

Cotford St Luke Primary School

Bethell Mead, Cotford St Luke, Taunton, TA4 1HZ

Inspection dates 21–22 May 2014

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

- Pupils' achievement is not good. Recent improvements in teaching have not had sufficient time to speed up progress so that it is consistently good throughout the school.
- Until recently, progress in mathematics has been too slow. As a result, attainment in mathematics has not been high enough.
- Pupils have not developed their comprehension skills in reading sufficiently well to become accomplished readers.
- Occasionally, teachers do not use the information about how well pupils are doing to plan work that is hard enough, especially for the most able.
- In the past, leaders, including governors, have not responded quickly enough to falling progress rates. They have not taken steps to make sure that teaching is good and pupils achieve well over time.
- Leaders do not check on the impact of teaching rigorously enough on how well different groups of pupils learn. They do not identify clearly the weaknesses and ensure they are fully resolved.
- Teachers' targets for improving their work do not centre precisely on raising the achievement of the different groups of pupils in their classes.

The school has the following strengths

- The acting headteacher, the leadership team, governors and the staff know what needs to improve. As a result, achievement is starting to rise.
- The quality of teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good, so that children make good progress.
- The support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is well led and managed.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They feel very safe and enjoy coming to school.
- Pupils have many memorable experiences, including those in learning other modern languages and sporting activities. These contribute strongly to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a wide range of teaching across the school in a variety of subjects, including a joint observation with the acting headteacher. In addition, inspectors made a number of short visits to classrooms, the dining hall and the playground, and observed an assembly.
- Meetings were held with pupils, governors including the Chair of Governors, and the school's leaders. The lead inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 63 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), as well as consulting informally with parents before start of the school day. They took account of the 36 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- They observed the school's work, looked at a range of documents including the school's improvement plans, information on pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring files, minutes of meetings of the governing body, the plans for use of the school sport fund and records relating to special educational needs, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- The inspectors heard pupils read, talked to them in lessons and evaluated samples of their work.

Inspection team

Sandra Woodman, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

David Shears

Additional Inspector

Roy Souter

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is much larger than the average-sized primary school. Pupils are organised in 11 classes, some with mixed ages, and there is a nursery class called Fledglings.
- The large majority of pupils come from a White British background.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the additional funding known as the pupil premium is below average. This is the additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and those with parents in the armed forces.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported at school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average
- The acting headteacher took up the interim post in April 2014.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is good or better in order to raise standards, particularly in reading and mathematics, by ensuring that teachers:
 - make better use of the information that is collected about pupils' achievement to plan work that is hard enough for pupils
 - develop pupils' comprehension skills in reading systematically across a range of literature.
- Increase the effectiveness of leadership and management by making sure that leaders:
 - evaluate the quality of teaching in terms of its impact on the attainment and progress of groups of pupils of different abilities
 - check the quality of teaching rigorously to identify the weaknesses and resolve them systematically
 - link teachers' targets for improvement more precisely to the attainment and progress of the different groups of pupils in their classes.

An external review of governance should be undertaken to ensure that this aspect of leadership and management is improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because pupils have not made good enough progress in mathematics and reading in Key Stage 2 over recent years. Attainment in mathematics has been below average at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- Pupils are not systematically developing their comprehension skills in reading, and standards of attainment fell below average in 2013 at the end of Key Stage 2. Even though pupils enjoy reading, they are not routinely encouraged to read across a wide range of literature and explore new authors.
- The most able pupils attain relatively well, but could be making more progress in reading and mathematics with more challenging work.
- Recent improvements have meant there are better rates of progress in current year groups and rising attainment in all subjects.
- The Year 6 pupils in 2013 who benefited from additional funding made better progress in reading and writing but less progress in mathematics than other pupils. Their attainment was three terms ahead of their classmates in reading and almost one term ahead in writing and in mathematics. The few remaining gaps in attainment are closing in current year groups as these pupils are getting effective extra help that is speeding up their progress.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are making better progress than previously, in line with their classmates. This is because of the well-planned support they receive.
- Most children start school in the Reception Year with skills that are typical for their age. They make good progress so that, by the time they start Year 1, they are confident learners. The very large majority have the skills and understanding expected at their age and some exceed these.
- Pupils benefit from expert teaching in modern foreign languages, such as French and Spanish, and are developing their knowledge, understanding and speaking skills to impressive levels.
- Greater numbers of pupils take part in a wider range of sports and competitions supported by the new school sport funding, and have improved their performances in activities such as cross-country running and tag rugby.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because pupils' progress over time has not been consistently good.
- On occasions, some groups of pupils do not make enough progress as the work is completed too easily. This is because teachers do not consistently use the information about pupils' achievement precisely enough to set work that gives the right level of challenge. This is particularly the case for the most able pupils where the work does not engage them.
- The new library has an attractive range of books and resources that promote a love of reading. However, teachers do not routinely encourage pupils to explore new authors and other types of literature. They also do not ensure comprehension skills are taught systematically enough.
- The guidance teachers give pupils in their marking and feedback is of good quality and is helping to increase progress rates. Pupils appreciate these comments that they say enable them to improve their work effectively.
- The positive relationships across the school create a productive learning environment. Pupils cooperate well and enjoy the interesting range of activities that teachers plan for them.
- Where learning is most effective, teachers have high expectations and stretch thinking to the full. For example, in a Reception session, children were expected to challenge themselves when writing recounts of their day, by using paragraphs and some difficult vocabulary. They were caught up with the enthusiasm of the adults and were successful in producing work of exceptional quality for their age.

- Pupils supported by additional funding are benefiting from the extra guidance from other adults and small group work. As a result, they are making similar, and sometimes faster, progress than their classmates. This is helping to close any remaining gaps in attainment.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs benefit from well-planned activities and good support from well-trained and skilled additional adults in school.
- Teachers have a keen desire to do their best for pupils and good training from the local authority and other external consultants is helping them to make improvements to their practice in areas such as problem solving in mathematics. Weak teaching has been eradicated, but some inconsistencies remain.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children enjoy the lively and 'playful' approach by the adults that gives them chance to explore their ideas and develop their own learning activities. The systematic teaching of the sounds that letters make is ensuring that children are developing their early reading and writing skills well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Typically, pupils are polite, friendly and very considerate of each other. They are well motivated, settle to work quickly and enjoy all the school has to offer.
- Relationships throughout the school are secure and effective. The school is effective in fostering good relations and tackling discrimination. The playground is a safe, harmonious place because pupils have plenty to do with a range of activities and play equipment.
- Behaviour is not yet outstanding because of occasional lapses in concentration by a few pupils in class, when they fidget, and some time is wasted.
- Pupils, parents and the staff are mostly positive about standards of behaviour. The school's records show that there are very few incidents of poor behaviour. The small number of pupils with behavioural and emotional difficulties are supported well. Pupils enjoy the range of rewards and incentives, such as house points and 'star' of the day.
- A few parents expressed concern about the way the school deals with bullying, but inspection evidence shows that, overall, behaviour is managed well.
- Pupils are clear that bullying is rare, although they are knowledgeable about the forms this can take, such as cyberbullying. Whilst they have effective strategies for dealing with any minor problems, they have complete confidence in the adults to help them where necessary.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that they feel very safe in school and most parents who completed the online questionnaire or who spoke to the inspectors agree.
- Pupils are very proud of their school and their involvement in making decisions about what happens, such as their work as school councillors. All pupils contributed to the improvements to the school's outdoor environment. They delight in the variety of roles and responsibilities that are offered to them as 'Young Leaders' of sporting activities or library monitors.
- The school gives a high priority to encouraging regular attendance and, as a consequence, current attendance rates are above average and punctuality is good.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection the school has experienced significant turbulence in its leadership, which is now resolved. School leaders and governors have not been vigilant enough in ensuring that all pupils have achieved well over time.
- Senior leaders check regularly on the quality of teaching, but they do not focus their evaluations precisely enough on the learning for different groups of pupils in lessons and in their books. This means that weaknesses in teaching are not always identified and resolved quickly enough.
- Middle leaders are developing their roles in school, but are not yet clear enough about the impact of their work on improving pupils' achievement in their subjects.

- Teachers have targets for improving their performance and they know how their pay only progresses when these are met. However, the targets do not centre precisely enough on the achievement of the different groups of pupils and are not helpful in the drive to speed up rates of progress.
- The acting headteacher has the confidence of staff and all are dedicated to making the necessary changes to increase progress rates.
- Until recently, the tracking of progress has not been precise enough to enable leaders to respond quickly and reverse the downward trend in mathematics and reading. However, they have gained an accurate view of the school's performance due to good support recently commissioned from the local authority consultants. Consequently, the latest improvement plans have a sharper focus on the correct priorities.
- Pupils' learning experiences across a range of subjects are varied and memorable, particularly in modern foreign languages and the links with international schools. A good array of enrichment activities contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Checks on the plans for the use of the new sport funding show that more pupils are taking part in a wider range of sports, and staff are extending their skills in teaching sports such as swimming.
- The well-organised support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is improving their progress, demonstrating the school's commitment to equality of opportunity. There are no recorded incidents of harassment in recent years. The additional government funding is being used effectively to support eligible pupils.
- The large majority of parents are very positive about the work of the school. They are pleased with the more open approach being developed by leaders and their increasing involvement in their children's learning.
- All statutory requirements for safeguarding are met and systems are managed efficiently. Training for staff, in areas such as child protection, is up to date.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governance of the school has been through a period of change and has become better organised as a result. Until recently, governors were not given an accurate view of pupils' achievement and this hampered their effectiveness when challenging leaders about why pupils' progress was not better. Through good support and training from the local authority this academic year, governors have developed a clearer understanding of the school's performance compared to similar and all schools nationally. They are in a better position to monitor the school's work and check its effectiveness for themselves. They know about the quality of teaching across the school and are aware of how the performance of staff is being managed, but judge that this is not rigorous enough yet. They understand how teachers' pay progression is linked to good performance. They ensure that statutory duties with regard to safeguarding are met.
 - Governors manage their budget effectively, including the additional funds for sport and those pupils for whom the school receives additional funding. They know how the funds are allocated and the impact they are having on pupils' achievement.

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	133560
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	439613

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	292
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lindsay Hall
Acting headteacher	Adrian Jones
Date of previous school inspection	13–14 May 2009
Telephone number	01823 430831
Fax number	01823 433906
Email address	office@cotford-st-luke.somerset.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 and 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 2014

