

West Huntspill Community Primary School

New Road, West Huntspill, Highbridge, TA9 3QE

Inspection dates 26–27 September 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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 is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because:

- Pupils', particularly boys, are not doing well enough with their writing. Achievement in writing is weaker than in reading and mathematics.
- Teaching requires improvement because pupils' progress over the past year remains inconsistent.
- Some of the work given is not sufficiently challenging and too little is expected from pupils. When this happens learning does not move on quickly enough.
- Teaching assistants do not always promote effective learning with the groups of pupils they work with.
- Leadership and management require improvement because checks on the quality of teaching and individual support have not been sufficiently robust to rectify weaknesses and lead to good achievement.
- Governors, many of whom are new to the school, have yet to get to grips with their roles and responsibilities. Their arrangements to hold teachers fully to account are underdeveloped.
- Pupils' attendance is below the national average but improving.

The school has the following strengths:

- The school is improving and on the way to becoming good; the school's information for pupils' progress over the past year shows a strengthening picture, particularly in reading.
- Provision in the Autism Base is good and the school can demonstrate significant improvement in the way these pupils learn.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to their work, contribute confidently in lessons and work together well. As a result relationships are harmonious and respectful.
- Teachers manage classes well and treat pupils as individuals. Pupils behave well, feel safe and secure in school and free from bullying. Pupils say they get on well together.
- Leaders have maintained a focus on improvement and some initiatives, for example better marking and the use of targets by pupils, are strengthening progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed nine lessons, of which four were joint observations with the headteacher. He also scrutinised samples of pupils' work.
- Meetings were held with staff, members of the governing body, groups of pupils and a representative from the local authority.
- There were not sufficient responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) to show results for this school. Parents' and carers' views were gathered from informal discussions at the start of the school day.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at documents, including the school improvement plans, school checks on teaching, records relating to attendance, and the school's data on pupils' progress.

Inspection team

Peter Clifton, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- West Huntspill Community Primary School is smaller than the average size primary school and is federated with East Huntspill Community Primary School which is approximately two miles away.
- About one third of pupils attend from outside of West Huntspill.
- The pupils are taught in three classes: Reception, Years 1 and 2; Years 3 and 4; and Years 5 and 6. The reception children are taught separately during the mornings.
- The school has specially resourced provision for pupils with autism, which currently has two Key Stage 2 pupils attending.
- Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported by school action is little above average; the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs (outside of the Autism Base) is below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and other groups, is broadly average. Currently, the school has no pupils who are in the care of the local authority or from other groups.
- There have been several changes of staff since the school was last inspected.
- A breakfast club runs on three mornings each week, run by the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the quality of teaching, so that pupils' attainment and progress, particularly in writing and for boys, improve by:
 - making sure that activities provided for different groups of pupils are not too easy so that pupils are able to learn as well as possible
 - making sure that teaching assistants consistently promote effective learning with the groups of children they work with
 - making sure that lessons, other than in literacy, are used to improve writing skills.
- Strengthen the impact of leadership and management by:
 - driving through improvements in teaching more robustly for example, by closer checking on the learning and progress of different groups of pupils in lessons so they make good progress
 - providing more individual support for staff according to their needs
 - making sure that governors and other leaders hold staff more closely to account for improvements in pupils' progress.
 - working more closely with parents and carers to raise attendance.
- Undertake an external review of governance in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement is not yet consistently good. In Year 6 in 2011 pupils did not do well enough. Results improved in 2012 with pupils making the progress expected from their different starting point in Year 3. The most recent results are similar to those in 2012.
- In 2012 attainment dipped at the end of Year 2 because of a weakness in writing. The more recent results in 2013 show that writing has improved but that overall attainment is still not high enough. The samples of writing seen during the inspection for pupils who are now in Year 2 show improvement and are broadly in line with those expected.
- The school's records show that over the past year, progress has strengthened across the school but is not yet good. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and those who are more able, make progress which is broadly similar to that of other pupils in the school. Progress in reading is a little stronger than in mathematics and writing.
- In 2012, pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium in Year 6 did not do as well as other groups of pupils and their attainment was about one year behind. However, samples of work and school records over the past year show that the current progress of this group of pupils, across the school, is improving. The progress of older pupils in this group is stronger than other pupils in reading.
- The 2012 results in last year's Year 1 phonics screening check were above the national expectation. This year, all pupils achieved the expected standard. Younger readers in Years 1 and 2 use these skills well to help them to read unknown words. They typically enjoy reading, persevere and want to reach the end of the story.
- Pupils who attend the Autism Base typically show significant improvements in their achievement and learning behaviour, so that they can be integrated back into the main classes and learn successfully alongside their classmates.
- Older pupils use different methods to multiply numbers with growing assurance. They read widely and talk knowledgeably about different books and why they like them. They name their favourite authors and discuss why they like their books.
- Children in Reception have settled into class routines. They choose different activities confidently and enjoy counting activities and searching for patterns.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is not yet sufficiently strong to promote good progress across the school. Activities are not always planned well enough to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. For example, there are times in lessons, including in Reception, when more-able pupils could move onto more challenging activities more quickly.
- At times, the support teaching assistants give to individual pupils is not effective so that lower-attaining pupils complete too little work in the time available. This happens, for example, when they are given too much help with their learning and are not expected to do enough writing. There are, however, examples of teaching assistants working well with individual pupils for example, to provide support and encouragement to help them improve their basic number skills.
- There are occasions when pupils' independent writing is inhibited, outside of literacy lessons, because they are not given sufficient guidance about what is expected or do not use their literacy targets to help improve skills.
- Although weaknesses in teaching remain, good teaching and progress was made in Years 3 and 4 when pupils developed their understanding of using contractions such as 'we're' and 'we've' in their writing. This work was successful because tasks were challenging for different groups.
- Pupils have targets to help them to direct their own learning and judge for themselves how well they have done. These were used effectively with older pupils, for example, in writing in literacy. Pupils comment that they value the positive comments made by teachers from marking and are

given additional time in lessons to work on suggested improvements. This is strengthening progress.

- Relationships between staff and pupils are strong and pupils have a lot of trust in the adults who look after them. Teachers manage pupils well, and treat them fairly and make learning enjoyable.
- In the Autism Base, pupils usually enjoy learning, for example when finding out about the different clothes worn in Tudor times and the names of the different garments worn.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The pupils' good behaviour and positive relationships reflect the schools' care and the sensitive way in which pupils' behaviour is managed. They play well together at break and lunchtimes and show concern for each other's well-being. They comment that it is a friendly place and know that discrimination is not tolerated. Pupils enjoy coming to breakfast club and the activities provided.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to school and value the helpful comments made by staff about their work. They answer questions enthusiastically and say what they understand. Nearly all quickly get on with tasks when asked by teachers and other adults without any fuss. Pupils from the Autism Base join their classmates in lessons when appropriate.
- Pupils enjoy school. They say they feel safe in school and there is very little evidence of bullying incidents from discussion with the pupils or in the school's records. Pupils are knowledgeable about different forms of bullying, including e-bullying, and the possible dangers of giving out personal information.
- Parents, carers and staff are supportive of the school. Although parents' and carers' views from questionnaires were not available, parents and carers spoken to confirm that they are happy with the school and that the headteacher had responded to any issues raised.
- Pupils say there are very few occasions when their learning is interrupted by inappropriate behaviour. Behaviour is not outstanding because in lessons, some pupils, mainly younger boys, find it difficult to stay sufficiently engaged when they are not being directly supervised. This inhibits their learning.
- Attendance is below average. Leaders are taking appropriate steps to improve pupils' attendance, for example through newsletters, giving out attendance certificates to pupils and working with individual families.

The leadership and management require improvement

- Leadership and management have not ensured that teaching is good enough to enable pupils to make rapid progress and achieve well. The support provided has not yet ensured that learning activities meet the needs of different groups of pupils equally well. However, the school's records show that teaching is improving, and the headteacher has a clear view about teaching strengths and weaknesses.
- Coordinators recognise that there is more to do to improve attainment in literacy and numeracy. They have attended training to help them to develop their role and have evaluated the effectiveness of changes that have already been made, for example, the way the pupils are assessing their own work using targets to help them to improve. Staff are positive about change and taking on further challenges.
- The headteacher has steered the school through a period of uncertainty because of staff changes. Opportunities for the pupils and staff from the two schools in the federation to work together are increasing. The pupils and staff comment positively about joint activities, including training for staff and sports events for pupils.
- The Autism Base is well led and staff are very knowledgeable and skilled in modifying pupils' behaviour and attitudes so that pupils become more confident about working alongside their classmates.

- Regular visits by a representative from the local authority are helping the school to move forward securely.
- Leaders have plans to use extra money from the primary school sport funding to expand the use of sports coaches to work in the school, for example, to expand after-school sporting activities and promote sport for all.
- Assemblies and the curriculum are used effectively to promote pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development. For example, they learn about how people have fought against intolerance and racism.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - An unusually high proportion of governors are newly appointed to the school, including the Chair of the Governing Body, and this means that they are still getting to grips with their roles and responsibilities having attended some initial training. They are keen to contribute and recognise that further training would be beneficial. They know the overall strengths and weaknesses of the school from the information provided, including how well the school's results compare with the national averages. However, they have yet to gain a fuller understanding how well different groups of pupils are doing. Governors know that the quality of teaching in the school is improving. However, the school's arrangements to hold teachers fully to account for the progress made by pupils, and decisions about whether or not teachers should move up the salary scale are underdeveloped. A helpful report about the effectiveness of the pupil premium funding was presented to governors earlier in the year; the group of governors spoken to have not yet had sufficient time to evaluate this. The required procedures about safeguarding children are followed. Governors monitor the school budget and spending decisions carefully.

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	123696
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	426782

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	John Micklewright
Headteacher	James Peate
Date of previous school inspection	15–16 September 2011
Telephone number	01278 783842
Fax number	01278 794429
Email address	Jpeate2@educ.somerset.gov.uk

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