

Canon Sharples Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School and Nursery

Whelley, Wigan, Lancashire, WN2 1BP

Inspection dates 3–4 October 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		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

- Progress is not yet consistently good in reading, writing and mathematics for all pupils. Not enough pupils make better than the expected progress across all classes.
- The standards pupils achieve at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are broadly average in both English and mathematics.
- Teaching requires improvement across the Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- Teachers do not give pupils enough chances to apply the skills that they have been taught to their own work. Teachers spend too much time directing pupils in lessons and so pupils do not spend enough time investigating or working independently.
- Pupils do not always take an active role in lessons and are not fully engaged in their work.
- Disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, and children in the Early Years Foundation Stage do not make consistently good enough progress because the provision for them is not well led and managed, and their achievement is not checked closely enough.
- The current leadership of the school has not had enough time to ensure that improvements already made are sustained and lead to significantly improved results for all pupils.
- Governors have not held the school to account well enough for the performance of pupils. The checks made have had a limited effect on improving the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.

The school has the following strengths

- The new executive headteacher, along with other leaders, has swiftly identified weaknesses in achievement, teaching and leadership, and has taken decisive action to bring about rapid improvements here.
- Some teaching is good and when pupils are engaged fully in lessons they make good progress and enjoy learning.
- Pupils enjoy school and feel safe and well cared for.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons or part lessons.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of staff, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Responses from 13 parents via the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) were also taken into account, along with the most recent parental and pupil surveys undertaken by the school.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation including: assessment data, the school's evaluation of its work, minutes from governing body meetings, safeguarding documentation, reports written by consultants commissioned to analyse areas of the school's performance, information about performance management, monitoring records and the school's improvement plan.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and also reviewed samples of their work.
- Inspectors also observed an assembly.

Inspection team

Clare Daniel, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Katherine Lee	Additional Inspector
Barbara Dutton	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (funding to help raise the achievement of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children of service families and children looked after by the local authority) is average and has risen significantly in recent years.
- An above average proportion of pupils are supported through school action.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- One pupil attends The Phoenix Centre alternative provision part time.
- The school is currently being led by an executive headteacher who is a national leader of education from St Wilfrid's Church of England Primary Academy, Standish. She is based at Canon Sharples C.E. Primary for three days each week.
- The deputy headteacher at Canon Sharples C.E. Primary has recently taken on the role of head of school. An assistant headteacher has also been appointed.
- The school operates a breakfast club during term time which is managed by the governing body.
- The school is accredited with the Eco Schools Bronze Award.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that all is good or better by:
 - improving the subject knowledge of staff so that they can identify misconceptions in pupils' work quickly and eliminate mistakes in their own teaching
 - making more effective use of on-going assessments so that lessons are planned to meet the needs of all pupils, especially those with a disability or special educational needs
 - increasing the range and quality of opportunities for pupils to work independently and apply their skills in all subjects.
- Build on the effectiveness of the current leadership of the school by:
 - ensuring that all staff who hold specific posts of responsibility, including those responsible for disabled pupils or special educational needs and the Early Years Foundation Stage, are fully accountable to senior leaders for the achievement of pupils in their care
 - ensuring that developing strategies for checking the quality of teaching and achievement are used effectively by all leaders so that all pupils achieve as well as they can
 - monitoring the spending of the pupil premium so that pupils who are supported by this funding achieve well and more exceed the standards expected of them at the end of Key Stage 2.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- The achievement of pupils requires improvement because it is not consistently good across the school.
- The quality of teaching has not been sufficiently well monitored to ensure that all pupils have made good progress. This has been particularly true of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and disabled pupils or who have special educational needs.
- Since the very recent leadership changes, there have been significant improvements in achievement for most pupils but these have not yet been sustained.
- Children join the Nursery class with skills that are below those expected for their age, particularly in aspects of communication and language development. They make good progress in the Nursery class but this slows in the Reception classes.
- A significant proportion of children join the school at the start of the Reception Year rather than in the nursery and this does affect the overall standards of attainment in literacy and mathematics. The majority of pupils enter Year 1 with skills that are still below those expected for their age.
- The proportion of Year 1 pupils achieving the expected standard in the 2013 national check on how children develop the skills of linking letters with sounds (phonics) was well below the national average.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 have improved and in 2013 were broadly average in writing and mathematics. Overall achievement in reading has improved significantly, especially for higher ability pupils.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about reading although when reading to inspectors, Year 2 pupils demonstrated some weaknesses in their skills linked to a lack of understanding of letters and the sounds that they make.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is broadly average in English and mathematics. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected level in mathematics has fallen slightly since 2012. However, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in reading and mathematics has increased.
- Although almost all pupils are making the progress expected of them in reading and writing by the end of Year 6, this is not so in mathematics and has decreased this year. Not enough pupils exceed the progress expected of them in English and mathematics.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is uneven. A few pupils make good progress, but too many do not achieve well because the systems for checking their learning have not been effective and the quality of teaching for these pupils has not been monitored closely enough. Higher ability pupils almost always achieve well in English and mathematics.
- The progress made by pupils who are eligible for free school meals, and supported through the pupil premium, is good in English and mathematics, although the standards they reach are sometimes below those expected of them by the end of Year 6. In 2012, their achievement was slightly over two terms behind their peers in Year 6.
- The school does not yet ensure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to succeed, because progress still varies between groups.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because not enough is good or better. Consequently, too few pupils make better than expected progress in English and mathematics.
- Although there are some examples of good teaching, too many lessons contain weaknesses in

teachers' subject knowledge leading to mistakes in grammar and sentence structure, and pupils' misconceptions not being identified in their work which means that they repeat errors over a period of time.

- In the majority of lessons observed, pupils spent the lesson being closely directed in their learning and did not have enough opportunities to apply new skills or to learn independently. As a result, pupils' attitudes to learning are often very passive.
- Where teaching is not yet good, teachers do not ask questions to check pupils' understanding often enough during lessons and as a result they sometimes do not recognise when pupils have not fully understood what is being asked of them until a significant amount of time has passed or the lesson has finished.
- The quality of marking is variable across the school and often does not give pupils enough guidance on how to improve their work. Marking in Year 2 is particularly good in English and mathematics, because feedback to pupils is carefully structured and evaluates how well they have done and what steps they need to take to move on further.
- Where teaching is good, pupils are enthusiastic and engaged in their work for extended periods of time because it is well planned to meet their needs effectively. They have the opportunity to apply the skills that they have been taught or to work independently on challenging activities.
- In a Year 6 reading session, pupils were using their current reading books as a starting point for a range of activities planned to extend and improve their skills. They were writing a newspaper report based on an important event in the story, a diary entry that reflected something that happened before the story started, and making a graph to chart the excitement value of each chapter of their book. The activities ensured that the pupils made very good progress because they were exciting, challenging and enabled pupils to apply their knowledge, skills and understanding to an independent task.
- The executive headteacher has swiftly identified weaknesses in teaching and has put appropriately focused short-term support plans in place to support the relevant staff as they improve.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Behaviour and safety requires improvement because pupils' passive attitudes to learning mean that they do not yet make consistently good progress across the school.
- Although pupils are well-mannered, polite and courteous around the school, they are often not active participants in the classroom and have learnt to expect that teachers do all of the work during lessons. As a result, their behaviour for learning does not have a significant impact on achievement and progress.
- Pupils say that they feel safe at school and that behaviour is mostly good. They demonstrated sensitivity when talking about some pupils who found it more difficult to behave and how they were managed.
- Information about school exclusions shows that the proportion of the pupil population who have had a fixed-term exclusion is higher than average. However the school is successfully managing provision for more challenging children in partnership with The Phoenix Centre.
- Records are kept which include the detail of any incidents of unacceptable behaviour and the consequences, but the school is not yet analysing the pattern or types of behaviour occurring.
- The majority of parents who completed the on-line questionnaire or spoke to inspectors said that the school ensures pupils behave well and that the school deals effectively with bullying.
- Pupils demonstrate a sound understanding of on-line safety and internet use.
- Attendance is average and improving. The proportion of authorised absences has fallen and the proportion of unauthorised absences has risen as the school has fully embraced new legislation and is monitoring requests for holiday absence rigorously. A very small number of pupils are late for school.
- Pupils have some responsibilities in Key Stage 2. However the impact of this on improving their

independence and sense of being responsible role models is not yet significant.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Although current leaders, under the skilful guidance of the executive headteacher, have identified the right priorities for improvement, until very recently this has not been the case. The pace of improvement has been too slow and effective systems to evaluate provision and to check on the quality of teaching have not been in place.
- School leaders and governors have now identified professional development and opportunities to work with improvement partners to improve teaching and raise achievement. As a result, there is clear evidence of an improvement in the proportion of pupils making the progress expected of them, particularly in English. This demonstrates the positive impact of leaders in improving previous inconsistencies in performance.
- The checks made on teaching are becoming more thorough, although leaders and governors recognise that this is still developing. Previously, the checks made have not been rigorous enough to sustain good teaching and too much teaching requires improvement to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress.
- The executive headteacher and head of school have used information about pupils' progress to identify specific groups that need additional support, such as disabled pupils and special educational needs and children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Leaders with responsibility for these areas have not been effective enough in monitoring achievement and as a result, these groups have not made the progress of which they are capable. The executive headteacher has put focused short-term support plans in place to address these weaknesses and is monitoring progress against targets closely.
- Teachers and school leaders now have targets based on their performance and pupils' progress. In the past, targets have not been sufficiently focused on pupils' progress, making it difficult to hold staff to account for the achievement of their pupils. This is improving as regular meetings now take place to review and monitor the progress of all pupils.
- Safeguarding requirements are met.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and is enriched with clubs and visits. The assistant headteacher has clearly focused plans to spend the new Primary School Sport funding to increase participation in physical education and sport by targeting specific groups of pupils as well as impacting on achievement through a series of classroom based programmes, and high quality training for teachers and support staff.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is very supportive of the work of the school but has, until very recently, lacked sufficient understanding of pupils' achievement or the quality of teaching to be able to challenge the school. It has not held the school to account well enough for weaknesses in its performance. However, this is starting to improve because experienced governors have joined the governing body and existing members have attended training on judging how well the school is performing in comparison to others. The executive headteacher ensures that information given to governors is accurate and based on a thorough analysis of performance. They understand how to use information about teachers' performance to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. Governors now evaluate their own understanding of different aspects of the school's performance and are in a position to challenge the school more effectively. They visit the school to observe teaching and other aspects of the school's work, as well as meeting with staff to discuss aspects of achievement and the curriculum. The governors have recently reviewed how the school spends the pupil premium funding and has recognised that it has previously not been used as well as it should have been to ensure that those pupils eligible achieve as well as their peers.

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	133781
Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	426170

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	367
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rob McKenzie
Headteacher	Janet Kneale
Date of previous school inspection	18 October 2011
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