

Deepcar St John's Church of England Junior School

St Margaret Avenue, Deepcar, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S36 2TE

Inspection dates 13–14 May 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Between Years 3 and 6, pupils make good progress. By the end of Year 6, standards in reading and writing are well above average and just above average in mathematics.
- Staff create imaginative learning experiences for pupils. As a result, pupils enjoy their lessons and learn well. Overall, teaching has a good impact on pupils' achievement.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve well. By the end of Year 6, there is no difference in the overall attainment of these pupils compared to other pupils in the school. Previous gaps in attainment have been closed.
- The curriculum provides an extensive range of opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They conduct themselves well in lessons, on corridors, at playtimes and during lunchtimes. Pupils say they feel very safe and well cared for by the adults in the school.
- The school provides a bright and welcoming environment in which pupils' achievements are celebrated. Pupils enjoy coming to school and the vast majority of them attend well.
- School leaders and governors have an accurate view of how the school is performing. They have worked well together to improve the quality of teaching and to raise pupils' achievement since the previous inspection.
- School leaders work effectively in partnership with other schools to share good practice and to ensure that teachers' assessments are accurate.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils do not make as much progress in mathematics as they do in reading and writing.
- Leaders have not provided additional training for all staff to enable them to support fully the increasing number of pupils who have special educational needs joining the school part-way through their junior education.
- A number of middle leaders are fairly new in post and have not fully developed their leadership skills.
- Teachers do not always provide opportunities for pupils to move on when they are ready to do so, thereby preventing some pupils from making more rapid progress.
- The targets in the school's development plans are not all as precise as they could be, making it difficult to check whether they have been achieved.

Information about this inspection

- Learning was observed in 11 lessons and inspectors saw the work of eight teachers. The assistant headteacher accompanied the lead inspector to one of these lesson visits.
- A wide range of documents was scrutinised, including records relating to behaviour and attendance, safeguarding procedures and the school's analysis of how well it is doing and how it plans to improve.
- Inspectors examined the school's systems for checking progress, records of checks on the quality of teaching, reports of visits to the school made by an external consultant, records of a visit of headteachers from local partner schools and minutes of governing body meetings.
- Inspectors talked to pupils about their work and listened to individual pupils from Years 3, 4 and 5 read. They also looked at samples of pupils' work across a range of subjects and classes, especially writing and mathematics.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders and members of staff and with pupil representatives from Years 3 to 6. Inspectors spoke to individual pupils in lessons and around the school. The lead inspector met with a group of four members of the Governing Body, including the Chair and the Vice-Chair, and an adviser from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the views expressed in the 25 online responses to Ofsted's (Parent View) questionnaire. They also gathered the views of some parents as they brought their children to school during the inspection. Questionnaires from 18 members of staff were also analysed.

Inspection team

Helen Gaunt, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Deana Aldred

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St John's Church of England Junior School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils attending the school are of White British heritage. There are currently no pupils in the school for whom English is a second language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or those who have special educational needs is above average.
- Pupils are taught in setted groups for some of their lessons.
- There are an increasing number of pupils in all age groups who join the school part way through the school year.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (the additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority) is below average.
- 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.
- The school works in partnership with a local family of schools, including Stocksbridge Junior School, Royd Infant School and Stocksbridge High School. The school is working with Dore Primary and St Patrick's School in respect of the new Milestones system for checking on pupils' progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Enable more pupils to make more rapid progress, particularly in mathematics, by improving the quality of teaching so that it is outstanding by:
 - ensuring that teachers provide the opportunities and encouragement in lessons for all pupils to move on to more challenging work as soon as they are ready to do so
 - developing the skills of teachers and teaching assistants so that those pupils with special educational needs who arrive part way through their junior education make as much progress as others.
- Strengthen the effectiveness of leadership and management further, so that it is outstanding, by:
 - ensuring that more specific targets are incorporated into all development plans to enable leaders and managers to evaluate the impact of actions more readily
 - continuing to provide training opportunities for newly appointed middle leaders
 - giving middle leaders full accountability for raising achievement and improving the quality of teaching in their subjects or aspects.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Senior leaders and governors are ambitious for the school. They have high expectations of pupils' progress and behaviour and this is communicated clearly to staff. Staff morale is high and adults work well together to achieve the school's aims. Leaders check to make sure that all pupils have equal opportunities and that any discrimination is tackled.
- Overall, leaders, including governors, have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas where further improvement is required. The correct priorities for improvement have been identified in the school's raising achievement plan and there is clear information about what actions are being taken to ensure that improvements are being made. There are specific targets within the plan and the headteacher reviews the plan regularly and reports on progress. However, some plans, for example the literacy and numeracy plans, do not contain specific targets relating to pupils' progress, and so the impact of actions taken is not directly linked to outcomes for pupils.
- School leaders and teachers have made good progress in implementing the new curriculum and are working hard, and in partnership with a number of local schools, to ensure accurate assessment of pupils' achievement.
- The quality of teaching is monitored accurately and frequently. The information gained is used to inform decisions about pay which are linked closely to pupils' progress and to provide appropriate training for all staff.
- Senior leaders rigorously check the progress of each pupil and provide extra support where there are any concerns. They have already started to tackle the areas for improvement that are highlighted in this report through a range of different strategies. Setting arrangements increasingly ensure that pupils are suitably challenged and supported. The new curriculum provides an increasing range of opportunities for the most able to deepen their understanding in all subjects and to help them reach the highest standards.
- The new mathematics curriculum has been introduced to ensure smooth progression of the development of pupils' skills across the school and learning is increasingly put into real life context. The subject leader regularly attends local network meetings for mathematics subject leaders.
- Subject leaders have embarked upon nationally accredited courses to further develop their leadership skills and are increasingly held accountable for pupils' progress. They have carried out joint lesson observations with senior leaders and an external consultant, but are not yet held fully accountable for improving the quality of teaching in their respective subject across the whole school. They produce reports to governors about the impact of their action plans, but these are not closely enough linked to information about pupils' progress.
- The curriculum and the wide range of clubs, trips and visits help to broaden pupils' experience and contribute towards pupils' very strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils learn about, and develop an appreciation of, British values through an effective programme of personal, social and citizenship education. They are involved in democratic processes from Year 3 onwards as they are required to prepare their own statements about what would make them a good school council member and they are elected into these positions by their peers. This contributes well to pupils being effectively prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The primary school physical education and sport funding has been used well to provide pupils with specialist coaching in a range of sports. Teachers are coached six times a year in order to improve their teaching of physical education. Pupils are increasingly involved in a wide range of competitive sports. Pupils are now more enthusiastic about participating in sport, thus further promoting their health and well-being.
- The school has clear guidelines for behaviour, which is consistently well managed by all members of staff. The school works well with parents to ensure that the school's expectations are consistently enforced. Consequently, pupils' behaviour and attendance are good for the majority of pupils.
- Leaders ensure that safeguarding is a priority and the school's arrangements to keep pupils safe are exemplary. All staff are vigilant and have been well trained in safeguarding procedures.
- The local authority has provided effective external moderation which means leaders can be confident in the accuracy of teachers' assessments.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body knows the school well. It has a good understanding of how effective the school is when compared to schools nationally. It uses the school's own information about pupils' progress and attainment to ask challenging questions in order to promote further improvement. It is well informed about the quality of teaching and how this is used to make pay recommendations.

- Governors know how additional funding is being used and know about the impact that this is having on and well-being of pupils. The governing body makes use of a range of courses to improve its knowledge to better support and challenge the school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils have a clear understanding of how they are expected to behave. There is smooth transition between activities and lessons get off to a quick start because it is rare that teachers have to remind pupils of their expectations.
- There is a calm and welcoming atmosphere in the school. Visitors are warmly welcomed by pupils and staff, and there are very positive relationships between staff and pupils and between the pupils themselves.
- Pupils value the support, encouragement and care they receive from adults. They say that their teachers and other adults are some of the best things about the school. Pupils say that, although they work hard, lessons are fun. They say they enjoy coming to school and most of them cannot think of any changes they would like to see. They say it is 'great as it is'.
- Pupils are usually strongly involved in their learning and they are keen to succeed. Occasionally in classes, pupils' concentration wanes when they are not sufficiently challenged but they rarely misbehave.
- Pupils play and work together well. There is no litter or graffiti. The school's extensive outdoor space is used well by pupils at breaks and lunchtimes. This contributes towards the development of pupils' co-operation with others and other social skills.
- Pupils take their responsibilities seriously and support one another. They are actively involved in fund-raising activities. Those concerned are proud of their roles as elected school councillors and the many other positions of responsibility provided by the school.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe. They have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying, including racial and cyber bullying.
- Pupils are very clear that people should be treated equally despite their individual differences or the varied choices they make. They say that everyone is of equal worth and this is demonstrated by the way in which they work together and support one another.
- Pupils say that bullying is rare and any incidents are quickly dealt with by the staff. This is confirmed by the school's record-keeping procedures and the vast majority of parents agree with pupils' positive views.
- Pupils are well prepared for keeping themselves safe in later life. For example, they learn about the dangers of drugs, fire and road safety and other scenarios.
- Good use of pupil premium funding ensures that absence rates for disadvantaged pupils are no different from those of others. There are rigorous procedures to monitor and improve pupils' attendance, which is average overall and above average for the majority of pupils.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching overtime is typically good across the school. This enables pupils to learn well. The school's records of pupils' progress and the work in pupils' books confirm this.
- Teachers plan tasks and activities that require pupils to think about their own progress, to work together and to apply their skills across a wide range of subjects. This enthuses and engages pupils in their learning. As a result, they are keen to learn and develop good communication and team skills. For example, in a science lesson, pupils were asked to consider what factors might affect the way in which sound travels. They were provided with plastic cups and string and asked to make predictions about changes, such as what would happen if the length of the string was altered or if a knot was put in the string. Pupils made good progress because they were instantly engaged and the teacher supported them in challenging their own predictions at exactly the right moments throughout the lesson.
- Pupils are increasingly being encouraged to read more widely and to read a wide range of different types of text. Books are available in all classrooms and pupils say they enjoy reading. Pupils are encouraged to apply develop their reading skills in all subjects. School leaders are working with parents to encourage them to complete their children's reading logs and the school library is being promoted for general use.
- Teachers use a wide range of ideas and topics to encourage pupils to write imaginatively. Many of these

also promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. All year groups, for instance, have the opportunity to be involved in visits to the theatre, inter-school sports competitions and charity fund-raising. They learn about many different cultures throughout the ages, including the Victorians, the Romans and the Egyptians.

- Writing is taught well. In every writing lesson, teachers encourage pupils to focus on accurate punctuation and the correct use of grammar. Teachers promote accurate spelling through written marking and feedback. A current priority for the school is to ensure that pupils spell subject-specific words accurately.
- School leaders ensure the curriculum is planned so that staff and resources can be effectively deployed and that there is a wide range of additional support for pupils who find learning more difficult. The special needs coordinator, the learning mentor and teaching assistants work well together, along with teachers, to direct this additional support. The number of pupils with special educational needs has increased in recent years. They are well provided for and most make good progress. However, support for pupils with special educational needs who join the school part-way through their primary education is not always as effective as it could be.
- The teaching of mathematics, although less strong than in other subjects, is improving. Increasingly, teachers provide pupils with questions that require them to apply their mathematical knowledge and skills in a range of contexts and there is generally challenging work for the most able. However, some pupils are not always given work that is hard enough to allow them to reach the highest levels of attainment and make the best possible progress. Pupils sometimes have to wait to be told to move onto the next level instead of moving on when they are ready to do so.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and highlight what they have done well. Some excellent practice in high quality marking is evident, particularly in pupils' literacy books. Teachers provide advice about how pupils could improve their work and pupils respond to this; they are able to articulate what they need to do to move on to the next steps in their learning. Marking is not yet as effective in mathematics in helping pupils to move on at a pace that is most suitable for them. In several literacy lessons observed during the inspection, pupils were seen responding to their teacher's advice.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Overall, pupils' achievement is good. It is not yet outstanding because the standards pupils reach in mathematics are not as high as they are in reading and in writing.
- The school's own, externally validated data show that pupils enter the school in Year 3 with attainment that is broadly in line with expectations for their age.
- In 2014, the standards pupils reached at the end of Year 6 were well above average in reading and writing and just above average in mathematics. This shows that these pupils made good progress in reading and in writing, and expected progress in mathematics, by the end of Year 6.
- The school's own records, evidence of the work in pupils' books and the learning seen in lessons show that the majority of pupils currently in the school, in all year groups and in most subjects, are making good progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils supported by pupil premium funding make good progress compared to others nationally and achieve well. In 2014, this group of pupils' attainment in the Year 6 national tests was similar to their peers and above that of other pupils nationally. They achieved well above average results in reading and writing, and above average in mathematics. Consequently there were no gaps between their achievement and that of their peers. For the pupils currently in Year 6, the school's data show that this is also the case. Throughout the school, disadvantaged pupils work at standards which are close to those of other pupils and any gaps are closed by the time they reach the end of Year 6.
- Pupils' achievement in reading is good. Additional support, for example in small groups and on a one-to-one basis, enables pupils who may experience difficulties to catch up. By Year 6, pupils read with confidence and enthusiasm.
- Most pupils make at least good progress in writing. Throughout all years, pupils are encouraged to write at length. The thematic curriculum offers numerous and varied opportunities which inspire pupils to write about topics that interest them and for a range of purposes, including writing reports and biographies. In all years, pupils are encouraged to use a wide range of vocabulary.
- There is an increasing proportion of pupils who have special educational needs in the school. The majority of them make good progress alongside their peers because their needs are identified early in their school life and staff ensure that appropriate support is put in place for them. This, alongside the highly sensitive care provided for them, and the school's effective partnerships with outside agencies, helps to boost their learning and promote their involvement in all aspects of school life. However, a small number of pupils

who enter the school at different points and in different year groups do not make enough progress.

Leaders recognise the need to provide even more support for these newcomers but not all teachers and teaching assistants have received enough training in meeting their needs.

- From their starting points, many pupils make good progress in mathematics. However, not enough reach the highest levels because there is sometimes a lack of challenge. Consequently, they are prevented from making even better progress and from moving on when they are ready to do so.
- The most-able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged to reach above average standards and the results of national tests reflect this. In English, the current Year 6 attend a 'challenge lesson' once a week led by the Year 6 English subject leader. They are aiming at reaching Level 6 by the time they get to the end of Year 6. The school's recent moves to put a greater emphasis on provision for the most able are proving successful.

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	107117
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	461878

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	196
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cherly Shaw
Headteacher	Beverley Cordle
Date of previous school inspection	27 June 2012
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