

St Philip's CofE Aided Primary School

2 Vinery Way, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire CB1 3DR

Inspection dates

16–17 January 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The school is recovering from a period of crisis. In October 2016, the local authority intervened to address its serious concerns over low standards, a serious breakdown in leadership, management and governance and safeguarding. The legacy of this crisis remains in pupils' academic outcomes.
- The interim executive board (IEB) has been very effective since the previous governing body was removed. The uncertainty over the future structure of the school has delayed progress in forming a new governing body.
- Overall, outcomes are improving as a result of effective teaching, but strategies to improve the progress of disadvantaged pupils have not yet shown sufficient impact. Leaders are not yet able to demonstrate that pupils make good progress across a range of subjects beyond English and mathematics.
- Provision in the early years foundation stage is improving well under new leadership. It still requires improvement because outcomes are not yet good enough and the quality of provision is not as consistently good as in the main school. Disadvantaged children do less well than other pupils.

The school has the following strengths

- This is a rapidly improving school. The headteacher and deputy constitute a formidable team. They have accelerated the school's improvement which began a year ago.
- The quality of teaching has improved strongly and is now good. There is a great level of consistency in approach. This is helping pupils catch up towards where they should be.
- Pupils behave well in classes and around the school. Pupils, parents, carers and nearly all staff agree that behaviour is good.
- The new headteacher has worked hard to engage parents better, and in response parents are very positive about all aspects of the school and its leadership.
- Middle leaders are an enthusiastic, energetic and effective group. They are playing an important role in improving provision.
- The development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural knowledge and understanding permeates all aspects of the school. The ethos is inclusive and pupils from different groups and backgrounds get on well together.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Establish a new governing body that has the skills and expertise to carry on the positive work of the IEB, in order to ensure the long-term effectiveness of the school.
- Ensure that pupils entitled to the pupil premium make good progress.
- Improve the consistency of teaching and outcomes in the early years foundation stage by training and continuing to support the development of the team under its new leadership.
- Strengthen assessment across the curriculum to ensure that leaders know how well pupils, and especially the most able pupils, are progressing across the breadth of subjects studied.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Over the last year, there has been dramatic improvement, most recently as a result of inspirational leadership from a highly effective collaboration of headteacher and deputy. The deputy headteacher was the interim head during the summer term when, building on the work of previous interim leadership, much of the current improvement began. As a result pupils' outcomes in the summer national tests, while still requiring improvement, were much better than expected a few months earlier and showed above-average progress from key stage 1 to key stage 2 in reading and in mathematics.
- Middle leadership is very effective. Phase and subject leaders are appropriately involved in monitoring and coaching teaching. As a result, the quality of teaching has risen sharply. Teachers understand and share the headteacher's vision. A typical comment was that 'the head has worked with us all to come to a collective vision.'
- The school's approach to safeguarding has been transformed. The local authority has worked with the school to ensure that all procedures are secure, and additional site security has been put in place.
- The current leadership has worked hard to engage parents. As a result, parents are highly supportive. Nearly all would recommend the school. Parents' comments reflect the view that their positivity is a response to the current leadership. There were some suggestions about specific aspects of provision, such as bemoaning the lack of specialist music provision. However, the overwhelming thrust of the many comments received is summed up by a typical comment: 'There has been a dramatic improvement in many aspects of the school since September. The new headteacher is very engaging and there is a definite sense of the staff being much happier, which rubs off on the children.'
- Leaders have created a culture of tolerance and respect among staff and pupils. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is seen particularly in art, personal, health, social and economic (PHSE) education, religious education (RE) and in assemblies. For example, inspectors visited an assembly led by a class. It promoted humility through a drama sketch, linked the theme of humility to relevant teaching in the Bible and pupils led prayers. A small number of parents criticised the religious element in the school, especially prayer, but the assembly was very well supported by parents.
- The curriculum is increasingly broad. Pupils praise the subject-specialist teaching in art and modern languages. Pupils enjoy a wide range of subjects, but leaders are not yet able to check on pupils' progress in subjects beyond English and mathematics. Leaders acknowledge that until recently the curriculum was too narrowly focused on English and mathematics, but work to improve other subjects such as science is under way.
- The quality of teaching has risen partly because of the planned programme of training throughout the year. Senior leaders coach middle leaders, and this has proved very effective.
- Leaders now have a good understanding of information on pupils' progress in English and mathematics. They respond to this information, for example establishing an

additional mathematics group for high attainers.

- Leaders make use of a wide range of external support. Its nature has evolved as the school has gained its own capacity to improve further. The local authority continues to provide regular support and challenge to the headteacher, and she receives further mentoring through the church schools of Cambridge. An employee of the Ely diocese provides additional support, and advisers from the local authority provide training for teachers. A package of local authority support was described by leaders as 'instrumental' in ensuring the school's improvement.
- Pupils understand British values. For example, Year 6 pupils can explain democracy and the rule of law, giving examples from the school such as the elections to the school council.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are supported well, and as a result they are now making good progress from their starting points.
- Leaders can account for the use of additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils, but admit that the spending has had insufficient impact in improving the progress of these pupils. The additional physical education and sports funding has been used to buy equipment, provide travel to sporting events and support the riding of bikes to promote healthy lifestyles and fit in to the life of Cambridge. The school has recently advertised for a sports coach to be funded from the sports premium.

Governance of the school

- The IEB is highly effective. Members bring extensive educational experience and expertise. They have steadied the ship and ensured that they recruited 'the right headteacher'. They worked imaginatively to secure additional funding to strengthen the leadership team to ensure that the school has the internal capacity to drive further improvement. They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further development.
- Members of the IEB have been robust in protecting the headteacher from the heated disagreements over the structure of the school which could otherwise have distracted from the school's improvement.
- The IEB has provided highly effective governance since the previous governing body was removed. Members are willing to support the creation of a new governing body. Following the IEB's very recent decision to not change the status of the school, leaders, the IEB and the local authority are working to establish a governing body that is more effective than its predecessor.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's approach to safeguarding has been transformed. The local authority has worked with the school to ensure that all procedures are secure, and additional site security has been put in place.
- Leaders are very aware of the safety and welfare needs of their pupils. Staff are diligent in ensuring that secure arrangements for child protection are in place. All

statutory requirements are met. Most importantly, pupils say that they feel safe. Parents agree. Very nearly all of the large number of parents responding to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, agree that pupils are safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching has risen over the last year. Lessons are characterised by effective planning that ensures that lessons flow well.
- Teachers' subject knowledge enables them to teach confidently and effectively.
- Professional relationships allow pupils to feel confident to learn through their mistakes.
- There is effective support to individuals from adults other than teachers. As a result, lower-ability pupils are supported in their progress better than the most able.
- Teachers increasingly know and understand the strengths and weaknesses of their pupils. This results from the reinvigorated pupil progress meetings.
- The quality of teachers' questioning is a strength. It helps pupils to develop their thinking and enables teachers to quickly check pupils' understanding.
- Teachers share effective approaches. Appropriate learning objectives are used consistently to ensure that learning is carefully targeted at pupils' abilities. In nearly all cases, the teaching is appropriate to what is expected at pupils' ages. The level of challenge is improving, for example in the higher mathematics set in Year 6, the challenge was very good indeed. Sometimes in mixed-year groups, the lesson may not stretch all abilities or ages.
- Pupils' writing skills are developed well in a range of subjects across the curriculum.
- There are extra activities outside the classroom, but no explicit interventions within the classroom aimed at supporting disadvantaged pupils.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils' attitudes in lessons show that they take pride in their learning, although their presentation of written work is more variable.
- Pupils are effectively taught respect for others' ideas through subjects like RE and PHSE.
- The ethos of the school develops pupils' respect for others' beliefs and cultures.
- Pupils' understanding of money and careers is developed through careers days and enterprising activities.
- Pupils have a high level of trust of adults in the school. They know that staff look after them.
- Pupils are taught how to be safe. This includes staying safe on the road, on the computer or practising for 'lock down'.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Teachers consistently use the behaviour policy.
- Pupils conduct themselves well both around the school and in the playground.
- Inspectors observed no instances of low-level disruption in any lesson observed. Very nearly all parents and staff agree that behaviour is good.
- Attendance is in line with that of other schools, and there is no significant variation in the attendance of groups.
- Bullying is rare and pupils are very confident that it would be resolved among themselves, and if not would quickly be sorted by an adult. Staff and parents agree.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Writing progress for disadvantaged pupils has been in the bottom fifth nationally for two years, although it is now improving sharply.
- Too few pupils reached the higher level in the 2017 tests, and of that small number none were disadvantaged pupils.
- While disadvantaged pupils made good progress in reading, they did less well in writing and mathematics than other pupils.
- In key stage 1 in 2017, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard was below average, but recently effective teaching is ensuring that standards are rising.
- Attainment in science was weak, but is beginning to improve. Across other subjects, leaders are able to talk about what pupils do, but are not yet able to judge pupils' acquisition of subject-specific knowledge, skills and understanding.
- For the last two years, the progress of pupils from the end of key stage 1 to the end of key stage 2 has been among the top fifth of schools nationally in reading. Pupils read fluently, and pupils of different abilities have effective strategies for reading unfamiliar words. They read regularly in school and at home.
- The summer 2017 national tests showed that the progress of pupils in reading and in mathematics between the end of key stages 1 and 2 was above the national average, and in writing was average overall.
- The most able pupils make good progress, but the legacy of underachievement has led to too few pupils reaching the higher levels in external tests.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 2 in 2017 was average in the combined score for pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- The early years area requires improvement because although provision is now improving strongly, outcomes are not yet good enough, and in particular, just as in the main school, disadvantaged children are doing less well than their peers.
- Teaching is improving, but until recently it has not been as consistently effective as in the main school.
- Until recently, the early years provision has not given children a sufficiently strong springboard for their progress in Year 1. For example, in last year's phonics screening check, Year 1 pupils did less well than other pupils nationally because there had been insufficient work to ensure continuity in building phonics skills. The teaching of phonics is now strong.
- Overall, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development is good, but within this there is too big a difference between the outcomes of disadvantaged and other children.
- Following an accurate evaluation of the quality of provision by senior leaders, there have been recent improvements to the environment, staff performance and the outcomes for children.
- Parents are fully involved in their children's learning, for example attending workshops on how the school teaches pupils to read.
- Safeguarding is effective, and the welfare needs of children are a priority for all staff.
- Some effective teaching was observed during the inspection. Adults help children's language development. They hold purposeful conversations with children. For example, during snack time they discuss the need to eat fresh fruit and also the benefits of resting.
- Where learning is best, children are well motivated and challenged. Children make confident choices and enjoy talking about their learning with friends. Children enjoy learning. For example, children in 'the spaceship' delight in dressing up as an astronaut and acting out being in the 'weightless zone'. As a result, most children are now being well prepared for Year 1.

School details

Unique reference number	110840
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10041784

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	324
Appropriate authority	Interim executive board
Chair	Penny Conway
Headteacher	Sally Allan
Telephone number	01223 508707
Website	www.stphilips.cambs.sch.uk/
Email address	office@stphilips.cambs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	15–16 July 2014

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is a little below average. However, the proportion who have an education, health and care plan is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' achievement.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils learning in each class, some of which were seen jointly with a senior leader. In addition, several short visits were made to a further range of lessons. Inspectors observed pupils at break and lunchtime and before and after lessons. Inspectors observed the teaching of reading and listened to pupils read. Pupils' books from different year groups were checked to see progress.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, three groups of pupils, a group of teachers, a group of middle leaders, the chair and three members of the IEB and a representative of the local authority, and a phone conversation was held with the Diocese of Ely's director of education.
- Inspectors analysed 130 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View), 105 written text comments on the same questionnaire and 26 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for staff.
- The inspection team scrutinised information about pupils' achievement, behaviour and attendance, considered the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, read minutes of the meetings of the IEB and scrutinised pupils' work in lessons.

Inspection team

Adrian Lyons, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Paul Hughes	Ofsted Inspector
Liz Kissane	Ofsted Inspector

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