

Pool-in-Wharfedale CE (VC) Primary School

Arthington Lane, Pool-in-Wharfedale, Otley, west Yorkshire, LS21 1LG

Inspection dates 27–28 January 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher has excellent leadership qualities and, allied with a talented acting deputy headteacher and determined governing body, is improving the school at a rapid rate. Consequently, the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement are both good and improving.
- The latest reliable school data show that pupils' achievement in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is now good. Standards at the end of Year 2 in 2014 were above average because pupils made rapid progress in their learning, which is now also the case in all other year groups.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 in 2014 were above average in mathematics and reading and broadly average in writing.
- School data show pupils' progress is accelerating rapidly in reading, writing and mathematics and pupils are well on their way towards highly aspirational targets.
- Expectations for children in the early years are high and the provision for them is good and improving.
- Pupils throughout school are happy and well looked after. They feel safe, behave well and have very positive attitudes to their learning in all lessons.
- Pupils have clear values of honesty, respect and tolerance for others because relationships are strong. They are eager to take on responsibility.
- The overwhelming majority of parents value the school highly and are very supportive of its work.
- Pupils with disabilities and those who have special educational needs benefit from strong support and make good progress in their learning.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Accelerated progress being made in school has not yet resulted in the highest possible standards of which the pupils are capable by the end of Year 6.
- Occasionally, teachers do not expect the highest standards of presentation from pupils.
- Marking does not always help pupils to improve their work further and a small minority of teachers mark work as correct when it is incorrect, particularly in mathematics because of their slightly weak subject knowledge.
- Occasionally, opportunities to extend the youngest children's mathematical understanding are missed.

Information about this inspection

- Teaching and learning were observed in lessons, including one observed jointly with the headteacher.
- A review of a wide range of samples of pupils' work was undertaken, discussions were held with a cross section of pupils and some pupils read to inspectors.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, staff, representatives of the governing body, a school improvement adviser from the local authority and the Local Leader of Education (LLE) supporting the school.
- Account was taken of 108 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. An open meeting with parents was conducted during the morning of the second day of the inspection. In addition, two email communications and two letters forwarded to inspectors were considered.
- Twenty-one questionnaires returned by staff gave inspectors a view of their opinions.
- A range of documentation was scrutinised including information about the progress of groups of pupils, the school's evaluation of how well it is doing, school improvement plans, safeguarding information and records relating to the management of teachers' performance.
- A further visit was made to the school by Declan McCauley and Eithne Proffitt, Senior Managing Inspectors at CfBT, after the inspection was completed to gather additional evidence in relation to pupils' achievement.

Inspection team

David Byrne, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Sharon Lambert	Additional Inspector
Declan McCauley	Additional Inspector
Eithne Proffitt	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The school provides full-time early years provision in its Reception class.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and therefore eligible for support through the pupil premium is well below the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or in the care of local authority.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been a significant number of planned and unplanned staff changes. Leadership has been disrupted due to the illness of the previous headteacher. The acting headteacher was appointed as substantive headteacher on 5 February 2015.
- During the inspection, temporary supply staff taught two classes.
- The school is supported by a Local Leader of Education (LLE), who is the headteacher of a successful school in the locality.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to strengthen the quality of teaching in order to raise standards further in reading, writing and mathematics by:
 - ensuring that all teachers have strong subject knowledge in mathematics
 - making sure marking consistently helps pupils to improve their work and learning further
 - ensuring that all teachers demand the highest standards of presentation from pupils
 - providing more opportunities for children in the early years to extend their mathematical skills and understanding.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has excellent leadership qualities and has brought a sense of urgency to school improvement. Together with a talented acting deputy headteacher and a skilled governing body, astute decisions are transforming the school effectively. The systems for tracking pupils' progress are robust and together with work in pupils' books provide much evidence to show that achievement is improving at a fast rate.
- Leaders are committed to providing equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination successfully. All pupils are given equal opportunities to learn well.
- Good support from the local authority has assisted the school to adjust to the previous uncertainty in leadership that has been experienced since the last inspection. The local authority has been instrumental in making a LLE available to the school to help with school improvement. The contribution of this partner provided effective and accurate guidance to senior leaders in undertaking self-evaluation, data analysis and developing effective strategies, which have greatly increased the impact of middle leaders on improving the quality of teaching and learning well.
- Staffing is now more settled than has been the case in recent times and a raft of well-designed policies is bringing about greater consistency to pupils' learning. This is diminishing the negative impact of staff changes on pupils' progress in recent times. Teaching is improving strongly and, as a result, standards are rising securely and are now above average in Key Stage 1. School data show this is also currently the case in Key Stage 2, where pupils are now making fast progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Staff have reacted positively to disruptions in leadership experienced since the previous inspection and are working well together to raise achievement further. Improved systems for managing their performance include highly aspirational targets for pupils' progress. Where possible, suitable training is sought to support the staff's professional development. Senior leaders report back regularly to staff on the quality of learning in their classrooms. Class teachers use the recently improved assessment systems to identify pupils who need additional support to help them catch up quickly.
- Responsibilities are shared well between staff. The middle leaders managing literacy and numeracy are driving forward improvement effectively. Action plans designed to raise standards have pertinent actions designed to secure further improvement. Similarly, clear targets and criteria for measuring success over time within the plan enable staff and governors to check how effectively the school is improving.
- The primary school sport funding is used effectively and boosts the experiences and skills of pupils in a variety of sports, as well as extending the abilities of teaching staff. It enhances the excellent provision for outdoor team games due to the proximity of the school to high quality community sports fields.
- The grant for pupils known to be eligible for funding from the pupil premium is used wisely. Each pupil is identified, their needs evaluated carefully and funds used to give additional support, as required, or assistance for educational visits and events, which is helping them to progress well in their learning.
- The curriculum is good and is meeting the needs of pupils well, particularly those of the most able. Pupils' books show that the most able are well challenged in lessons. Spiritual, moral and social development is good, although cultural development is a not quite as strong. Although pupils learn about the British values of respect and democracy, school leaders are aware there are limited opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of the richness and diversity of modern British society. Well-informed plans are already in place to increase pupils' understanding.
- The headteacher and early years leader have worked closely with the LLE and the children's various pre-school settings to ensure that their assessments of the children's knowledge and skills when they start in Reception are accurate. This gives the school a clear picture of the children's varied starting points and drives the planning for their learning and progress in Reception.
- The overwhelming majority of parents support the school. Senior leaders and governors work successfully with parents. Communication has improved. For example, better information is available about what pupils are learning each term. Parents report that they feel this improvement is helping their children, but a few are still concerned about some of the unavoidable staff changes.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is a critical and supportive friend to the school; it has done all that can be expected to minimise the negative impact of long-term absence of key staff.
 - There have been some changes in the make-up of the governing body in recent years. The governors bring to their roles a wide set of valuable qualities; these include professional skills, as well as a good knowledge of the local community. They are committed to ensuring that achievement continues to rise.
 - Frequent visits to the school and attachments of individual governors to classes and subjects make

them aware of what goes on in school.

- Governors have worked with the school to create a highly efficient system for tracking pupils' progress. This helps governors and staff make detailed analyses of the school's data and to ensure that their statutory responsibilities are met. They know about pupils' progress and the quality of teaching. They use this information to make decisions about staff deployment and their performance management.
- Effective systems are in place for improving the school's finances, which, due to past decisions, have slipped into deficit. The local authority trusts the ability of the current governing body to manage the budget prudently through well-thought-out financial plans, so that the deficit is removed within four years.
- Systems to keep pupils safe and free from harm are effective and revised regularly. Safeguarding requirements are met.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Typically, pupils' behaviour is good in and around school. Pupils enjoy school and attendance is above average.
- Most pupils have positive attitudes to their work. They show respect and kindness to one another and adults. Many are very mature and socially adept and at ease talking with adults. They enjoy many aspects of school life, which was obvious in discussions with them.
- Pupils are proud of their school and speak highly of the staff. They develop a strong social conscience and are eager to take on extra responsibilities, such as acting as 'Pool Pals' or becoming members of the active school council.
- Staff have improved the way in which they manage pupils' behaviour, following a whole-school focus on anti-bullying. As a result, pupils have clear expectations of the iniquity of stereotyping and homophobia.
- Pupils are a highly valued part of the village community and the school is developing even stronger links with it. Pupils have worked with a dedicated governor in developing the new Riverside Park by helping to clear weeds and by planting bulbs. Characters designed by pupils feature on the guides produced for visitors. Pupils are developing a good understanding of their responsibilities and role within the wider community.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils are made aware of risks, particularly when using the Internet and mobile devices. Pupils say they feel safe in school because the atmosphere is calm and well ordered.
- Instances of all kinds of bullying have diminished, but pupils and some parents say occasional incidents do occur. Pupils are confident that staff will listen to their concerns and anxieties. 'If we have any problems, teachers sort it' was a typical pupil comment. The school is continuing to strengthen its system for dealing with any incidents of unacceptable behaviour and making better records of actions taken.
- Procedures for training staff and governors are up to date. The school takes sensible actions to keep the site and school safe.

The quality of teaching is good

- Standards are rising and pupils' progress is accelerating rapidly across all year groups. Increasing proportions of pupils are now making more than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics because of good teaching.
- In Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching over time has been particularly strong and evidence from this inspection shows it is now more consistently the case in Key Stage 2 as well. There are numerous good and outstanding examples of learning to be seen throughout school. The most-able pupils in particular are challenged well and many of them are making more than expected progress in their learning.
- Learning in Key Stage 1 is consistently good and has been since the previous inspection. Pupils develop their ideas confidently and use their good skills of speaking to inform a good and improving quality of writing. Their very good understanding of phonics (the letters and sounds they make) gives pupils good skills of reading and writing new words. Pupils in Key Stage 1 enjoy reading and benefit from many opportunities for doing so. Pupils enjoy mathematics, especially when it is linked to everyday life.
- Reading has a high profile and much effort has improved its provision, for example by re-organising the

Key Stage 2 library which has supported learning well. Efforts to boost standards in writing are paying dividends. Pupils are proud of their 'super books', which encompass good quality writing from a variety of subjects.

- The recently revised mathematics calculation policy is enabling pupils across the school to work in a more consistent way that helps them develop their skills as they move from class to class. Its impact on learning is positive and the books show that pupils are making fast progress in their learning. Less-able pupils and also those with disabilities and those who have special educational needs make good progress because of well-targeted and effective support by skilled classroom assistants and teachers.
- Assessment information is used well to target additional support astutely for pupils who are identified as not making as much progress as they could be. The well-designed tracking system enables teachers and teaching assistants to get pupils back on track with their learning rapidly. Teaching assistants are particularly skilled at this type of work.
- Important systems have been embedded to secure consistency in pupils' work, for example in marking; the desired effect, however, is not always evident. At times, pupils' response to the 'learning mountain' (a marking system used by the school) is very positive, because they rise to the challenge of starting with work at the top, i.e. the higher expectations. However, at other times, the process is not applied effectively.
- The school marking policy is clear, although the quality of guidance given by teachers varies and is not always fully effective in helping pupils to improve their work. Occasionally, teachers mark pupils' work as correct when it is incorrect and, at times, some teachers' subject knowledge is not strong enough, particularly in mathematics, and this reduces the effectiveness of their teaching and marking. Now and again, teachers also accept work from pupils which is untidy or poorly presented.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils' attainment across the school is rising rapidly and their progress is accelerating, so much so that all pupils in all year groups are already working at standards which are high for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. Current Year 6 pupils look well set to achieve above average standards in the national tests in July 2015.
- A good proportion of children enter the early years with skills and abilities typical for their age. By the time they enter Year 1, pupils have progressed at a good rate. In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 progress has improved since the previous inspection. The results of the Year 1 check of the pupils' understanding of the sounds that letters make (phonics) far exceed the standards expected nationally. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards in reading, writing and mathematics have risen and in 2014 were above average.
- In Key Stage 2, progress has recently improved because of the improvements to the quality of teaching led securely by the headteacher and other senior leaders. Standards at the end of Year 6 in 2014 were above average in mathematics and reading and broadly average in writing. Accurate data held by the school and inspection evidence show that pupils are making faster progress and reaching higher standards.
- The most-able pupils do well. In 2014, for example, the proportions of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 and in some cases Level 6 in reading and mathematics were above the national average. Assessment information is used well to inform teachers' planning so that the most-able pupils are challenged effectively by the work they are given.
- School leaders have developed a strong culture for promoting reading, which is supporting pupils' reading achievement successfully. A typical pupil comment was that 'reading is cool'. As a result, pupils enjoy reading and talk about the stories they have read with enthusiasm. Younger pupils are developing their skills in reading unfamiliar words by using their knowledge of letters and sounds to word build and blend.
- Pupils with disabilities and special educational needs benefit from effective support and guidance and make good progress from their starting points.
- There are very few disadvantaged pupils; too few to draw secure conclusions about their comparative performance with others nationally or in school.

Early years provision

is good

- The majority of children enter early years with knowledge and skills that are typical for their age. An increasing proportion starts school with more advanced skills in many areas of learning, especially those that help early reading and writing development. This year, a small number of children have specific special educational needs.

- By the end of Reception, the proportion of children who reach a good level of development is well above the national average in all areas of learning. Many children exceed this level, especially in their reading and writing. They make good progress overall and are well prepared and ready for Year 1. Progress in mathematics for most-able children is not as rapid as in their reading and writing.
- The headteacher and early years leader have a shared vision and determination to extend this good learning. There are now clear systems to record and track all the children's progress, with a sharp focus on increasing the proportion exceeding expected progress which drives the early years action plans. The school's data show that this has had a marked impact on all children's progress this year and inspection evidence provides clear indications that an increasing proportion is again on track to exceed national expectations. The learning and progress of the small number of children with special educational needs are well resourced and managed through bespoke provision and learning plans.
- Actions taken by leaders have also led to improvements in the quality of activities provided. Adults are skilled in supporting and developing children's play to promote their reading and writing. Focused questioning teases out the children's ability to decode words and to use these skills in their writing. Questioning during mathematics-based activities has improved through staff training. The children use appropriate mathematical language skilfully to explain what they know, understand and can do, but adults do not always seize upon these responses to probe or challenge in order to move the children's learning even further forward.
- Children are well behaved, happy and eager to learn. Their efforts are celebrated well and they are keen to share their successes with staff and visitors alike. Routines and relationships are well established and embedded, with clear systems and procedures in place to ensure that the children are cared for and kept safe and secure. Parents are well informed through meetings, newsletters, workshops and the school website as to how best to support their children's learning and about the school's vision to 'exceed'.

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	108000
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	453619

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	183
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joanne Pellow
Headteacher	Sally Fox
Date of previous school inspection	12 March 2013
Telephone number	0113 284 3151
Fax number	0113 203 7852
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