

Pytchley Endowed Church of England Primary School

High Street, Pytchley, Kettering, NN14 1EN

Inspection dates 22–23 October 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 is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- The strengths in teaching have not been sustained since the last inspection. Variations in the quality of teaching mean that pupils' progress in reading and mathematics is not fast enough.
- Leaders are not sufficiently rigorous in checking that the quality of teaching is ensuring that all pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- Opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge and skills in reading and mathematics in a range of subjects are not fully developed.
- Work is not always matched closely to the needs of individual pupils, particularly the most able and those of lower ability.
- Pupils are not given clear guidance on how to develop their skills, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- Governors and senior leader's plans for improvement are not sharp enough to help them check the extent to which their actions are having a positive impact on pupils' achievements.

The school has the following strengths

- The school has successfully improved the teaching of writing. Pupils are making good progress in this subject.
- Children make good progress in the Reception class.
- The headteacher is highly-regarded by parents because she ensures that pupils are well looked after and kept safe.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to their work are good.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well promoted.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons, taught by five teachers, four of which were jointly held with the headteacher. In addition, the inspector listened to pupils reading, observed assembly and breakfast club and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher and other school leaders, a group of pupils, and representatives from the governing body.
- The inspector looked at a range of documentation including the school's self-evaluation, plans for improvement, the school's data relating to the attainment and progress of pupils, reports from the local authority and information relating to the attendance and safeguarding of pupils.
- Consideration was given to 28 responses from parents to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and questionnaires completed by 11 members of staff.

Inspection team

David Carter, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Pytchley Endowed Church of England Primary School is a smaller than average-sized primary school. Pupils are organised into 5 classes during the morning sessions: Reception; Year 1; Year 2; Year 3 and 4; and Year 5 and 6. In the afternoons, pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 are taught together.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding is similar to that which is found nationally. This is additional funding provided for looked after children and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with 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 above average.
- The school runs its own breakfast club.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher has increased her teaching commitment in order to cover for staff that has been on extended leave.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better and enables all pupils to achieve well in reading and mathematics, particularly in Key Stage 2 by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve so that they plan lessons which meet the needs of all pupils, especially the most able pupils, those of lower ability, disabled pupils and those identified with special educational needs.
 - ensuring that all lessons move at a brisk pace, and that teachers check on pupils' learning more frequently so that they are able to gauge any misunderstanding quickly and where required, provide additional challenge
 - ensuring that pupils are given detailed feedback on a regular basis on how to improve their work in reading in mathematics and so that pupils are motivated to reach their targets
 - extending opportunities for pupils to develop their reading skills in subjects other than English
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills in the different subjects they study and to solve real-life problems.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - enhancing the opportunities for the headteacher to check on teachers' performance and use the information gathered to raise the quality of teaching and accelerate pupils' progress
 - ensuring that senior leaders and leaders of English and mathematics refine their evaluation of the quality of teaching, by taking into account evidence drawn from visits to lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work, and assessments on pupils' progress in order to make more precise recommendations to help teachers to improve their practice
 - ensuring that the school improvement plan includes regular and specific measures of success linked to pupils' attainment and progress so that governors and senior leaders can check that teaching is having the desired impact on pupils' achievement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because pupils have not made rapid gains in their learning from their starting points. Too few pupils make the expected rates of progress in reading and mathematics, especially in Key Stage 2. As a result, standards of attainment in reading and mathematics have fallen since the last inspection.
- Pupils make a good start in developing their reading skills. Pupils are encouraged to read every day and the good links with parents and carers means that they are heard read by adults in and out of school on a regular basis. Children in the Reception class and pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop a secure understanding of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) and by the end of Key Stage 1, standards in reading are average. Not all pupils in Key Stage 2 however, have a secure understanding of phonics, and this is affecting their ability to read unfamiliar words and to understand the texts which they are reading.
- Pupils make a secure start in developing their knowledge and skills in mathematics and by the end of Key Stage 1, standards are broadly average. This is not built upon across Key Stage 2 because pupils are not always provided with work which is set at the right level. As a result, pupils who find learning difficult have gaps in their mathematical knowledge which are not addressed well enough to ensure that they make good progress. More-able pupils are not challenged sufficiently. Their skills to apply their mathematical understanding to solve real-life problems are under-developed.
- Pupils are making good progress in their writing. Pupils are given many opportunities in which to write in a range of subjects and as a result, they have a good understanding of different styles and types of writing. Pupils are motivated to develop quickly their skills in handwriting because of the award of a 'pen-licence'. Consequently, handwriting and presentation are of a good standard. Pupils are developing their skills in spelling because they are encouraged to correct their work as well as learn new words.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including those with a statement make similar rates of progress to other pupils in reading and writing, however, it is slower in mathematics. This is because the work in mathematics is not always pitched precisely enough to meet the needs of individual pupils.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium make similar rates of progress to their peers. Hence, they make better progress in writing than in reading and mathematics. The attainment of the most recent Year 6 cohort shows that the attainment of eligible pupils in English and mathematics is the same as those who are not in receipt of additional support.
- Children in Reception start school with levels of knowledge and skills which vary from year to year. They quickly become accustomed to the routines of the class and develop independence, so they readily choose from the good range of activities what they want to learn. Adults talk to children about their learning, and as a result, they quickly develop their social and communication skills. Adults provide structured support, so that children make good progress in developing their early skills in reading, writing and understanding of number. By the time they enter Year 1, their knowledge and skills are broadly average.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it is not consistently good enough to make sure that all pupils make rapid progress from their starting points. The quality of teaching is good in Reception, but varies in quality between Year 1 and Year 6. Pupils have good attitudes to learning even when the work they are set is not at the right level of challenge to meet their needs or aspirations.
- Teachers are not using the information which they have about pupils to plan lessons well enough to meet the different needs of everyone in the class. Although pupils are keen to learn and apply themselves, frequently, they spend too long completing tasks which are too easy for them. Conversely, pupils are sometimes given work which is too challenging. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Year 3 and Year 4, pupils of different abilities were asked similar questions relating to converting measures of length into decimal notation and so not everyone made the learning gains of which they were capable.
- The pace of learning during lessons is frequently too slow. Teachers often repeat explanations and instructions even though the pupils are eager to commence their tasks. Teachers do not consistently check on learning during lessons. Consequently, more able pupils often complete tasks quickly and are not always provided with challenging work to extend their learning.
- The consistent approach to the teaching of writing is ensuring that pupils are making good progress. As a result, standards are rising. Pupils are motivated to write because they are given clear targets to work towards. As a result, the quality of pupils' presentation, spelling and the organisation of their work is the same in a range of subjects. Pupils are provided with detailed feedback about their work and this is helping them to know precisely what they need to do next to improve.
- Pupils are not provided with the same quality of feedback in reading and mathematics. Pupils are unaware of their targets in reading and the lack of feedback is not helping them to make the progress of which they are capable. Pupils are not provided with enough opportunities to read widely and to apply their reading skills in other subjects. Pupils are given too few opportunities to respond to marking in mathematics and to correct their work.
- Pupils who receive additional help because they have difficulties with learning, or they have fallen behind are given appropriate support by teaching assistants. This ensures that make at least the same rates of progress as their peers in reading and writing
- Teaching in Reception is good. Adults check closely on each child and their good level of understanding means that they can plan activities both indoors and outside, which meet children's individual learning and development needs. Adults guide children well during their activities to improve their understanding.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are keen to learn whether they are working on their own, in pairs or in a group. They behave well in lessons and respond well to the guidance which is given by adults.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are positive, which results in the welcoming and calm atmosphere within the school. Pupils say that they feel safe in school because the adults care for their well-being. As a result, from breakfast club through to after-school clubs, pupils' behaviour during the school day is good.

- Pupils were keen to tell the inspector about the new behaviour code and how this has improved behaviour in the school. Pupils are motivated by 'golden time' and the house point system where they are awarded merits for demonstrating positive attitudes to learning and for being considerate to their peers. Pupils say that the 'strikes' system has made them aware of the consequences if they choose to misbehave.
- Senior leaders have been successful in introducing an effective system for checking on pupils' behaviour. This has helped them to manage the behaviour of a few pupils who have challenging behaviour. Staff, pupils and parents agree that behaviour in the school is consistently good.
- Pupils say that bullying in school is rare, however, if it does occur, adults deal quickly with any issues which may arise.
- Pupils have a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe. Pupils know the risks associated with using the internet and the potential dangers posed by roads, railways and water.
- Pupils told the inspector that they enjoy coming to school and in particular, attending the wide range of after school clubs. Attendance has improved since the last inspection and is now average.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because activities to check on the quality of teaching have not been frequent enough to ensure they have a positive impact on the rate of pupils' learning. The headteacher has increased her teaching commitment in the Reception class in order to cover for staff who have undertaken temporary leave. This has meant fewer opportunities to check on the quality of teaching in other classes, beyond agreed requirements, in order to gather information which contributes to evaluating teachers' performance. The reduction in the frequency of checks has resulted in teaching becoming inconsistent between Year 1 and Year 6.
- Senior leaders know what the school needs to do to improve and have shown that they are able to make things better. For example, they have addressed the key issue from the previous inspection regarding improving the teaching of writing. As a result, pupils are making good progress in this subject.
- Plans for improvement are based on the correct priorities; however, they do not give a clear indication of the order of the steps to be taken to drive improvement at a good pace. The plans do not contain milestones, specific targets or measures of impact based on pupils' progress, so that leaders and governors can check if the actions being taken are proving successful.
- The leaders of English and mathematics are having an increased role in checking on the quality of teaching and pupils' learning. They visit lessons, look at pupils' work and consider how well pupils are achieving. The regular feedback which staff receive about the teaching of writing helps to improve provision. However, leaders are not drawing together sharply enough their findings to provide teachers with the same level of guidance about how to improve their practice when teaching reading and mathematics.
- The school has planned its teaching around topics and themes, which are enriched by a wide range of after school clubs. Pupils told the inspector that they enjoyed attending after school

clubs and demonstrates their positive attitudes to learning. Pupils are provided with many opportunities in which to develop their social skills, through residential visits and events which are held in the school and local community. The close links with the church makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development. The school's work in assemblies and through a wide range of subjects ensures that pupils have good understanding of different faiths and cultures.

- The school has worked in partnership with other local schools in order to help pupils develop their skills in physical education and sport. The school plans to use the new primary sports funding to train its own teachers in order to improve provision. However, it is too early to judge the impact on pupils' participation in sports.
- The headteacher ensures that parents are involved in their child's learning from the moment they start the school. Parents contribute to the on-going record of their child's development. Throughout the school, pupils are provided with homework and reading diaries which parents can support their child with their learning. 'Parent View' survey responses show that the vast majority of parents are supportive of the school.
- The headteacher draws on the support of external partners well to support the needs of pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. The clear commitment to make sure that all pupils are involved in all aspects of school life demonstrates the school's strong commitment to equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination
- The local authority has provided a 'light-touch' level of support to the school. Plans are in place for this to be intensified following the school's most recent assessment results.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governors have increased the frequency of checking aspects of the school's performance and are able to use the information which they have found to challenge leaders. For example, governors talk in great detail about the school's performance and they acknowledge that the achievement of pupils is not good enough. They are ambitious and are aware that pupils' attainment should be higher when they leave the school.
- Governors keep a close eye on the deployment of funds. They have re-organised the arrangements for the teaching of pupils in Reception and Key Stage 1 since September 2013. This has reduced the amount of teaching commitment of the headteacher as well as ensured that pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 are taught in smaller and separate groups each morning. This is in pursuit of raising standards. Governors have deployed the pupil premium funding appropriately and this is ensuring that pupils make similar rates of progress to their peers. Governors have clear plans for the use of the new primary sports funding. Governors have put in place a robust system for reviewing the performance of teachers. Targets are set based on the progress which pupils make as well as the contribution of teachers to whole-school priorities. Governors and the headteacher work closely together to ensure that decisions about pay increases are linked closely to performance.
- The governing body monitors arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils well; consequently, the school's systems meet statutory 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	122028
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	427345

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	103
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tracey Lynch
Headteacher	Julia Havlickova
Date of previous school inspection	13 May 2011
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