

Cold Harbour Church of England School

Highland Close, Bletchley, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire MK3 7PD

Inspection dates

13–14 December 2017

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	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- School leaders have not achieved a consensus on their vision for improvement. They do not work effectively together as a team to improve the quality of education.
- Leaders' evaluations of the quality of pupils' learning are not sufficiently stringent or accurate.
- Teaching is not consistently good. In some classes, teachers do not plan learning that interests pupils and enables them to achieve well.
- Some teachers do not take account of pupils' prior learning or have high enough expectations of what pupils can do.
- Although current pupils' outcomes are improving, they are not yet good and are below national averages in mathematics.
- Some pupils, staff and parents are concerned that the poor behaviour of a few pupils sometimes interrupts learning in class.
- The school's policies for dealing with behaviour and bullying are not applied consistently by all staff.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are not always supported well enough. As a result, these pupils do not make consistently good progress.
- Some of the most able pupils are not sufficiently challenged to enable them to achieve the higher standards.
- Until recently, the governing body has not effectively held leaders to account for pupils' progress.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher ensures that all pupils are safe and well cared for. Staff nurture the pupils well.
- Some leaders are working hard to make improvements in their areas of responsibility.
- The recently appointed and committed chair of governors is supported well by other governors.
- The teaching of phonics is now good and the Year 1 phonics outcomes are improving.
- Children in the Reception classes get off to a good start to their education.
- The school's new assessment system provides staff with the tools to make accurate judgements about pupils' progress.
- Most pupils are very polite and respectful.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and governance by ensuring that:
 - leaders work together more effectively as a team to make sure that teaching and learning are consistently good or better across the school
 - leaders develop a shared vision for improving the school and communicate this effectively to all staff and parents
 - leaders' evaluations of pupils' learning are sharpened to provide greater accuracy, especially in relation to the progress different groups of pupils are making
 - the governing body is well informed about all aspects of the school's performance and holds the school to account more rigorously.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that it is consistently good by ensuring that:
 - all teachers make better use of assessment information to plan lessons that meet the needs of all groups of pupils
 - all teachers deliver lessons that are sufficiently challenging to enable the most able pupils to achieve the higher standards
 - teachers and staff have high expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - all adults consistently apply the agreed behaviour policy so that pupils' learning is not disrupted.
- Improve outcomes for pupils by ensuring that:
 - all groups of pupils are supported well, including disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities, to enable them to make consistently good progress
 - a higher proportion of pupils reach at least the expected standards for their age, particularly in mathematics.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Over the last three years, there have been many changes of staff, leaders and governors. The current headteacher joined the school in September 2016. Planned improvements have not been bedded in sufficiently to ensure that they make a positive difference to pupils' learning and behaviour.
- The good quality of education found at the last inspection has not been maintained. A significant number of staff and parents have found the many changes unsettling and feel that the school is currently not as good as it could be. Negative relationships between some members of staff are getting in the way of school improvement.
- The senior leadership team members do not currently work well together. They do not communicate a clear, consistent vision for the school or enough ambition for pupils. While individuals within the senior leadership team have well-developed skills, their responsibilities are not evenly distributed and expertise is not shared, which impacts on their effectiveness.
- Some subject leaders do not make a strong enough contribution to improving teaching. Their checks are not used effectively enough by senior leaders to gain an accurate picture of where strengths and weaknesses lie.
- Although there is an appropriate assessment system to ensure that teachers' judgements about pupils' progress are accurate, senior leaders do not make effective use of assessment information. As a result, they do not have a succinct overview of the progress different groups of pupils are making. Insufficient attention has been given to the progress of disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- Leaders know what additional government funds they receive and how they spend it. This includes the sports funding and pupil premium funding. Senior leaders track the progress of current pupils to monitor the impact of this funding. However, while governors receive progress reports from subject leaders, they do not yet receive regular overviews of the progress all groups of pupils are making, including that of disadvantaged pupils.
- Leaders have worked hard to develop an exciting and engaging curriculum which offers a breadth of experiences for pupils across the school. The curriculum supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Strong links with the local church and community organisations, such as the local elderly residents' home and the Rotary Club, help pupils to develop their understanding of Christianity and the school's values. Pupils also learn about tolerance and gain an understanding of other beliefs.
- Pupils enjoy participating in extra-curricular activities, including drama, dance and sporting events. These opportunities help pupils to develop their physical, mental and personal well-being.
- Leaders are receiving support from the local authority and the chair of governors to improve the school. They have received targeted professional development to help them to develop their knowledge and skills to improve teaching.

Governance of the school

- The recently formed governing body is beginning to challenge school leaders to gain a better understanding of the school's strengths and areas of development.
- The chair of governors is committed to carrying out her role efficiently and is focusing on improving outcomes for all pupils. She understands the current difficulties in the school and is committed to doing all she can to move things forward.
- Governors are now asking the right questions at committee meetings but, as yet, are not following up the answers by checking the impact that leaders' actions are having on pupils' progress and outcomes.
- Governors are committed to making effective improvements to the school, and welcome the opportunity for an external review of governance to improve the quality of governance.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The headteacher has ensured that correct procedures are in place when appointing staff. The school's register of the checks made when appointing staff meets requirements. Staff demonstrate a clear understanding of statutory guidance and know what to do if concerns about pupils arise. Regular staff meetings ensure that all staff are kept up to date with current and pertinent information.
- The school works effectively with external agencies to support vulnerable pupils. The headteacher is tenacious in ensuring that pupils are kept safe. When needed, she challenges external agencies so that pupils receive the support they need.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inconsistent across the school. As a result, not all groups of pupils make good progress.
- In classes where teaching is not good, some pupils quickly become bored and this sometimes results in incidents of poor behaviour which distract learning for everyone. Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils. They do not routinely expect pupils to present their work well. Their low expectations of pupils result in some pupils expecting too little of themselves.
- Additional adults in classrooms are not consistently used well to support pupils' learning. This slows the progress that some pupils make, particularly disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- In some classes, teaching does not routinely challenge pupils and learning is not well matched to pupils' needs. Teachers do not question pupils effectively to help them deepen their understanding. The most able pupils are not consistently well supported to achieve the higher standards that they are capable of. Pupils told inspectors that they would like to have more challenging work.
- In classes where tasks meet pupils' needs and teaching is engaging and interesting, pupils enjoy their learning and make good progress. For example, during the week of

the inspection, groups of pupils in Years 5 and 6 were given different challenges that made them think and talk together to solve problems. They talked enthusiastically about the problems and challenged one another confidently before agreeing on an outcome.

- Teachers carry out regular and thorough assessments of pupils' work. They check standards with each other as well as with other schools to ensure that their assessments are accurate. Some use this information to plan targeted support for both English and mathematics, but this is not consistent across the school.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and the majority feel safe. They talk about ways in which they can stay safe, including when they are online or if they feel they are bullied online.
- Parents speak positively of the 'friendly, family' atmosphere in school and the large majority of them feel that teachers take good care of their children.
- Many pupils are confident and self-assured learners. Some teachers encourage them to be independent and resilient thinkers and not to be afraid to ask if they don't understand something.
- The school provides good opportunities for pupils to learn about British values as well as the school's own values. Through the democratic school council elections, pupils learn about expressing opinions and the importance of individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance.
- Pupils understand the need to care for one another and to listen to and respect one another's differences and views.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Staff do not rigorously follow the school's behaviour policy. Some pupils say that this is unfair as, consequently, adults do not always deal with incidents of poor behaviour well. Pupils also feel that some adults do not always deal with the few incidents of bullying effectively. In some classes, incidents of low-level disruption from a few pupils are not consistently and swiftly tackled by teachers. When this happens, pupils do not learn as well as they could.
- Pupils are courteous and most of them move around the school calmly, holding doors open for visitors and answering questions politely. During the inspection, the snow restricted the use of the playground; however, most pupils entertained themselves well in their classrooms at breaktimes under good supervision.
- The recently established nurture class provides a safe and caring environment for pupils who find it difficult to behave well in class. Pupils are supported by a teacher and two learning mentors who teach lessons which are planned by individual pupils'

teachers. Staff also organise appropriate activities to support these pupils towards achieving their personal behaviour targets and to help them integrate well with other pupils in class and around the school. Leaders are due to review the impact of this new initiative and consider the best next steps.

- The large majority of pupils attend school regularly. Attendance information is collated diligently by the school's business manager and any absences are followed up swiftly. The school works hard to ensure that pupils are in school promptly and ready to learn.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- As a result of inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, not all groups of pupils have made consistently good progress across different subjects over time.
- Since the previous inspection in 2014, outcomes at the end of the early years and key stages 1 and 2 have not been consistently good. The progress of some pupils currently in the school is improving, but this is not consistent across all year groups and subjects, especially mathematics. However, pupils currently in Year 6 are on track to achieve well and attainment in this year group is better than in other year groups.
- In recent years, the progress of all pupils in mathematics has been significantly below the national average. The current leader for mathematics has accurately identified the reasons for this and is taking appropriate action to bring about improvement. Leaders are aware that their work to improve pupils' progress in mathematics must be continued as a priority.
- In the past, progress for disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities has been below that of other pupils nationally in English and mathematics. The current progress of these groups of pupils is improving in some, but not all, subjects. Progress in mathematics is notably less consistent.
- In 2017, the proportion of pupils who attained the higher standards was below the national average. Due to recent developments in the way pupils are assessed, the progress made by the most able pupils currently in school is improving. A greater proportion of the most able pupils are on track to meet the higher standards in English and mathematics than in previous years.
- A lower than average proportion of Year 1 pupils achieved the expected standard in the phonics screening check in 2017. This was because phonics lessons were not always of high quality and a lack of training meant that there were gaps in teachers' knowledge and understanding. Leaders have taken effective action to address this. As a result, the teaching of phonics has improved and more pupils are currently on track to achieve the expected standard at the end of Year 1. Most pupils enjoy reading and the attractive library has a wide range of texts for them to choose from.

Early years provision

Good

- Children enter Reception with skills that are lower than those typical for children of the same age. Good teaching ensures that all groups of children, including the most able, disadvantaged children and those who have SEN and/or disabilities, make good progress.

- Leaders ensure that any specific or individual needs children have are identified early. At the end of their year in Reception the majority of children achieve the expected good level of development. This means that children are well prepared for transition into Year 1.
- A well-established and comprehensive induction programme enables children to make a positive start to school. This gives parents confidence that the school will take good care of their children and support their learning.
- All welfare requirements are met and staff care for children well. Children are happy and feel safe in school.
- Children in the early years arrive full of enthusiasm and ready to learn. They are presented with a wide range of activities which excite them and inspire them to learn. For example, during the inspection, a group of children enjoyed building a stable using foam bricks. Children used tools to measure the stable and check that the bricks were level. They were supported effectively by an adult who provided a timely commentary and questions that extended children's vocabulary.
- Children typically concentrate for extended periods of time and have well-developed social skills, share well and take turns. For example, during the inspection, one group worked very well together wrapping parcels for Christmas and talking about the shapes they were wrapping.
- The substantive early years leader is currently absent. The interim early years leader has been in post since September 2017. She is a strong practitioner who, along with her team, demonstrates an accurate understanding of the provision needed for children in the Reception classes.
- The school's processes for assessing children as they join the Reception classes are robust and accurate. However, leaders acknowledge that their early years system is not aligned as well as it could be to the whole-school assessment system. They are sensibly planning to adjust this so that leaders can even more effectively evaluate children's progress.

School details

Unique reference number	110404
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	10037814

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	308
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Sharon Power
Headteacher	Mrs Christine Ryan
Telephone number	01908 270377
Website	www.coldharbourschool.org.uk/
Email address	office@coldharbour.milton-keynes.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	1–2 July 2014

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2016. Since the previous inspection, there have been many changes to the governing body. The current governing body was established in September 2017.
- The school is an average-sized primary school. The early years consists of two Reception classes.
- Pupils come from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average, as is the proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.

- In 2016, the school met the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club for pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all classes and in a range of subjects. Some observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors checked the school’s recruitment checks made on the suitability of staff to work with children. Behaviour and attendance records and information relating to safeguarding were also checked.
- Inspectors worked in partnership with the school’s senior leaders to analyse the school’s own assessment information for current pupils. The inspectors reviewed pupils’ outcomes, the school’s evaluation of its own performance, the development plan, and leaders’ monitoring and evaluation records of the quality of teaching. Inspectors also gathered information about the curriculum and pupils’ learning from work on display, and by reviewing pupils’ work in their books.
- Inspectors spent time on the playground before school and at lunchtime, listened to pupils read and spoke to parents.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, subject leaders, the special educational needs coordinator and the early years team. An inspector met the headteacher to consider safeguarding, attendance and welfare. Two inspectors met with seven members of the governing body, including the chair, and one inspector met with the local authority’s representative.
- There were no responses from pupils to Ofsted’s online questionnaire. However, inspectors considered the views of pupils from recent questionnaires published on the school’s website. An inspector also met with a group of pupils and inspectors spoke informally with pupils around the school.
- Inspectors took account of 34 staff questionnaires, and considered the 57 responses to Ofsted’s online staff questionnaire. Parents’ views were taken into account through the 57 responses to Ofsted’s online survey, Parent View. Inspectors also had discussions with parents before and after school.

Inspection team

Sarah Varnom, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Stephen Phillips	Ofsted Inspector
Dom Cook	Her Majesty’s Inspector

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