

St Augustine's School

Longfellow Drive, Worksop, S81 0DW

Inspection dates 10–11 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	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

- While most pupils make the progress expected nationally, not enough achieve well.
- Teaching requires improvement to ensure that standards rise and progress quickens.
- Work is not consistently challenging for all pupils to make sure that they achieve at least well.
- Marking is too variable in telling pupils what they have learned well and precisely what to do next. Teachers do not check regularly that pupils respond to their advice.
- Pupils' work is often untidily laid out and presented because teachers' expectations of what pupils should do are not consistently high.
- In Nursery and Reception, there are insufficient opportunities to encourage children to develop their writing skills. Overall, activities do not ensure that all the children develop well in all aspects of learning. Staff are not always at hand to support when needed.
- Leaders at all levels do not have a full understanding of pupils' progress and the quality of teaching and learning. Their checking on teaching and learning is not regular enough, responsibilities are not all clearly defined, and some subject leaders have not developed the skills needed.
- Although the governing body questions many aspects of the school's work, several members are new to their roles and do not have the skills, knowledge or training to enable them to hold the school fully to account for its performance.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher, having overseen the amalgamation of the two schools successfully, is driving improvement skilfully.
- Pupils behave well round the school and in lessons. They are keen to learn.
- Pupils feel safe throughout the school day. The school cares for them well.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is good. Pupils mix well with each other, creating a happy community.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors watched 21 lessons, including seven jointly observed with senior leaders.
- The inspectors spoke with many pupils during lessons and at playtime, watched an assembly, and listened to several pupils from Years 2, 5 and 6 reading. They also observed support provided for pupils.
- An inspector met formally with a group of pupils to find out what they think about the school and spoke with parents at the start of the school day.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior and subject leaders, members of the governing body, and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors looked at documentation about the school's work, including information about pupils' achievement, the school's improvement planning, examples of pupils' work, and policies to keep them safe.
- The inspectors took into account the 12 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the 81 responses to the school's recent questionnaire. They also checked the 17 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Lynne Blakelock, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Sarah Davey	Additional Inspector
Christopher Webb	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than other schools of its type.
- It opened in April 2013, following the amalgamation of St Augustine's Infant and Nursery School and St Augustine's Junior School.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage and most speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of students supported through the pupil premium is above average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, and those who looked after.)
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school is part of the Worksop Family of Schools which consists of two secondary schools and 18 primary schools. It works with its partners to improve teaching and learning and to develop leadership skills.
- The school works closely with the Prospect Kilton Children's Centre to ensure the children's readiness for joining St Augustine's School. The Centre is separately inspected.
- The school provides a breakfast club Monday to Friday.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching in order to quicken pupils' progress and raise standards, by ensuring that:
 - learning stretches and challenges all pupils, and those who can learn quickly are helped to do so
 - marking confirms for pupils what they know well, tells them specifically what to do to improve and makes sure they respond to the advice given
 - teachers' expectations are always high for how pupils present their work, lay it out and the neatness of their writing.
- Accelerate progress in the Nursery and Reception classes, by making sure that:
 - children are regularly encouraged to practise their writing skills
 - activities, indoors and outdoors, help the children to achieve well in all aspects of learning
 - the staff are available to support and encourage the children's learning.
- Increase the effectiveness of leaders at all levels by ensuring that:
 - they have clearly defined roles and responsibilities for which they are trained, and for which they are held to account
 - they have good understanding of the quality of teaching and pupils' progress by close checking of their areas of responsibility, and make improvements where necessary
 - the governing body has the knowledge, skills and training it needs to enable the members to challenge the school fully on its performance.

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

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Overall, pupils do not make good progress because teaching is too variable throughout the school.
- Currently, standards in Year 6 are in line with national average performance for 2013 in reading, writing and mathematics, showing a small improvement from 2013. School data show that not enough pupils are predicted to reach the higher levels by the time they leave.
- Standards are rising in Key Stage 1 in writing and mathematics, but remain well below the latest national averages. Work in books and the school's information show that, while most pupils make the nationally expected rate of progress from their individual starting points, few make more rapid progress.
- There is too much variability in the progress of pupils within some year groups, which the headteacher has taken very appropriate and quick action to address, so that these pupils have started to catch up. Overall, pupils make quicker progress in Year 6 where teaching is good.
- Children join the Nursery with levels of knowledge and skills that are below those typical for their age in almost all areas of learning. They make progress, but it is not consistently good throughout Nursery and Reception. This is because, while the children enjoy a lot of the activities, they do not show the curiosity and enthusiasm to investigate and learn more. Sometimes, there is not enough support from staff to help the children to extend their learning. The children make good progress in their personal, emotional and social development. They treat other children kindly, have learned to share, and take responsibility for keeping their learning areas tidy.
- Additional funding (pupil premium) provides teaching and support for eligible pupils in literacy and numeracy and finances their breakfast-club places and visits. Although eligible pupils have been one term behind others in their classes in reading and two terms behind in writing, there is no attainment gap in mathematics. Currently, any gaps in attainment have narrowed as a result of the school's efforts. Eligible pupils in Year 6 are on track to be a term ahead of others in mathematics and are achieving the same levels as others in reading and writing.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve similar rates of progress to those of other pupils. They receive regular support to improve their literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are supported well so that they develop a more secure understanding of reading and writing.
- Some of the most-able pupils, who can learn quickly, do not achieve the higher levels that they should. The work they are given does not always make them think hard and apply what they have learned to make the good progress of which they are capable.
- In 2013, under half of the pupils reached the required standard in the national Year 1 check on phonics (the sounds that letters make). The school ensures that from Nursery, the children practise their phonic skills very regularly and the school's data show that, this year, results are on track to be in line with the latest national average. Pupils pronounce letters and groups of letters accurately and continue to use their phonic skills in Key Stage 2, in order to help them with any words that they find difficult. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 read with confidence and show good knowledge and understanding of story plots and in evaluating the characters.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching is too variable between subjects and year groups, including in literacy and mathematics. Not enough is good or better so pupils have not made consistently good progress and reached higher standards.
- Activities are sometimes too hard for some pupils and, often, insufficiently challenging for the most-able pupils so that their progress slows.
- Although some marking confirms for pupils where they have succeeded in their work and guides them what to do next and teachers check that they are acting on their advice, practice in marking is very variable through the school. In Year 2, marking is extremely helpful to pupils' learning, but in other years, pupils lack the guidance they need to make better progress.
- Teachers' expectations of how pupils should present their work, lay it out, and the neatness of their handwriting, are not high enough. Although pupils are willing and want to learn, teachers are not setting the standards for presentation of work high enough so that pupils know what to aim for.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes have many ways to learn and develop. However, activities involving writing are less interesting, and result in children not practising writing enough.
- Some teaching is good. In these lessons, pupils know exactly what they have to learn and how to achieve their goals. Tasks are interesting and motivate them. For example, a Year 4 visit to a coal mining museum had been fascinating, and the pupils made good progress in choosing adjectives to make their writing on the experience more vivid. They added to their learning through sharing vocabulary and using a thesaurus.
- More opportunities are being provided for pupils to practise their literacy and numeracy skills across subjects, in order to raise the standards they achieve more quickly.
- The pupils want to learn and this is helped by the good relationships between them and the staff. Where activities are interesting and challenging pupils achieve well. For example, Year 3 pupils learned well through solving interesting mathematical problems outside.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Their attitudes to learning and to school, and their conduct in lessons and round the site, are all good. They contribute much to the happy atmosphere in the school and pupils' sense of security.
- The pupils value their roles and responsibilities in the school. From Nursery onwards, they show pride in their jobs as house captains, anti-bullying ambassadors, play leaders and digital leaders.
- They come to school ready to learn, wearing their uniforms neatly and helping to keep the school tidy. Their writing is less so, in some cases because they are not guided directly enough to make sure it improves.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Leaders make sure that the site is safe and that no one can get in who should not do so. Staff are rigorously checked prior to appointment. There is very little bullying because the pupils know that it is wrong, and are

confident that it is dealt with effectively. All pupils have access to a member of staff when they need someone to help them with their concerns.

- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils have many chances to explore their feelings through, for example, music and art. They learn about different faiths and beliefs. For example, in assembly, pupils reflected on people's rights and responsibilities and their roles in caring for each other. They demonstrated this in the care they show to the chickens that live on the site.
- Pupils' attendance has risen this year, helped by the school's effective methods of checking and addressing absence.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders at all levels have not made sure that teaching and progress are good. Their checks on the school's performance have not had sufficient impact to enable them to address any areas for development promptly.
- The headteacher knows well what the priorities for this amalgamated school are and is carefully driving improvement forward. However, roles and responsibilities of leaders are not all clearly defined or necessarily match the school's most pressing needs in order to raise standards as quickly as possible. The checking of teaching and progress is, overall, not comprehensive and effective enough to ensure leaders' full understanding of teaching and achievement in their areas of responsibility. Several subject leaders are still at an early stage in developing their skills in checking performance in their areas.
- The senior leaders and the literacy and numeracy leaders observe teaching formally three times a year. Although their evaluation of the quality of teaching over time is overly generous, leaders' judgements were found to be accurate during the inspection.
- The school improvement plan reflects the school's findings about pupils' achievement and determines staff performance targets, which are challenging and measurable. Pay rises are not awarded unless they are all met.
- Staff speak positively about the training and support they receive in school and through the partnership with neighbouring schools. This professional support is starting to quicken pupils' progress by helping leaders to strengthen their teaching and leadership practice. The local authority has also provided support, including for mathematics. The impact is shown in the better achievement in mathematics of pupils eligible for additional funding. The local authority continues to advise the school appropriately.
- Learning focuses primarily on literacy and numeracy throughout the school. Pupils also develop a range of knowledge and skills through topics and other subjects. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported well throughout the activities of each day. However, pupils lack equal opportunity to succeed in their learning because some are not challenged well enough. The pupils benefit greatly from the many visits they make, which broaden their experience. They enjoy the good choice of after-school activities, such as the choir and film club.
- Thoughtful spending of the national sports funding has focused mainly on financing a leader, who has already ensured that all classes have a bigger choice of activities. Teachers are developing their skills in a range of skills. The leader reports increased attendance at clubs.

■ The school is very keen to involve parents in the life of the school and in their children's learning. Overall, parents are supportive of the school's work. They feel welcomed to events, including celebration assemblies and to a range of workshops and find the school's work with the local children's centre helpful in ensuring their children settle quickly and happily into school. Family learning of mathematics has proved popular.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body's minutes of meetings show probing questioning of the school's work and impact. The governors are very committed and are determined to improve the school's effectiveness.
- The Chair of the Governing Body and the governor with responsibility for finance demonstrate a good knowledge of the uses of pupil premium funding and have some understanding of its impact. Finances are sound and managed responsibly. They understand the importance of the management of staff performance in improving teaching and apply a link between pay rises and pupils' progress.
- The governing body ensures that safeguarding procedures meet requirements.
- The governors receive detailed information from the headteacher about the school's performance. They also find evidence for themselves, through, for example, emerging links with subject leaders.
- Most of the governors are relatively new to their roles and do not yet have the training or skills to fulfil their responsibilities as well as they, themselves, intend to do. The Chair of the Governing Body welcomes a review of governance to ensure that governors can fully challenge and support the school's work and help to steer it forward.

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	138238
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	439926

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	397
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Glynn Gilfoyle
Headteacher	Jacqueline Ryan
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01909 473955
Fax number	01909 473955
Email address	office@augustines.notts.sch.uk

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