

St John's CofE Primary School

Raymoth Lane, Worksop, S81 7LU

Inspection dates 17–18 June 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils, including those who need extra help and the most able, make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- By the time they left the school in 2013, pupils had reached average standards. Attainment is improving. Pupils currently in the school are now working at above average standards.
- The school is a calm and well-ordered community. Pupils enjoy school and work hard. They behave well and feel safe.
- Learning activities in lessons promote thorough learning and good understanding.
- School leaders keep a close check on the quality of teaching and the progress that pupils make. Staff training has improved teaching since the last inspection.
- Leaders have created a culture in which pupils are keen to learn, and in which teachers have high aspirations for their pupils.
- Governors know the school well and provide a high level of challenge and support.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The progress made by pupils in Key Stage 1 is not as strong as that made in the Reception classes or in Key Stage 2.
- Occasionally, the work set for pupils is too easy or too hard and they do not make as much progress as they could.
- Feedback to pupils does not always give them accurate and relevant information on how to improve their work.
- Leaders are taking the right action to improve the school, but do not check thoroughly what impact their actions are having on pupils' achievement.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils learning in 20 lessons, some of them jointly observed with the headteacher, and made brief visits to several more. They looked at the work in pupils' books.
- Inspectors held discussions with pupils, parents and carers, staff, governors and with a representative of the local authority.
- A wide range of documents were looked at, regarding safeguarding, child protection, attendance and behaviour policies as well as records of pupils' attainment and progress. Inspectors reviewed the school's improvement plans and notes regarding the monitoring of teaching quality.
- Inspectors considered the responses to a questionnaire completed by 18 staff. They also took into account the 51 responses from parents and carers on the Parent View website.

Inspection team

Stephen Palmer, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Alan Brewerton

Additional Inspector

Linda Bartlett

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is low, as is the proportion of those who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium is lower than average. This is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care and pupils with a parent in the armed forces.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is slightly lower than average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is much lower than the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and thereby raise pupils' achievement, especially in Key Stage 1, by ensuring that all teachers:
 - set work at just the right level of difficulty to move pupils' learning forward
 - give pupils, particularly in Years 1 and 2, clear guidance when marking their work, that lets them know how they can improve.
- Improve leadership and management by making sure that checks on the quality of teaching are more sharply focused on pupils' learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the Reception classes with knowledge and skills often below those typical for their age, particularly in reading and writing. In the past two years, nearly all pupils have caught up, and have achieved levels that are broadly in line with national expectations by the end of the Reception year.
- By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils reach levels in reading and writing which are broadly in line with the national average, and reach slightly better than average standards in mathematics.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2013 were broadly average. The proportion of Year 6 pupils who made and exceeded the progress expected of them in reading, writing and mathematics was close to or above average.
- Current assessment information shows that throughout Key Stage 2, pupils make are now making good progress so that, by the end of Year 6, they attain higher levels than the national average.
- The most-able pupils are not set work that is challenging enough for them to make good progress, even from their higher starting points.
- Pupils supported through the pupil premium benefit greatly from the individual and small-group activities which the pupil premium has funded. This ensures that these pupils achieve well. At the end of Year 6 in 2013, pupils were about half a year behind their classmates in reading and writing, and about half a term behind in mathematics. While the standards attained by these pupils in the current Year 6 are still lower than those reached by other pupils in reading, writing and mathematics, many pupils have made rapid progress and have caught up considerably from their lower starting points.
- Pupils talk openly about how good teaching has helped them, especially those pupils who are supported by extra group work to help them catch up. Most disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make at least the progress expected of them, and some make more than expected progress.
- Most pupils read well, and have many opportunities to use their reading skills in lessons. Less-able readers are helped with regular opportunities to practise reading in small groups.
- Scores in the 2013 Year 1 national check on standards in phonics (the sounds that letters make) were above average. Pupils show clearly how they cope with unfamiliar words using the 'sounding out' and 'blending' techniques which they have been taught.
- The school leaders monitor carefully and regularly the progress of all pupils, and have set up an effective system of small group work to enable those pupils who are at risk of falling behind to catch up. As a result, a high proportion of all pupils make at least the progress expected of them.
- The progress made by pupils in Key Stage 1 is not as rapid as that made in the Reception classes and Key Stage 2. This is because pupils, especially in Years 1 and 2 are not always given effective advice on how to improve their work.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers generally have high expectations of all of their pupils. Much of their teaching engages pupils' interest, and meets their differing needs. As a result, pupils are keen to learn, and want to do well.
- In lessons, teachers monitor pupils' work, and intervene effectively with questions or further explanations to help pupils to understand ideas and to gain new skills.
- In the Reception classes, teachers carefully and regularly check on the children's skills and understanding so that they can plan appropriate lessons and activities. For example, teachers noticed that children's understanding of shapes was weak, and so planned a series of activities to help the children gain a better understanding of the properties of different shapes.
- Work in pupils' books is generally well presented and it is evident that teachers encourage pupils to work hard. It shows that pupils study a wide range of topics and themes, and that their skills in reading, writing and mathematics are developed further through work in these topics.
- Pupils' work is consistently of a good standard. Pupils are encouraged to achieve well. Pupils expressed the view that their work was sometimes hard, but that teachers offered good support so that they could achieve the demanding targets set for them.
- Pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding develop at a good rate when the tasks they are set at just the right level of difficulty to move their learning forward. However, on rare occasions the work is too easy or too hard and a few pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Teachers frequently mark pupils' work that lets them know how well they have done. On the whole, they give pupils guidance on how it could be improved. When this advice is clear, pupils have a good understanding of what they need to do to make their work better. In some cases, especially in Key Stage 1, teachers' comments are not as helpful. As a result, learning for these pupils is limited.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Nearly all pupils want to do their best. They try hard in their lessons and take pride in their achievements. They work well in small groups, and often try to help each other.
- The school is a calm and orderly place where pupils can learn purposefully and effectively. Nearly all pupils show an eagerness to learn. They say adults treat them with respect. Pupils are respectful of other members of the school community.
- There is hardly any disruption in lessons. On the occasions when this does occur, pupils say that the adults deal with it well. A very small number of parents commented on disruptive incidents in one class, but pupils say that, while there have been a small number of incidents, these have been managed well by adults.
- Behaviour is managed well. Pupils understand that there are rewards for good behaviour and attendance, and that the sanctions for poor behaviour are fair. Pupils' conduct around the school and in the playgrounds is good. Most parents and all pupils interviewed agreed that behaviour is good.

- Records show that there have been no racist incidents since 2011, and that the few incidents of poor behaviour were dealt with appropriately. However, there have been two fixed-term exclusions this year, used as a last resort for serious poor behaviour.
- Pupils are aware that bullying may take several forms, including name-calling and physical threats, and that it may take place through social media. Pupils understand what they should do if they feel that they are being bullied. They say that it is rare, but that it is tackled well by adults.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The school's systems for safeguarding pupils are robust and work well. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe when out of school. Older pupils know how to stay safe when using the internet.
- Pupils' attendance has improved, and is now better than the national average. The school has effective rewards for good attendance, and checks up immediately on any unexplained pupil absence.

The leadership and management are good

- The school's leaders have created a positive climate for learning among both staff and pupils. They set demanding standards of professionalism for staff, and encourage pupils to have high aspirations.
- The school is an orderly, hard-working community in which there is mutual respect and tolerance. Good attention is paid to equality of opportunity and any kind of discrimination robustly tackled.
- Improvement plans are accurately focused on helping pupils to make more rapid progress. They correctly identify what success will look like, the timescale in which actions are to take place and which members of staff are responsible for each aspect of the plans.
- Leaders rigorously check the progress of individual pupils and groups to make sure that the school is doing all it can to help them all. This ensures that pupils who are at risk of falling behind are promptly given extra support. As a result, nearly all pupils make at least the progress expected of them.
- The pupil premium funding is spent effectively; eligible pupils are well supported, and are making good progress.
- Parents are given up-to-date and accurate information about their child's progress at regular parents' evenings. Parents who spoke to inspectors commented that they found this useful in being able to help their child.
- The government's primary school sport funding is used well to offer a wider range of sporting activities. This is leading to more pupils being involved in physical activity and adopting healthier lifestyles.
- The regular checks on teachers' work are having a positive impact on how well teachers teach. School leaders set challenging targets for teachers about the progress pupils need to make, and ensure that teachers receive the right training to help them improve. Teachers understand that

there is a clear link between their performance and the pay they receive.

- Teachers in charge of subjects have developed their skills well. They have improved their own knowledge of their subject area so that they can offer support and challenge to other staff in order to bring about improvements.
- The topics and themes that pupils study are well planned and respond well to current issues and pupils' interests. They give pupils a wide range of knowledge and experience, to act as a stimulus to use reading and writing skills in a wide range of contexts. The topics and themes are well supported by a large number of resources. In particular, an outdoor area is used well for gardening, nature study, raising chickens, and currently as a focus for a topic on World War 2. For this, on the pupils' initiative, a replica Anderson shelter has been built. There are also a large number of activities for pupils outside normal lessons, as well as residential visits. Such activities promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- A very large majority of parents are supportive of the school, and feel that their children are happy and are making good progress.
- Leaders' checks on the school's performance are accurate, and are used well as a starting point for planning further improvements. Leaders' assessments of the quality of teaching are not as sharply focused on pupils' learning as they might be.
- The local authority has provided training for those who lead subjects. Consequently, they have become more effective in improving the quality of pupils' learning in their subject. In addition, the local authority helps the school's leaders to review their performance.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are effective in providing support for the school's leaders. They check the performance of the school thoroughly and raise questions and concerns so that the school can achieve the best for its pupils.
 - The governing body is aware of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. It knows how its performance compares with that of other schools.
 - Some governors come into school regularly to help in lessons and to observe the work of the school. They attend parents' evenings to listen to parents who may have concerns.
 - Governors have an overview of leaders' checks on teachers' performance and that teachers who meet the targets set for them progress along the pay scales. They effectively manage the performance of the headteacher.
 - The governing body oversees the budget well. In particular, the school's management of the pupil premium has been effective.
 - Governors make sure the school's arrangements for safeguarding children fully meet the current national requirements. It also ensures that all adults who work with pupils are checked for suitability, and that pupils are kept safe.

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	441949

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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	388
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Adrian Eccles
Headteacher	David White
Date of previous school inspection	12 February 2013
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