

Two Village Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Mayes Lane, Ramsey, Harwich, Essex CO12 5EL

Inspection dates

11–12 December 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
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 progress that pupils make from key stage 1 to key stage 2 is well below average in reading and mathematics. In 2018, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 was low compared to other schools nationally.
- In the early years, children are happy and enjoy their time, but adults do not always make best use of this to develop children's skills and knowledge. There are limited opportunities to learn about the wider world and other cultures. Teaching approaches are inconsistent. Early reading and writing is not developed as strongly as it could be.
- The quality of teaching and learning is inconsistent. Some pupils do not have positive attitudes to learning. Consequently, pupils do not make the progress they should.
- Many leaders are new to post and are not yet fully effective in ensuring whole-school improvement.
- Governors are passionate about the school and provide high challenge to school leaders. However, the existing arrangements for financial advice do not support the headteacher fully in her role.

The school has the following strengths

- Under the strong leadership of the headteacher, the school has already begun an improvement journey. Staff and governors are ambitious for the school and are introducing appropriate actions to ensure that the provision for pupils in their care improves.
- Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is of a high standard. These pupils are making strong progress from their own starting points. Support staff enable pupils with SEND to take a full part in classroom activities. Where pupils with SEND have had difficulties controlling their behaviour, there has been rapid improvement.
- Where teaching is of a good standard, pupils are engaged in learning and make appropriate progress in their work.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring that there is a consistently good or better standard of teaching across the school, so that pupils make at least expected progress
 - insisting that all staff have equally high expectations of pupils' attitudes and behaviours for learning.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - further developing the roles of the new members of the leadership team, ensuring that they fully understand their role in wider school improvement
 - making sure that leaders are effective in supporting others to improve their own practice
 - those responsible for governance ensuring that leaders have high-quality financial advice and support to make best use of the school's resources.
- Improve the effectiveness of the early years provision by:
 - creating a consistent approach to teaching
 - developing the roles of adults to enable children to make best use of their time in school
 - furthering children's opportunities to learn about and experience the wider world.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- After the last inspection, there was a significant deterioration in the quality of leadership and standards. This resulted in the school being issued with a warning letter by Essex County Council in November 2016 and a strategic intervention board (SIB) being put in place to oversee the school's finances and the work of governors and school leaders. An academy order was issued in February 2018, but academisation has not yet taken place. The strategic intervention board remains in place.
- The headteacher has been in post since April 2017. Under her leadership many new processes and ways of working have been introduced and there have been several staff changes. Leaders are ambitious for the school and know what needs to be done to improve standards, although many of their actions are still to show impact.
- Members of the leadership team are all either new to their role or have been in post for less than two years. They, and subject leaders, are enthusiastic and keen to improve the areas that they are responsible for. They are currently accessing training from the Harwich Education Partnership but require further development and support to enable them to successfully lead the changes needed in the school.
- The curriculum is currently under review to make it broader and to ensure that it deepens pupils' skills and knowledge. Opportunities for pupils to apply and develop reading, writing and mathematical skills across subjects are limited.
- Leaders regularly monitor the quality of teaching and learning through lesson observations, work scrutinies and discussions with pupils. Leaders know where there are weaker areas in teachers' practice but they are not always strategic in the way they plan support and development opportunities.
- The headteacher and the governing body have overseen several changes to staffing in a short period. The current staffing levels are unsustainable without obtaining additional funding. The existing financial support to the headteacher is being reviewed to ensure that best use is made of financial resources.
- Leaders promote a culture of respect and responsibility. Staff and pupils do not accept prejudiced behaviour towards anyone. Leaders have put in place effective actions to improve pupil behaviour and the number of incidents of poor behaviour has dropped steadily.
- The pupil premium grant is used for appropriate purposes. Vulnerable pupils have a learning mentor to support them. There is also additional academic support for pupils who need more help. Although disadvantaged pupils across the school do not yet make good progress compared to pupils nationally, they do match the progress of their peers in school.
- The physical education and sports premium is used effectively. Pupils' engagement in extra-curricular sports activities and competitions has risen.

Governance of the school

- Governors of the school work alongside the SIB put in place by the local authority. The chair of governors is also the chair of the SIB.
- Governors are highly passionate and determined that the school will improve. They are realistic about where the school is currently and have supported school leaders well to start the transformation needed.
- Both governors and the SIB are clear about issues the school has faced in the past. They regularly discuss the progress of pupils, behaviour and finances. They follow up on any concerns, questioning and challenging school leaders on areas that are unclear to ensure that actions are followed through.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safeguarding of pupils is of a high standard. Concerns about pupils are dealt with in a rapid and appropriate way. Record-keeping is detailed, comprehensive and supports leaders' monitoring of pupils' ongoing welfare.
- All staff have received appropriate training. They know what to look out for to keep pupils safe.
- Parents spoken to during the inspection believe that their children are safe in school. Pupils say that they feel safe.
- All appropriate pre-employment checks have been carried out on employees, governors and those who volunteer in the school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is inconsistent across classes. There are strengths in every teacher's practice but there are too many aspects of teaching that are not yet good. Consequently, pupils do not always make the progress they are capable of.
- Most pupils show interest in what they are learning. When tasks do not fully motivate them, some pupils lose concentration and low-level poor behaviour can result. Teachers do not always check this and reinforce the high expectations of behaviour that leaders have introduced.
- Teachers have redesigned the curriculum to make sure that learning is interesting for pupils. They have made links between different subjects and created more opportunities for reading, writing and mathematics to be developed in the wider curriculum. This is at an early stage of implementation and has not yet had an impact on the work produced by pupils.
- Leaders have identified that understanding new or more challenging vocabulary is a weakness for many pupils in the school. Teachers emphasise new words and, where teaching is stronger, ensure that pupils both understand these and can use them in their writing.

- A new way of teaching phonics has been recently introduced but is not yet fully implemented. There is too much variation in the way that the lessons are delivered in different classes and, therefore, the impact on pupils' learning also varies.
- Where teaching is stronger, well matched 'core', 'stretch' and 'challenge' activities provide fluency development, support and extension to pupils. In these lessons, teachers effectively use their knowledge of pupils to ensure that all access the correct standard of work and are challenged appropriately.
- Teachers apply the school's assessment policy consistently and use the information to plan next steps for pupils. Pupils are seen to gain positively from the feedback that teachers give them.
- Teaching assistants work well with pupils with SEND, enabling them to access the same learning as the rest of the class. Consequently, pupils with SEND are making good progress.
- Mathematics teaching has a strong emphasis on the use of number. Other topics are revisited through weekly tests where misconceptions are followed up. Teachers use practical equipment effectively with the younger years, and with those pupils who need additional support to access the learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- In the past, there have been several high-level behaviour incidents that were viewed by some pupils as bullying. This is not a current issue as leaders deal with all behaviour problems that might be seen as bullying in an appropriate and effective way. However, there remains a perception from some parents that this is still an issue and leaders are working closely with these families to resolve any concerns.
- Leaders have focused pupils on being respectful to each other. They are working to broaden pupils' moral and cultural understanding by, for example, rewriting the religious education curriculum. Pupils in all year groups have produced some thoughtful work on the Bible creation story. They have shown their understanding of it in age-appropriate tasks, from simply retelling it to comparing it with the scientific view of creation.
- Parents spoken to, and those who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, agree that their children are safe. Parents feel that communication with class teachers is positive.
- Pupils are polite and welcoming. They are keen to talk to visitors about their school.
- Pupils feel safe in the school. They know who they can talk to if they are worried about anything.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.

- Attitudes to learning in the classrooms are not always as positive as they could be, with some low-level behaviours that stop individuals from gaining as much from lessons as they could do.
- Logs of incidents show that there has been a marked decrease in the poor behaviour of pupils, with fewer playground issues. The conduct of individual pupils who have struggled to control their behaviour has seen improvement.
- Pupils are generally well behaved around the school site. They play well on the large playground and are sensible moving between classrooms. They come quietly into assemblies and take an active part in activities such as singing together.
- Attendance is tracked well by school leaders and families are supported to improve the attendance of their children where necessary. Governors have worked closely with the headteacher to develop appropriate policies and actions. Consequently, attendance is broadly in line with national averages.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' progress from key stage 1 to key stage 2 has been low over the last three years and provisional information from 2018 shows that progress was well below the national average in reading and mathematics. Writing progress has increased and is now average.
- Pupils' attainment is also low. Provisional information for 2018 shows only 41% of pupils achieving the expected standard in all of reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' writing is at a higher standard, in line with national averages.
- The cohorts of disadvantaged pupils are too small to be statistically significant, but inspection evidence indicates that they are making the same progress as their peers now and currently have the same level of attainment.
- There was a large difference between both the progress and attainment of boys and girls indicated in the provisional end of key stage 2 outcomes for 2018. Boys did much better than girls. Achievement at the end of other key stages and pupils' work in school does not suggest that this is a consistent pattern across the school and was limited to that one cohort.
- Pupils at the end of key stage 1 had better attainment, with the proportion achieving at least the expected standard rising in the provisional information for 2018 to be above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils achieving at least the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has risen in recent years but is still below the national average.
- The percentage of children in the early years who achieved a good level of development is just below the national average.
- The work in the books of pupils with SEND shows they make good progress from their own starting points.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- The early years leader is new to post, although previously experienced in teaching in the early years. There is inconsistency in how children in the early years are taught. Teaching does not always have the pace and urgency that senior leaders expect.
- Leaders have identified that early writing is not as developed as it could be. They have introduced additional opportunities for writing, but these are not yet fully embedded into practice and teaching points are not always followed up in children's work.
- The physical environment in the early years provides many opportunities for children to develop their skills across the areas of learning. However, children do not always choose to access the wide range of activities provided. Adults do not effectively ensure that children tackle a broad enough range of tasks so that they make good progress in all areas of development.
- Children are happy in the early years. They enjoy their time in school. Parents are very positive about the way their children have started school.
- Staff offer regular parent meetings to support families to help their children learn. Some parents use the school's online recording scheme to see what their children have been doing in class.
- Staff ensure that children with SEND feel included in what all children are doing and support them to develop appropriate independence.
- Children are safe. Safeguarding practices are of the same high standard as in the rest of the school.

School details

Unique reference number	132234
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10046088

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	190
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Linda Hughes
Headteacher	Natasha Bennett
Telephone number	01255 880268
Website	www.twovillage.essex.sch.uk
Email address	schooloffice@twovillage.essex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	3–4 December 2014

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average primary school.
- The school opened in 2000, as a result of the merger of two village primary schools.
- The governing body works under the guidance of a strategic intervention board, put in place by Essex County Council.
- Leaders work alongside others in local schools as part of the Harwich Education Partnership.
- An academy order has been published as of February 2018, but academisation has not yet taken place.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed learning in every class. Some of these observations were undertaken alongside members of the senior leadership team.
- A wide range of pupils' workbooks were looked at by the inspection team.
- Inspectors met with representatives from the local governing body and the strategic intervention board. They met with senior and subject leaders. The responses to the staff survey were considered.
- Two groups of pupils met with an inspector. Inspectors also spoke to pupils informally in lessons and at playtimes. The responses to the Ofsted pupil survey were considered.
- The inspection team scrutinised the school's website and a range of documents, including assessment information, the improvement plan and the school's self-evaluation.
- Pupils read to inspectors and talked about their reading preferences.
- The 59 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and the 31 free-text comments were considered. The inspection team also spoke to some parents before school.

Inspection team

Tessa Holledge, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ruth Brock

Ofsted Inspector

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