. In an outstanding Year 5/6 mathematics lesson, for example, pupils were asked to investigate patterns within a sequence of numbers and to articulate what they had discovered. Very skilled interventions and praise for success from the teacher ensured that every pupil persevered with

the task and was proud of his or her achievements by the end of the lesson.

- The time of skilled additional adults in the classroom is used well, often to the benefit of the lower-attaining pupils. It is, in part, due to the skills of these adults that interventions to support these pupils have been successful.
- Teachers are trying hard to find activities that motivate and inspire pupils. A hunt for clues placed around the school, for example, meant that pupils were active and engaged in learning about rationing in the Second World War. When pupils are fully engaged in this way, their behaviour is positive in helping them to learn.
- Another school improvement initiative, to improve the quality of feedback and marking, is beginning to take effect. Pupils report they find the marking of their work helpful. It is detailed in telling them where they have succeeded and what they could improve. The school is, however, right in continuing to look for ways to provide pupils with more opportunity to act on the advice they are given.

The behaviour and safety of pupils require improvement

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are mixed. While almost all want to learn in lessons, they do not always concentrate as well as they should. This is sometimes caused by the way time is used and it is sometimes because pupils' ability to listen and think is not good enough to prompt full concentration. It is also in part due to a lack of full understanding on the part of pupils that they have a responsibility to promote their own learning. In discussion, pupils often relate the quality of their learning to what their teachers and other pupils do, rather than showing understanding of their own contribution to good learning.
- Pupils comment on the improvement in behaviour around the school and in the playground. This is now good. Pupils fully understand the renewed system of rewards and sanctions and this helps them to live up to the expected standards of behaviour.
- Pupils feel very safe in school, commenting it feels like a big family. Parents and carers spoken to agreed with this opinion. Pupils report that there is very little bullying of any kind. They know what to do if any should arise. Pupils show good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, for example, knowing the dangers of use of the internet and how to avoid them.
- The pupils' welfare is given the highest importance. Recently developed links with a range of other professionals are assisting the school to support a small number of more troubled pupils very well.
- Rates of attendance have risen in response to increasingly robust measures to promote it. Attendance by the vast majority is now at least average. The school works hard with the families of the small number of pupils who have less than average attendance to promote improvement.

The leadership and management are good

- A very significant amount of improvement work has been undertaken over the last two terms. Improvements in the teaching of younger pupils, in teaching and progress in reading, in improved behaviour and attendance, and in greatly strengthened leadership roles are only a few of the developments that are clearly documented and evident in the school.
- The clear vision and drive of the headteacher and the new head of school to improve are a prime cause of this move forward. It is of note, however, that teachers and teaching assistants have also risen to the challenge of restoring the school to its former strength. It is the combination of this shared determination and the track record of recent improvements that shows the school has at least good capacity to further improve.
- Wider leadership across the federation is being developed. Although very new, this is already benefiting both the quality of teaching and the range of activities open to pupils, through the greater breadth of teacher expertise available. The school has received good support from the

local authority, particularly over the period of change of leadership.

- The school's own evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses is very robust and accurate and is being used to guide and prioritise improvements. The checking of the quality of teaching, for example, leads to initiatives such as teachers across the federation working together to improve the way reading is taught in small groups. Appraisal is playing a key part in the development of teaching. New tracking procedures are working well in ensuring that any potential underachievement by a pupil is rapidly identified and actions are taken to halt it.
 - The school's curriculum is appropriately broad and pupils are benefiting from the increased opportunity to gain first-hand experiences. Pupils had, for example, clearly gained better thinking skills through a 'survival' day at a local beach. The curriculum is being developed alongside the move to improve progress. For example, there has been increased emphasis on giving pupils opportunities to write for real purpose. Information and communication technology is playing a good part in promoting learning, not least because it increases pupils' interest.
 - Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is promoted well through the curriculum and through the work done to improve behaviour. Personal development is also very effectively supported by the school's family ethos. This also plays a strong part in ensuring pupils' well-being, alongside robust safeguarding procedures. These elements, along with the careful checking of pupils' progress, are promoting good equality of opportunity and ensuring that there is no discrimination in the school.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The current governing body has been in place since federation in September 2012. This move has been very well managed. Systems are relatively new, but increasingly robust. Governors are already proactive in gaining first-hand information through school visits. They are very supportive, but are keen to hold the school to account. The governing body has secure knowledge both of attainment and progress in the school and of how they relate to other schools nationally. Good procedures are in place to provide governors with knowledge about the quality of teaching and how it is being developed. They are suitably informed about systems for managing staff performance and the way that pay rises should be decided with this taken into account. Governors have ensured that finances are very carefully allocated to promote pupils' achievement. This includes the way pupil premium funding is spent, for example to finance the very successful interventions.
-

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	113404
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	413199
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	34
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Reg Rew
Headteacher	Philip Medway
Date of previous school inspection	14–15 October 2009
Telephone number	01548 852002
Fax number	01548 857782
Email address	admin@west-alvington.devon.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

