

St Oswald's CofE Infant School

Mayfield Road, , Ashbourne, DE6 1AS

Inspection dates 14–15 January 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher, assistant headteacher, governors and staff have been very successful in building on and improving the practice seen at the last inspection. They have taken increasingly successful action to raise the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Pupils make rapid progress as a consequence of consistently good quality teaching and their very positive approach to learning.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They behave extremely well and are respectful towards one another as well as to all adults working in the school. Their very positive attitudes to learning are a significant factor in their good progress.
- Any pupils at risk of falling behind are helped to catch up. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress because of the focused support they receive.
- Teaching is consistently good and at times outstanding. Very positive relationships in lessons help ensure that pupils have the opportunity to offer their views and opinions.
- The range of subjects is carefully planned to provide pupils with exciting learning experiences. It effectively promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding.
- Teaching assistants are not always clear about how they can help the pupils that they are working with in lessons to make good progress.
- Subject leadership is not yet consistently effective in raising achievement.
- Pupils do not always understand the comments made by teachers in their marking and so do not know what to do to improve their work.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons and was accompanied by the headteacher during five of these observations. Visits were also made to phonics sessions and to see pupils working in small groups outside the classroom. One assembly and pupils' behaviour in the playground and at lunchtime were also evaluated.
- The inspector observed many aspects of the school's work, including support for pupils who need extra help. She examined pupils' work in their books and on classroom and corridor wall displays, and heard a group of pupils read.
- Discussions were held with a group of pupils about their experiences of school and the standards of behaviour. The inspector spoke with other pupils and their parents at social times and at the beginning of the school day.
- The inspector looked at a range of documentation including the school's own view of its performance and standards, plans for the school's future development, records of how pupils' learning is monitored and how the quality of teaching is checked, minutes of governing body meetings, records of behaviour and attendance, the school website and records relating to safeguarding.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, subject leaders, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Account was taken of the 35 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the 19 questionnaire responses from staff.

Inspection team

Sue Rath, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized infant school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage with only a few who speak English as an additional language.
- Almost all children who join the Reception class continue their education at the school until they leave at the end of Year 2.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is higher than the national average. The proportions of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is broadly average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, those who are looked after by the local authority and other eligible groups.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
 - ensuring that teachers' marking and feedback help all pupils to understand what they have to do to improve their work
 - giving teaching assistants the training they need to ensure that the pupils they are working with in lessons make good progress.
- Ensuring that subject leaders, who are in the early stages of developing their roles, have the right skills to bring about improvements in the subjects they are responsible for.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding on entry to the school vary considerably: typically, for half of the pupils in each year group these are below the expectations for their age. The school's accurate assessments show that pupils have made good progress from their different starting points in writing and mathematics and outstanding progress in reading. In 2013, the attainment of pupils at the end of Year 2 was above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. There is evidence to show that this year progress has quickened, with more progress being outstanding.
- As a result of effective teaching, children in the Reception class get off to a good start. They are helped to settle quickly and develop positive attitudes to learning. They quickly learn the sounds that letters make and write simple words and sentences. The majority of children move to Year 1 with a good level of development in most areas, although standards in writing are not as well developed as in reading and mathematics.
- National checks on phonics (the sounds that letters make) in Year 1 show that standards have been above average for the last two years. The systematic teaching of phonics provides pupils with a strong foundation for learning to read and write.
- Pupils' achievement in reading is a strength of the school. They make outstanding progress across the school because of the excellent support that skilled adults provide when pupils are learning to read. Pupils are quickly taught phonics and how they can use letter sounds to help them read new words. Attractive displays and collections of characters linked to stories encourage a love of books and reading. Pupils who read to the inspector did so with confidence, accuracy and enjoyment. They showed a good understanding of what they were reading and so read with fluency and understanding.
- The focus on raising attainment in writing has been successful throughout the school and the current assessment records shows that progress in writing is improving. The school's regular checks to make sure that the levels that pupils are working at are accurate and their close and rigorous monitoring of progress in this area shows that pupils are on track to achieve their end of year targets.
- Structured plans for the teaching of mathematics across the school ensure that pupils systematically gain new knowledge and skills. Pupils make good progress because teachers plan lessons that build well on their experience. For example, in a Year 1 lesson pupils used practical methods that enabled them quickly to understand numbers bigger than ten and to identify which were the biggest numbers and why.
- The school's clear commitment to promoting equality of opportunity is evident in its success in supporting pupils with different needs and starting points. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because of the effective support provided for them both within lessons and during small-group sessions. Pupils with English as an additional language benefit from additional help and also from the support that is provided for their parents.
- The previous attainment gap between pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding and all other pupils narrowed in 2013, from being around two terms in 2012 to one term in 2013. The current pupils in receipt of the funding are on course to achieve at the same level as their class mates.

The quality of teaching is good

- Reception children are introduced to a wide and interesting range of activities both inside and outside the classroom. These stimulate children's curiosity and are planned to support their personal, social, emotional and physical development alongside teaching them the foundations of reading, writing and mathematics. For example, some children eagerly acted out the story of the Three Billy Goats Gruff with puppets, whilst others wrote their stories or worked together to build a bridge for the troll to hide under. Children's progress is monitored carefully and activities are designed to build upon what children can already do.
- Teaching in Key Stage 1 promotes good and sometimes outstanding progress. All pupils benefit from practical activities that help to deepen their understanding. During a Year 2 lesson, for example, more-able pupils used scales to work out how to weigh fruit. This helped them make good progress in understanding weight and also helped them solve mathematical problems.
- Across the school teachers set high expectations for pupils and plan very carefully to make sure that the work is set at the right levels. The additional challenge that they provide for more-able pupils means that these pupils now make good progress and achieve well.
- Warm relationships and teachers' excellent management of behaviour contribute to the good teaching across the school. Classrooms are welcoming and very well resourced. Attractive displays provide prompts for learning and celebrate pupils' work.
- Teachers motivate pupils so that they are keen to learn. They ensure that when activities change, pupils move quickly to the new work, responding instantaneously to teachers' requests. As a result no time is wasted in lessons and pupils learn new skills and knowledge quickly.
- Teaching assistants work very effectively to support small groups of pupils who need additional help. For example, a teaching assistant helped a small group of Reception children to develop their handwriting and phonic skills. She showed them how to use cheerleader pompoms to make big letters in the air then write the letters on large pieces of paper, sounding out each letter as it was formed. In some whole class lessons, however, teaching assistants are not clear about what they need to do to ensure that the pupils they are working with make good progress.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly and teachers provide pointers for how pupils' work might be improved, but often their comments are not understood by the pupils or used to improve their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. They demonstrate an excellent approach to their learning and strive to do well; as a result they make at least good progress at all times. They are prompt to lessons, settle quickly and, for their age, work with sustained concentration for long periods of time. They respond positively to the high expectations that teachers have of them. They work very effectively in small groups and support and encourage each other.
- A strong contribution to pupils' very positive attitudes to learning is made by the school's emphasis on children's personal social and emotional development when they start school. In the first term children develop an understanding of the school's high expectations in relation to behaviour, which sets the scene for the rest of their time at the school.

- Pupils are extremely polite and courteous and show respect for each other and adults. They are very proud of their school and talk confidently about their work and what they have been learning. They are thoughtful and very aware of how they can help and support each other. One child captured this by saying that 'we are one big team working together'.
- The strong sense of community along with the focus on moral and social development explains why pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is so good.
- Playtimes and lunchtimes are well-organised social occasions. In the limited playground space the school provides a wealth of stimulating activities that enable pupils to play harmoniously together. Older pupils enjoy the responsibility of being a 'buddy' and helping younger pupils during playtimes.
- Pupils were able to describe what constitutes bullying and are confident that there is no bullying in their school and that any disagreements are dealt with swiftly and fairly. The school's records show that incidents of bullying are rare and managed quickly and effectively. Parents were unanimously confident that the school manages behaviour well and that bullying is dealt with effectively.
- Attendance is broadly in line with the national average. The school tracks attendance rigorously and has good systems in place to ensure that pupils attend regularly. The school is continuing to work with a group of parents who take their children on holidays in term time.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. The school cares for its pupils exceptionally well and as a result pupils say they feel safe and get on well together. They are taught how to keep themselves safe, for example when using the climbing apparatus. Older pupils have a good understanding of 'stranger danger', road safety and how to keep themselves safe when using a computer. Parents strongly agree that the school keeps their children safe.

The leadership and management are good

- The highly effective headteacher has established a very clear vision for the school's development with the aim of ensuring that all pupils are successful and enjoy and engage with their learning. This vision is shared by all staff, who work effectively as a team and are committed to continuing to improve the achievement of all pupils.
- Accurate self-evaluation steers the future work of the school and enables appropriate priorities to be set for improvement.
- There has been a clear focus on improving teaching. Observations check the quality of teaching and help teachers to understand how they can become outstanding teachers. A comprehensive performance management process is in operation and regular meetings to check on pupils' progress enable leaders to hold teachers to account for achievement in each class.
- Pupils' progress is tracked methodically and this leads to a clear understanding of how well all pupils are doing. From this information the school is able to target additional support so that resources are used effectively and all pupils make good progress.
- The English subject leader has competently overseen developments to improve achievement, particularly in writing. Effective leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage has ensured that appropriate provision is made for the youngest children in school and that they make good

progress. Other subject leaders are in the early stages of developing their roles and are not yet securing improvements in the subjects for which they are responsible.

- The school has produced a new curriculum plan which covers the changes that are due to be made to the curriculum in September 2014. Themes have been chosen that will excite pupils and as a result they are motivated to learn, enjoy their lessons and show determination to succeed. For example, in a design and technology lesson pupils were designing and making puppets. Pupils worked systematically to complete their design, solving problems as they went and showing persistence in their approach to the task. This lesson also reflected the good links that are made across the curriculum to support pupils' reading, writing and mathematics skills.
- Partnerships with parents are extremely strong. The online survey and discussions with parents indicate that the great majority of parents are very happy with the school. The school works hard to involve parents as much as they can in the life of the school. For example the after school 'stay and play' session is valued by parents as it gives them the opportunity to share the day's learning experiences with their children. Regular workshops help parents to support their children at home and parents of EAL pupils work alongside their children as they learn English.
- A strong partnership with local schools and pre-schools is supporting the school, particularly in relation to effective transition and the accuracy of assessments. In addition the headteacher has worked with other schools within the local authority and beyond to help develop their provision for phonics and early reading.
- Safeguarding and child protection arrangements are regularly reviewed and meet current statutory requirements
- The newly introduced primary school sports funding from the government has been used to provide an all-weather surface for outdoor physical education lessons. This will extend opportunities for physical education by providing a safe outdoor area which can be used throughout the year.
- The local authority has provided light-touch support for this good school, mainly in evaluating different aspects of the school.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are clear about the school's strengths and weaknesses and use a range of information including data, visits to the school and reports to ensure that the information that they receive is accurate.
- Visits to lessons, looking at pupils' work and discussions with pupils help governors to have a clear picture of the quality of teaching.
- Their effective committee structure ensures that the works of the school, including the school's plans for improvement, are regularly monitored and evaluated.
- A programme of training with other local school ensures that governors are continuing to develop the skills necessary to challenge the school.
- Governors review the headteacher's performance management and set appropriate objectives related to the school's plan for improvement. They monitor the performance management targets that are set for staff and check the links that are made to pay progression.
- Governors are clear that the way that the school has used the additional government funding for pupil premium pupils has been instrumental in narrowing the gap in attainment between them and other pupils.
- Statutory duties are carried out effectively and regular checks by the designated safeguarding governor ensure that all safeguarding procedures are carried out appropriately.

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	112796
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	431196
Type of school	Infant
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4-7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	112
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Vee Monro
Headteacher	Rebecca Wood
Date of previous school inspection	18 March 2009
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