

Pensford Primary School

Pensford Hill, Pensford, Bristol, BS39 4AA

Inspection dates

13–14 June 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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires Improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This school requires improvement. It is not good because

- Not enough pupils make good progress throughout the school because not enough teaching is good or better and high staff turnover has hindered pupils' learning.
- Teachers do not always use information on pupils' learning accurately to set work that is matched to their individual needs.
- Teachers sometimes talk for too long so that pupils do not have enough time to practise what they have learnt by working on their own.
- Marking does not always show pupils how to improve, and teachers do not routinely check the advice they have given has been acted on.
- Not all pupils know their individual targets and whether they have achieved them.
- Some staff are not trained well enough to help pupils to improve their reading.
- Leaders' checks on the impact of teaching on pupil achievement are not sharply focused enough on how well different groups of pupils learn. They do not clearly identify weaknesses and ensure they are fully resolved.
- Summary information on school performance is not sufficiently developed to show more clearly progress made.
- Subject leaders do not regularly check and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in their areas of work.
- Members of the governing body have not ensured that school leaders have monitored teaching and learning across the school with sufficient rigour.

The school has the following strengths

- The school provides a good range of opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils throughout the school behave well. They feel safe in school because they know that adults care for them.
- Progress is improving in mathematics because of improvements to the curriculum. There is a sustained trend of improvement in reading at the higher levels in Year 6, and the proportion of good teaching is improving.
- Pupils attend well because they enjoy school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching in all classes. She observed seven lessons/parts of lessons, over half of which were shared observations with the headteacher.
- The inspector heard some pupils read in class.
- The inspector had discussions with pupils, staff, members of the governing body, parents and carers, and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector examined a range of the school's documents and samples of pupils' work.
- There were no responses available to the online questionnaire (Parent View). The inspector examined the school's own surveys, and staff questionnaires were taken into consideration.

Inspection team

Sonja Joseph, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Pensford primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are White British and well over a half are girls.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those looked after by the local authority, and pupils with a parent in the armed forces) is well below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is also below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club for pupils.
- There have been significant changes to the teaching team since the previous inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that all pupils make consistently good progress in lessons by:
 - using information gained from checks on pupils' progress to plan work that is well matched to their individual abilities
 - ensuring that teacher explanations are short so pupils have time to work things out for themselves
 - making sure pupils know and understand their targets
 - providing more opportunities for practical and open-ended investigation in mathematics.
 - ensuring all adults are using training in teaching early reading skills consistently to ensure that pupils make the best progress they can
 - ensuring all marking shows pupils how to improve their work and that teachers check more regularly that pupils act on their advice.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - using available national information to set ambitious, realistic targets for all pupils based on their starting points
 - making sure all leaders and managers use performance information to make certain that all pupils are achieving well
 - presenting such information in a summary form so that progress is easier to see
 - making sure that the monitoring of teaching is fully focused on how well different groups of pupils learn, and rigorous enough to identify weaknesses and resolve them
 - providing more opportunities for subject leaders to check the quality of teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility
 - making sure that the governing body is better informed about how well the school is doing so that the governors can ask challenging questions of school leaders and hold them to account

more effectively.

- 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

- The progress that pupils make throughout the school is uneven and varies for different groups of pupils because the quality of teaching is inconsistent across subjects and year groups.
- Overall progress in mathematics is not yet fast enough to ensure all, especially the more able, make good progress because there is too little opportunity to use and apply mathematical skills across all subjects to solve problems. However, recent improvements to the curriculum and to the way mathematics is taught are speeding up progress across the school.
- Pupils' learning targets and guidance on how to reach them are not always clear. Marking and feedback to pupils are not always helpful in pointing out the next steps they need to take to improve their work, particularly in writing. Consequently, pupils are unsure of how they can move their learning on. Teachers do not check regularly enough that the advice they have given has been acted on.
- Although younger pupils who read to inspectors clearly enjoy reading, they were not always confident in breaking down and building up words. This is because the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is not precise or rapid enough. The proportion of pupils in Year 1 who met the required standard in the phonics screening check in 2012 was below average.
- Nevertheless, by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6, pupils achieve their best results in reading and there is a sustained trend of improvement in reading at the higher level in Year 6 tests.
- Pupils make the best progress in lessons where teachers have a very clear understanding of what they want each pupil to learn and carefully match their work so that it is neither too hard nor too easy. For example, in an excellent Year 5/6 lesson, pupils were able to carry out complicated calculations and solve problems accurately because they had a good grasp of basic number skills. This good practice is not routinely applied across the school.
- Individual and small-group tuition for pupils who benefit from extra funding through the pupil premium is closing the gap in attainment. In national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2012, eligible pupils attained levels broadly in line with their classmates in reading and writing. In mathematics, they were about four terms ahead. However, their progress, also in line with their classmates, is not yet even across the school or subjects.
- Pupils' work seen during the inspection, and observations of lessons, indicate that no group of pupils is disadvantaged or makes significantly less progress than any other group. All pupils are included in learning and none is discriminated against, including those from any minority ethnic groups, boys and girls, and those with differing special educational needs.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive support in the form of extra help from a range of teaching assistants and other adults, but they do not yet achieve well enough.
- The skills of children when they join the Early Years Foundation Stage differ year-on-year. However, pupils generally make expected progress when compared to their starting points, and a small proportion of children make good progress.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is uneven across the school, including the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, teaching is improving strongly, particularly in English and mathematics, and some excellent teaching was observed during the inspection. Too little teaching is of sufficiently good quality for pupils to make good progress overall.

- Where teaching is weakest, too much teacher-talk means that pupils do not get the chance to reflect in order to extend their ideas or develop their skills. It also limits the amount of time pupils have to learn for themselves during the tasks set.
- Teaching is weaker where information about pupils' progress is not used well by teachers to make sure that work is set at exactly the right level for pupils in their class. Consequently, more-able pupils find activities too easy and finish quickly, and less-able pupils find it too hard, and do very little. As a result, learning slows, and pupils are less active and engaged in their learning.
- The teaching of phonics is inconsistent. Some staff do not have a good enough understanding of how letters and sounds should be taught and do not provide pupils with enough opportunities to sound out new letter sounds themselves.
- Teachers often miss opportunities, both in lessons and when marking books, to emphasise pupils' individual targets and set out the next steps they need to take. As a consequence, pupils do not always have a clear idea about how to improve quickly.
- Occasionally, teachers do not check pupil responses to their comments and some pupils continue to make the same mistakes.
- Where teaching is good or better, teachers are lively and engaging, and plan lessons very well to promote high levels of skills, including pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, across a range of subjects. Teachers use skilful questioning to probe the understanding of all pupils. They provide thinking time for pupils and expect well-thought-out, extended responses to their questions.
- In a Year 5/6 mathematics lesson, pupils made outstanding progress in securing their understanding of calculation. Careful questioning from the class teacher, coupled with interesting and challenging problem-solving tasks, supported further learning. In an English lesson, pupils made rapid progress in their understanding of the use of specific language through turning themselves into a human rollercoaster. Such lessons are not routine across the school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well around the school, at playtimes and in lessons. They work well with others. For example, in morning 'wake up' dance exercise, they learn how to follow rules, keep themselves safe and work with a partner. In breakfast club, they learn to share food and take turns when playing games.
- Most pupils learn to listen and concentrate. For example, in assembly, all pupils listened to the teacher intently, followed instructions carefully, and sat for a few minutes in quiet reflection. Behaviour is not yet outstanding because occasionally, when teaching is less effective, pupils' attention can wander.
- A very small number of pupils have some difficulty in managing their behaviour, almost always related to their special educational needs. They receive good-quality support to help them develop strategies to deal with this and to be able to work alongside other pupils successfully.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school. Bullying is rare, although pupils feel that occasionally staff do not respond quickly enough, should it occur. However, all pupils agree that staff do deal with bullying effectively.
- Pupils know about the dangers of smoking and drugs, and develop an understanding of personal health through visits by the school nurse and by undertaking first aid training.
- Attendance has improved steadily in recent years and is currently above the national average. The school has worked hard to achieve this, resisting authorising absence, and rewarding pupils who attend regularly.

- A minority of parents and carers expressed concern over behaviour but the inspection verified the pupils' views that behaviour is good.

The leadership and management require improvement

- The headteacher and the governing body recognise that achievement should be better. High levels of staff turnover and long-term absence have hindered pupils' learning, and the school has not been able to sustain previous good outcomes.
- Senior leaders have not checked the performance of teachers rigorously enough. They have not ensured that the areas of weakness they have identified sufficiently focus on how well different groups of pupils learn, and that they are resolved quickly. Consequently, inconsistencies in teaching remain.
- Information on how well pupils are achieving is not compared to national expectations rigorously enough by all leaders. Consequently, targets set for pupils' learning are not as challenging as they could be to make sure that all pupils achieve the highest levels of which they are capable.
- Subject leaders are not always clear about their roles and responsibilities. They have not had enough opportunities to check the quality of teaching and learning in their subject areas and use this information to make sure that pupils make at least good progress. This limits their ability to drive improvements in their areas.
- All leaders now have a more realistic understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and have made suitable plans to improve the school further. Leaders recognise information on all aspects of school performance must be written in summary form so that progress is easier to see. There is an appropriate link between progressing teachers up the pay scale with their performance. The proportion of good teaching is improving. Consequently, pupils' progress is improving. These successes reveal the school's capacity to improve.
- The school successfully promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through a well-balanced curriculum based on interesting topics. Pupils enjoy the wide range of activities outside lessons such as music, art, sport, and residential trips where pupils learn outdoor survival skills. Adults provide a good example to pupils in the positive way that they respond to them.
- All statutory requirements regarding safeguarding are met.
- The local authority has supported the school over the past 12 months, particularly in its review of teaching and learning.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body brings a wide range of skills and experience to the school. Governors provide effective challenge for the school's improvement of pupils' behaviour, but do not hold the school sufficiently to account for pupils' progress and the standards they reach. Governors are aware that they have not challenged enough the progress information presented, and questioned current inconsistencies in teaching. They have ensured that appropriate systems are in place to manage the performance of staff and their salaries. They pay high attention to the welfare needs of pupils in the school, including safeguarding. They carefully monitor the school's finances, including how the pupil premium funding is spent and its impact on pupils' achievement. They know that it has been partially used to support eligible pupils to have individual mathematics tuition and that this has helped to improve their progress. Governors have undertaken a wide range of training, including understanding data in order to help them hold the school to account better.

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	109068
Local authority	Bath and North east Somerset East Somerset
Inspection number	412214

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	73
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Evans
Headteacher	Lorna McIsaac
Date of previous school inspection	21 January 2010
Telephone number	01761 490470
Fax number	01761 490470
Email address	lorna_mcisaac@bathnes.gov.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

