

St John's CofE Primary School

Raymoth Lane, Worksop, Nottinghamshire, S81 7LU

Inspection dates 12–13 February 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Teaching requires improvement. In recent years, it has not enabled pupils to achieve well enough by the end of Key Stage 2.
- Not all pupils progress as quickly as they should, especially those who are more able. The progress of some pupils in mathematics is slowed because their understanding of mathematical vocabulary is not well developed.
- Teachers' marking, particularly in mathematics, does not always show pupils what they need to do to improve. Pupils are not being consistently taught how to assess their own and each other's work.
- Progress in reading and writing is better than that in mathematics, but is not yet consistently good in all year groups.
- Over time, senior leaders have not been rigorous enough in using information gathered during monitoring activities to improve standards.
- Subject leaders have not had sufficient expertise to check on improvements in teaching and the standards within their subject, so that they can affect the improvements needed to raise standards.

The school has the following strengths

- Progress and achievement is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Recently, senior leaders have made considerable improvements to the way in which they check on the quality of teaching and the progress of pupils. This is beginning to have an impact on learning.
- The staff and governing body share the senior leadership's accurate view of the school's effectiveness.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- There is now some outstanding teaching.
- Pupils feel safe and know how to stay safe within an environment in which they behave well, and show respect and care for others.
- Attendance is above average.
- The caring leadership of the headteacher has created a happy and harmonious school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 lessons or parts of lessons, some of which were jointly undertaken with the headteacher. They also listened to pupils reading, and evaluated the quality of work in pupils' books and the school's assessment and tracking data.
- Inspectors held meetings with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, senior and subject leaders and held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of school documentation, including the school's own self-evaluation and its corresponding action plan, pupil progress data and minutes of governing body meetings. Other documents looked at included those relating to safeguarding and child protection, and behaviour and incident logs.
- Inspectors took account of the 46 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) as well as letters received from parents. Inspectors spoke to some parents informally on the playground at the start of the day. They took account of 15 staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

David Edwards, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Janet Bird

Additional Inspector

Lesley Sanderson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St John's is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils come from White British backgrounds and there is a very low proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding to support pupils entitled to free school meals, those who are in the care of the local authority, and those who are members of service families, is lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported through school action is higher than average. The proportion supported through school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- All pupils are educated on site. The school does not use alternative provision to support any of its pupils.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Year 6.
- More pupils join or leave the school partway through the school year than is the case in most primary schools.
- There have been significant changes in staffing since the last inspection, including the appointment of a new deputy headteacher in September 2011.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement in mathematics and English by ensuring that teaching consistently demonstrates the recent improvement in good teaching and, consequently, raises the proportion of outstanding teaching, by:
 - teaching all pupils the skills they need to evaluate effectively the quality of their own work and that of others
 - ensuring greater consistency in marking, particularly in mathematics, so that it guides pupils more effectively to understand and take their next steps in learning
 - systematically teaching key mathematical vocabulary
 - ensuring that work is not too easy for more-able pupils.
- Develop the skills of recently appointed subject leaders so that they have a clear view of standards within their subject or area of responsibility and can take effective measures to accelerate pupil progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because not enough pupils, including those who have had the benefit of being at school all the way through, make fast enough progress.
- Attainment by the end of Year 2 has been rising slowly but steadily, keeping pace with the rise nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. However, in the past, some pupils have not done as well as they should. This is because teachers have not used the information available to them about how well each pupil is doing in order to meet the needs of all groups of learners, particularly the most able.
- Attainment is better in reading and writing than in mathematics, with attainment in these subjects close to national averages at the end of Year 6. Pupils were a term behind national averages in English, but more than six months behind in mathematics. This is because pupils have not developed the mathematical vocabulary necessary to ensure that they have a secure understanding of their work in the subject.
- Pupils make steady progress in reading throughout Years 1 and 2 and use good strategies to read unfamiliar words. The results of the Year 1 phonic screening test were well above those of other pupils nationally. Pupils leave the school with attainment in reading which is broadly average.
- School data and work in books shows that pupils' progress is accelerating. Most pupils are now making at least the progress they should and some are making good progress, particularly in Years 2 and 6. However, some inconsistencies remain in the progress made by different year groups and in different subjects.
- The skills and abilities of children starting in the Reception Year are below those expected for their age. Children settle well in Reception. They make good progress and join Year 1 with broadly average attainment.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are now making better progress because of the help they are given, which is often in small groups and sometimes on an individual basis. It is sharply focused on what they need to know to develop their reading, writing and number skills.
- Pupils known to be eligible for extra funding benefit from a wide range of extra support, such as financial help for trips and one-to-one and small-group tuition in reading, writing and mathematics. The results of the Key Stage 2 tests in 2012, show it has not been effective in closing the gap in attainment for eligible pupils as their attainment was below their classmates and similar pupils nationally.
- The school has now added rigour to its additional support programmes for these pupils, carefully using all of the information available to it to deliver work that is appropriate to their needs. There is evidence that this is now starting to narrow the attainment gap between this group of pupils and the rest. For example, in a very effective mathematics small-group additional work session, pupils were being taught how to improve various aspects of their numeracy skills. The work was pitched at an appropriate level for their needs and it engaged and motivated them so that they made rapid gains in their learning.

- Pupils learn about other cultures and their work indicates that they have developed a good understanding and appreciation of those living in societies very different to their own. For example, pupils have exchanged thoughtfully worded letters with children in schools in Nepal, Uganda and Brazil. This contributes to their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Although most teaching observed during the inspection was good or better, teaching requires improvement because, over time, it has not ensured good achievement.
- Lesson observations, the school's monitoring data and scrutiny of pupils' work show that teaching is improving. There is some good practice which is helping to accelerate pupil progress, particularly in Year 2 and upper Key Stage 2. The pace of improvement has not been fast enough to raise attainment to above national averages, particularly for the most able pupils.
- Lessons in Key Stage 1 and 2 do not always include enough opportunities for pupils to learn actively and independently. There is often insufficient time allocated in lessons for pupils to learn from each other by checking each other's work so that they can understand better how to improve their own work.
- Pupils all understand the school's marking system. In English, especially, teachers increasingly praise high-quality work appropriately and give clear directions on how pupils can improve. Marking in mathematics does not contain as many helpful comments. Teachers do not always give pupils time to reflect on and correct work that has been marked, so that pupils can learn more quickly.
- Where the best teaching was observed, teachers had very high expectations and used questions well to check pupils' understanding. They provided well-focused feedback to the pupils. For example, in a high-quality literacy lesson, the careful planning by the teacher, the engaging tasks and the well-tailored feedback resulted in pupils in Year 6 making rapid progress in writing interesting poems using correct grammar and adventurous language. The pupils showed great excitement in learning and this resulted in high quality work.
- Teachers have strong subject knowledge and usually explain clearly what they want pupils to do. Work is carefully modified for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. All classrooms have stimulating displays with clear learning prompts, such as key words or visual examples of what a good piece of writing looks like. Mathematical language is not taught effectively and this is slowing pupils' progress in the subject. The subject leader has recognised this and is working with a local authority adviser to improve this situation.
- For Reception children, teachers create a good balance between activities that are led by adults and those that children choose themselves. Careful questioning and assessment of children as they work, helps them to make good progress. Teachers build up a picture of how well children are doing and what they should do next by compiling 'Learning Journeys' which are shared with parents.
- In most lessons, teaching assistants are skilled at following the teacher's lead to question pupils and reinforce learning points. This is because of the substantial investment the school has made in training and support for its teaching assistants in recent times. They also give effective support to pupils who need it, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, and those eligible for pupil premium funding.

- Pupils who speak English as an additional language and those who join partway through their school life, quickly have their needs assessed, so that the school can put the necessary support in place to support their needs. This allows them to make the same rate of progress as their classmates.
- Recently, support for pupils with special educational needs has much improved. The school has carefully identified the best ways to help them and move them forward.
- Pupils say there is an interesting range of visits and visitors which enriches their lessons, and they thoroughly enjoy the residential visits to Whitby and Castleton and activities in school such as the 'Proms in the Playground'.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour is consistently good throughout the day and makes a positive contribution to their learning. They show respect for others, enjoy learning and try their best.
- Pupils enjoy everything the school offers and take part wholeheartedly.
- Pupils like their teachers and other staff, and this encourages them to seek help if they need it. Pupils are polite, considerate and happy at school. This is reflected in their improved attendance, which is now above average.
- Pupils take their extra responsibilities seriously. The school council is influential and has raised considerable amounts of money for charities, as well as advising on how playground equipment should be used and ways of keeping the school tidy.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. For example, they know about the dangers that social networking websites pose to children. They also have a good understanding of different types of bullying and can recall what they learned during anti-bullying week recently. They say that bullying in school is rare and that staff deal with any incidents promptly and effectively.
- Most parents are very positive about pupils' behaviour and feel confident that their children are kept safe. They appreciate the way that the school cares for their children and supports their learning.
- The team's scrutiny of school records on behaviour shows that incidents of poor behaviour are rare, as are racial incidents.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- This is an improving school, but the rate of improvement has not been fast enough to raise its effectiveness to good. This is largely due to considerable staffing changes over the last few years, which have resulted in inconsistencies in the quality of teaching that have, in turn, held back pupils' progress.
- The headteacher has attempted to drive up standards since the last inspection but lacked the necessary support. However, the appointment of a new deputy headteacher has strengthened leadership and, together, they have raised the quality of teaching so that more good teaching is

now evident.

- Many strategies are still 'works in progress' and there has not been time for the several recent initiatives to show their full impact. For example, procedures for checking and developing the quality of teaching, including frequent lesson observations by leaders and ongoing training for all staff, are now more robust and are underpinning current improvements, but they have not had time to show through fully in terms of their impact in raising attainment.
- Subject leaders have not had a sufficient impact on raising standards or been involved enough in evaluating the progress of pupils since the last inspection because there have been several changes forced by the significant changes in staffing. They were not given enough training. For example, although assessment information about pupils was collected in the past, it was not used to set appropriate targets or to compare the school's attainment with that of schools nationally.
- Self-evaluation is accurate. Plans to improve the school correctly identify what needs to be done. The school has refined its system for staff to track pupils' progress. This is starting to be used more effectively to identify pupils who need additional support to close gaps in their learning compared with that of most other pupils.
- Checks on teachers' performance and the decisions about their salaries are being used increasingly well to help staff meet the school's raised expectations for better teaching and achievement. Although improvements are not fully embedded, there is some evidence of pupils' faster progress, and current attainment data show better performance than for previous years.
- The recently introduced teaching of subjects and activities by linking them together through topics is well matched to pupils' learning needs and is motivating them to learn more quickly. Pupils say they enjoy the regular 'theme' days. On a recent 'Tudor day' pupils learned much about life in Tudor times. They all look forward to 'Art week' where they gain experience of different styles of painting, sculpture and collage work.
- The school offers a wide range of well-attended art, dance, music and sports activities, as well as visits and visitors and involvement in the Eco Club. This has led to the school gaining the Eco Award. All these activities promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively.
- The local authority offers effective support to the school's leaders through the direct contact of the school improvement adviser. The new mathematics subject leader has benefitted from her support, which is beginning to increase the effectiveness of her role and the support that she can offer staff in developing mathematics throughout the school.
- The school works hard to listen to and act upon parental concerns. Partnerships with parents and carers have been strengthened. The school has an informative website which offers advice and guidance to parents about the things their children learn in school. Parent workshops and coffee mornings all help to engage parents and carers more in their children's learning.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are increasingly holding the school to account. They are improving their ability to challenge leaders. They now compare the school's performance with that of other schools, and are aware that there is more to be done to accelerate pupils' progress and raise attainment. Governors are increasingly asking searching questions as their analysis of the school's data becomes more robust. Some governors are visiting the school more frequently so that they know more about aspects of its day-to-day teaching and performance. The headteacher's

performance targets are set appropriately by the governing body. The governing body is increasingly ensuring that the salary progression of staff is justified. Governors know about the use of the pupil premium to improve the achievement of the pupils for whom it receives these additional funds. The school's safeguarding arrangements are rigorously checked by the governor who has responsibility for pupils' safety. As a result, safeguarding arrangements meet current national requirements.

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	122748
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	402115

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	389
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Reverend Martyn Alvey
Headteacher	David White
Date of previous school inspection	25 November 2009
Telephone number	01909 481540
Fax number	01909 481540
Email address	office@st-johns-worksop.notts.sch.uk

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