

# Kintbury St Mary's Church of England VC Primary School

Gainsborough Avenue, Kintbury, Hungerford, RG17 9XN

**Inspection dates** 8–9 July 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The achievement of pupils has improved since the last inspection and is now good. The progress of pupils in Year 6 has increased over the last two years.
- Due to effective teaching, children in the Reception class make good progress.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds letters make) has improved this year. The proportion of pupils who have reached the expected standard is well above the national average. This is a significant improvement on last year.
- Pupils' behaviour in school is good. This contributes to how well pupils concentrate on their learning. Pupils say they are well looked after at school. Staff are on hand to help them when necessary.
- The headteacher ensures staff are held to account for pupils' performance. The staff have risen to this challenge and the quality of teaching has improved.
- Middle leaders are given greater responsibility to improve the quality of teaching. They have provided training for other teachers. This has improved how well pupils learn their phonic skills and their learning in mathematics.
- School leaders and governors have secured the improvements to the quality of teaching which has raised the achievement of pupils.
- Governors hold senior leaders to account for the progress pupils make. They make effective checks on the work of the school.
- The local authority has provided the school with a good level of support. This has helped the school make the necessary improvements.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not consistently provide clear enough guidance in their marking on how pupils can improve their work.
- Teachers do not always provide opportunities for the pupils to quickly make the necessary corrections to their marked work.
- The achievement of pupils in Year 2 is not as good as that seen in other year groups as teachers' expectations are not always high enough.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 12 lessons, five of which were jointly observed with the headteacher. In addition, two assemblies were observed.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and senior and middle leaders. The lead inspector also held a meeting with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors listened to pupils read and scrutinised samples of pupils' workbooks.
- A wide range of documents was examined, including the school's information on pupils' recent progress. Planning and documentation about checks on teaching, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding arrangements were observed.
- The inspectors also took account of the 48 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), six emails and one letter from parents to the inspection team. The views of staff were considered through the 23 staff questionnaires.

## Inspection team

David Hogg, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Peter Clifton

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are from a White British background. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds or who do not speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is lower than the national average. The proportion of pupils who are supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is higher than that found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is lower than that found in most schools. This is additional government funding to give extra support to those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and to children who are looked after.
- The proportion of pupils who join the school part way through the year is lower than that typically seen in other schools.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The current headteacher has been in post since January 2014. Most of the senior and middle leaders were appointed in September 2013, having been promoted from within the school.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching further by ensuring that:
  - the marking of pupils' work provides specific guidance on how pupils can make it better
  - teachers give pupils time to respond to feedback and comments in their marked work so that they can correct and improve their work.
- Increase the attainment and rates of progress for pupils in Year 2 by raising the expectations of what pupils can achieve, so their literacy and numeracy skills can be developed more quickly.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- The achievement of pupils by the time they leave school in Year 6 has improved over the last two years and is now good. They now make greater progress from their individual starting points in Year 2, especially in mathematics. Their attainment is now higher than the national average for reading, writing and mathematics.
- The children in the Reception class join the school with skills that are typical for their age. Through effective teaching, the children make good progress. Over the last two years the proportion of children achieving a good level of development has been above the national average. This year, two thirds of the children have reached this expected standard. They are confident speakers with well developed social skills. Children are well prepared for their move into Year 1.
- The school saw a dip in 2013 in the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the phonic screening test. The new headteacher and literacy leader quickly carried out a review and made significant changes to improve the teaching of phonics. This has already had a good impact, with over 80% of pupils reaching the expected standard this year. Older pupils read often, with Year 6 pupils enjoying a wide range of books including *The Diary of Anne Frank* and *The BFG*. The school has developed strong reading habits with the pupils.
- The most able pupils are suitably challenged with activities that extend them and help them to achieve the highest levels. In the recent national tests, at the end of Year 6, over 65% of pupils achieved the higher Level 5 in writing, with 60% in mathematics which is much higher than the national averages.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs generally make similar progress to that of other pupils. Teaching assistants provide well-targeted support, both in class and in small group work sessions. The school enables all pupils to have equality of opportunity and to make as much progress as they can. The school challenges any discrimination should it occur.
- The numbers of pupils eligible for additional support through the pupil premium funds are low, but the school uses the additional resources effectively. A review prompted changes in how the support was being delivered. As a consequence, the gap in the skills and understanding between those eligible pupils and other pupils are now closing more rapidly across the school. In 2013, supported pupils were about two terms behind their peers in English, but had caught up in mathematics.
- The school has been effective in closing the gaps in achievement between boys and girls. The engagement of boys has been improved, for example through changes to the activities provided in lessons. Reviews of work in pupils' books show both boys and girls are now making good progress.
- The very small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds or who do not speak English as their first language make similar progress in their knowledge and skills as other pupils.
- In Year 2, pupils' progress is not always as good as in other classes. Pupils are not sufficiently challenged because expectations of what they can achieve are too low. Consequently, their literacy and numeracy skills are not developed as quickly as they might be.

### The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and pupils now are making greater progress and standards are rising.
- Teachers make checks on pupils' work so they know how much progress they are making. They use the information gathered to plan activities at the right level that are not too easy for some or too difficult for others, which build on work in previous lessons.
- Teachers ensure pupils are clear about what they are expected to achieve. For example, in a Year 1 mathematics lesson about estimating and measuring accurately, the teacher

demonstrated how to use a ruler to carefully measure the length of an object. Pupils went on to share ideas on how they could measure something longer than the length of the ruler.

- Pupils are encouraged to 'take risks' so, for example, they are not worried if they 'get things wrong'. In a Year 4 science lesson the teacher presented the pupils with a vase of white flowers sitting in water that had been coloured red and asked them what was going to happen. This task to get them thinking and talking promoted a lot of discussion between pupils and a range of plausible ideas were put forward.
- Teachers work closely with the teaching assistants so that any additional support is effectively targeted to those who may need it most. Teachers and teaching assistants use questioning well to check pupils' understanding.
- Teachers use the school grounds to good effect. Year 3 and Year 4 pupils explored the growing area and the longer grass looking for minibeasts and compared the different habitats. Year 4 pupils demonstrated a good understanding of how animals were adapted to live in particular areas in the school grounds and other more extreme habitats, such as deserts and polar regions.
- The quality of the marking in pupils' books is variable. Many, but not all, pupils are given clear guidance on how to make their work better. Pupils in turn do not always make the necessary corrections in response to this feedback and improve their work.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. This makes a positive contribution to their learning. The school has worked successfully to develop pupils' self-confidence. As a result, they are happy to stand up in class and share their opinions on particular ideas or pieces of work. The relationship between the pupils and adults is often very positive and contributes to classrooms being busy and purposeful environments.
- Pupils' behaviour around school is good. Pupils are friendly to visitors and were keen to talk to the inspection team. They are active at break and lunch times, enjoying a range of games and climbing equipment in the playgrounds. Pupils are well supervised outside lesson time.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Visitors to school have raised pupils' awareness of keeping themselves safe when using social media games. Further actions by the school have complemented this work and pupils have a good understanding of e-bullying. Pupils say acts of unkindness in school are rare and that they have confidence in all staff, particularly lunchtime supervisors, to help them if problems arise. Parents also feel their children are well looked after and safe in school.
- The school has provided more opportunities for pupils to become involved in school life. Pupils now take on roles such as house leaders and promote a sense of belonging within the school. Due to the inspection, the school postponed a sports festival that the Year 6 sports leaders had organised for younger pupils. This activity had been planned and organised by the pupils themselves, with a little help from the teachers.
- The opportunities for pupils to take part in sports clubs and activities have increased since the new headteacher arrived. The school now takes an active part in local inter-school sporting events and has enjoyed success in netball and cross-country running with girls leading the way.
- Attendance is in line with national averages.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- Leaders and managers across the school have been effective in improving the quality of teaching and the standards pupils achieve.
- The new headteacher has provided a renewed drive to speed up the process of making the necessary improvements identified arising from the last inspection. Middle leaders have taken on greater responsibilities. They have provided training and support to staff with lesson planning. This support has had a positive impact on the quality of the teaching of phonics and

mathematics. School leaders are clearly capable of moving the school further forwards.

- The local authority has provided good support to the school over the last two years. It has assisted the school in its efforts to address the points in its plans for the future by providing training for staff and the governors. It has provided challenge through a process of review and check on the work of the school. The school's judgements about the quality of pupils' work have been compared with those of other schools to check if they are accurate. Assessments made by the teachers have been validated.
- Pupils' work is checked closely by subject leaders to see if individuals are falling behind, and to support judgements about the quality of teaching. Teachers' effectiveness is regularly reviewed and information is used in deciding on any salary progression and promotion.
- The school's topic-based curriculum is suitably broad and balanced. There are opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in writing and mathematics in other subjects. The school provides exciting learning opportunities, for example through visits to places of interest or by bringing in visitors such as local authors. The school is currently working on a production of the *Wizard of Oz* with pupils from Year 5 and Year 6 in the acting roles. Pupils from Year 3 and Year 4 are supporting the singing and dancing. A song from the musical was enthusiastically sung in an assembly. Pupils are encouraged to be thoughtful and reflective. The school supports the social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of the pupils very effectively.
- The school uses the primary sport funding well. Teachers work alongside professional coaches to develop their skills in providing high-quality physical education lessons. There has been an increase in the number of opportunities provided for pupils to take part in a wide range of sports. Participation rates have increased. The school is currently reviewing the impact of this work.
- Parents are supportive of the school and overwhelmingly feel their children are making good progress in the school.
- Child protection and safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is very active and provides challenge to the school leaders for the progress pupils make. The governors review pupils' achievement and can compare this with the national picture. The progress of groups of pupils, for example those eligible for additional support through the pupil premium, is checked carefully. Governors visit the school regularly and meet with members of staff. They hold senior leaders to account for the ongoing improvements in teaching and pupils' performance. They have a clear understanding how underachievement has been tackled. They do this by taking an active part in school improvement meetings and by reviewing reports from the school and the local authority. The governors know how teachers' performance is related to the issues of promotion and salary advancement. The financial position of the school is reviewed carefully, as is the impact of other sources of revenue, such as the sport funding. Safeguarding policies and procedures are monitored closely to make sure pupils are kept safe in school.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	109967
<b>Local authority</b>	West Berkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	442470

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

<b>Type of school</b>	All-through
<b>School category</b>	Academy alternative provision converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	158
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Alison Mitchell and Annette Warren
<b>Headteacher</b>	Melanie Higgs
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19–20 September 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01488 658 336
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