

Mexborough St John the Baptist CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106764
Local Authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	356022
Inspection dates	14–15 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Bernard Jones

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	204
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Jeff Riley
Headteacher	Mr John Hunter
Date of previous school inspection	20 May 2008
School address	Sedgefield Way Mexborough South Yorkshire S64 0BE
Telephone number	01709 582619
Fax number	01709 584957
Email address	jeh@stjohns.doncaster.sch.uk

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	14–15 March 2011
Inspection number	356022

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 16 lessons, where seven different teachers were seen. The inspectors held meetings with a member of the governing body, staff, groups of parents and carers and pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at pupils' work, data on pupils' performance, development plans, safeguarding documents and records of the school's own monitoring of its performance. The responses to 81 parents' and carers' questionnaires were considered, alongside responses from staff and pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The impact of initiatives taken to raise standards in mathematics.
- How well teachers use information about pupils' progress when planning lessons.
- The impact of the new, creative curriculum in raising achievement and pupils' enjoyment.
- How effectively teachers use challenging targets to ensure that pupils know how well they are doing and what they must do to improve further.
- The impact of school leaders' monitoring of the quality of teaching.

Information about the school

This school is smaller than the average primary school. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is also broadly average. There are few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and none are at an early stage in learning English. Since the previous inspection, there have been significant changes to the teaching staff. The school has gained the following awards, Investors in People, Basic Skills and the Eco Schools Bronze. It has achieved Healthy Schools status.

The privately run on-site provision for childcare, Daisy Chain Nursery is subject to a separate inspection and its own inspection report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school that gives satisfactory value for money. Pupils' attainment is broadly average by the time they leave Year 6, reflecting satisfactory achievement in relation to their starting points. Pupils do not make as much progress in mathematics as they do in English. The good care, guidance and support that pupils receive ensure that they feel safe and understand well how to live safely and healthily. Parents and carers are largely supportive. There is too much unevenness in the quality of teaching. While there is some that is outstanding, so too there is some that is inadequate. The majority of teaching is satisfactory. This is mainly because teachers do not use the information they have about pupils' attainment well enough to match the needs of different groups and challenge pupils to produce their best. In contrast, the outstanding and good teaching uses assessment data very effectively and pupils' progress benefits significantly.

The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and is evidenced in pupils' positive behaviour and the harmonious relationships between pupils and with their teachers. Pupils respond well to the responsibilities they are given, for example on the school council, and they make a good contribution to their school and the wider community. Those pupils who are potentially vulnerable receive good care and respond well to the additional help from their teachers and classroom assistants, so that they too make satisfactory and in some cases good progress and participate fully in school life.

The school's self-evaluation is mainly accurate, based on a well-understood knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses. For example, the need for improvement in mathematics has been rightly identified as a priority. The school has some good systems for monitoring teaching and learning but as yet subject leaders are not involved enough in raising standards in their subject. Recent turbulence in staffing has been resolved and some previous weaknesses in teaching have been successfully tackled. The development of detailed systems to track pupils' progress has provided a powerful tool for the school's improvement. It is starting to have an impact in the classroom as more teachers become adept at using information about pupils' progress to target their teaching with greater precision. There is more work to do in this respect, but a start has been made. Similarly, recent improvements have been made to the curriculum, but the full impact is yet to be seen in improved achievement. The school has a satisfactory capacity to sustain improvements and to raise standards further.

Up to 40% of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged to be satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve standards in mathematics across all years by:

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

- – giving pupils more practical experience of using calculation and problem-solving skills
- – planning lesson materials that are pitched accurately and delivered at pace to ensure a good level of challenge.
- Ensure more good quality teaching and learning throughout the school by:
 - – spreading the excellent practice that already exists, particularly relating to the use of data about pupils' attainment and progress in lesson planning
 - – ensuring that teachers and pupils are clear about what constitutes good progress in their lessons
 - – improving the use of assessment information to stretch and challenge all groups of pupils to achieve the best of which they are capable.
- Develop the roles of subject leaders by:
 - – ensuring middle managers acquire the skills to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects
 - – making subject coordinators more accountable for standards in their subject areas.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

There is a wide range in the quality of teaching and learning leading to variable achievement among pupils, which is due primarily to inconsistencies in the effectiveness of teachers' lesson planning. There is far greater consistency in the success teachers have in managing their classrooms and ensuring that pupils are interested and enjoy their work. Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory and generally they enjoy their learning. Behaviour in the classroom is good and sometimes excellent. Pupils usually listen attentively and work well together, sharing their learning to good effect whether comparing answers or discussing solutions to problems. Classrooms are often productively noisy with a real buzz of excitement as pupils enjoy the opportunities afforded by the school's development of a new, more creative curriculum. On occasion, where the pace of learning is slower, a lack of challenge leaves some pupils bored and distracted.

When children enter the Reception class their skills and knowledge are broadly in line with those typically expected for their age. They make sound progress and enter Year 1 with levels of attainment that are broadly average. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in the rest of the school and leave Year 6 with attainment that is broadly average in English and mathematics. However, within this broad category, standards are lower in mathematics than English because pupils do not have enough experience of using mathematical skills, such as calculating and problem-solving. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and other vulnerable pupils enjoy their work because of the good quality support they receive from teachers and teaching assistants and because they benefit from well-targeted interventions to help them.

Pupils are open and welcoming to visitors and caring and responsible in their relations with each other. For example, older pupils readily help younger children in the daily routines of the school. They have a good understanding of right and wrong. These attributes ensure that they readily take up the opportunities presented to them in class to work independently and to collaborate effectively in pairs and groups to share their learning. A good proportion of pupils take part in the sporting activities offered by the school. Overall,

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

apart from some weakness in mathematics, pupils are equipped and ready for the next stage of their education, particularly in terms of their positive attitudes to school and learning.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

While a very small proportion of teaching and learning is inadequate, the majority is satisfactory and there is much that is good and some outstanding. Across the school, teachers mostly manage their classes effectively to ensure a good working atmosphere where pupils enjoy their learning. The best teaching is particularly effective in using data about pupils' attainment and progress to match learning material to their differing needs. In such lessons, all pupils are stretched and challenged and produce their best. Where teaching and learning are satisfactory, teachers are not as precise in their planning and pupils are not clear enough about what represents good progress and learning slows. Teachers' marking of work is undertaken conscientiously and is usually positive and encouraging. The best marking adds to this by directing pupils clearly to the next steps they need to take to improve further. The use of individual targets to focus pupils' learning is a growing strength and consolidates the successful changes undertaken to improve learning and progress in mathematics. Information and communication technology is used well to engage pupils, make lessons interesting and to help teach new concepts.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

The newly-planned curriculum is good and is increasingly successful in raising pupils' academic achievement and makes a positive contribution to pupils' personal development. It is enhanced by visitors, educational visits and the annual residential experiences for Year 5 and Year 6 pupils. Provision is successfully extended by effective partnerships developed with other schools and agencies and the local community. These help to ensure a good range of additional activities in sports and the arts, which are popular with pupils and enrich the life of the school.

The school's good care, guidance and support, coupled with the effective links with outside specialists, ensure pupils' well-being and contribute to their good personal development. Pupils feel safe in school. There is an effective partnership established with the large majority of parents and carers so that any concerns are dealt with quickly. All pupils who may have additional educational or social needs are well catered for by teachers and teaching assistants.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and senior team have developed good systems to monitor the impact of their work in terms of improvements in pupils' achievement. Self-evaluation is based appropriately on measuring the impact that actions taken have on pupils' progress. The impact is starting to be seen as weaknesses are tackled, for example, standards in mathematics are starting to improve. Such work is now giving a clear lead in setting a vision for the continued improvement based on sound planning at all levels. Targets are set appropriately and are increasingly challenging. Good monitoring systems show that they are largely being met. Staff throughout the school, share in the ambition to succeed. However, middle managers have not yet developed their leadership skills sufficiently. This restricts the impact of monitoring and evaluating standards and the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects.

The governing body knows the school well and actively supports new initiatives and plans. It has not, however, fully developed its role in holding the school to account or challenging it to ensure pupils make the best possible progress. Leaders and the governing body are committed to ensuring equal opportunities for pupils in all aspects of school life and ensure that the school tackles any form of discrimination assiduously. Financial control, planning and accountability and the use of resources are satisfactory. There are good safeguarding procedures in place, which meet government requirements. Staff are well-trained in child protection procedures, and pupils feel confident and safe in school. Satisfactory partnerships with other schools ensure a flow of additional expertise into the

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

school. The provision for community cohesion is good and has a clear impact seen in the harmonious relationships throughout the school and the understanding pupils develop about their place in the wider society.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Recent changes in staffing have enabled the school to appoint a leader specifically concerned with the development of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision. This has given a positive impetus to the work with young children and improvements are starting to have an impact. Children make satisfactory progress in response to the satisfactory teaching they receive. Good induction procedures help children to settle quickly. Parents and carers are encouraged to interact with the teachers and other adults to be full partners in the education of their children. The leaders and managers ensure satisfactory planning and a well-structured environment that builds children's learning systematically. Teachers know how young children learn and provide interesting activities that they enjoy. For example, children were digging in a garden corner as they looked for the minibeasts that they had been told about in the classroom. They were delighted when they found worms and snails. Assessment procedures are now becoming more firmly established and are used effectively to ensure that the curriculum matches the needs of the children. Children benefit from a satisfactory balance of adult-led or their own choice of activity, both indoors and outside. However, the clear direction given to children to acquire and consolidate skills that is evident in the classroom, is not as well established outside and the outdoor facilities are not used as effectively to further children's progress. Staff are particularly successful in developing children's personal and social development. Effective routines have been established that help children to acquire the necessary social skills to participate fully in the range of activities provided. Children with special educational needs

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

and/or disabilities, and those children who are potentially vulnerable, benefit from the additional help and care provided and they too make satisfactory progress.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

A near average proportion of parents and carers returned the questionnaire. Most are supportive of the school, as are those who met the inspectors. A small minority are not satisfied with the way the school deals with unacceptable behaviour. During the inspection, behaviour was good and pupils' behaviour was managed well. A few feel that the school does not take account of their suggestions and concerns and that their children do not make enough progress. A few also feel that the school is not well led and managed. Parents and carers value the safety and security provided by the school and they approve the approaches taken to ensure pupils develop good relationships with each other and their teachers. They are very positive about their children enjoying school and learning how to behave and respect other people and to live healthily. The inspection team found that the school works hard and mainly successfully to include parents and carers in all its activities. Typical of the positive comments made was, 'My daughter enjoys coming to school. I find it a very warm, encouraging and safe environment for my daughter'.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Mexborough St John the Baptist CE Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 81 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 204 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	43	53	34	42	3	4	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	41	51	38	47	0	0	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	28	35	51	63	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	30	37	44	54	6	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	33	41	45	56	3	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	27	33	49	60	3	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	23	28	55	68	2	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	28	35	45	56	4	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	29	36	48	59	3	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	20	25	44	54	14	17	3	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	24	30	49	60	5	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	28	35	47	58	5	6	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	36	44	40	49	3	4	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



17 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Mexborough St John the Baptist CE Primary School, Mexborough, S64 0BE

Thank you for being so welcoming to me and my colleagues when we inspected your school recently. Please thank your parents and carers for all their letters and for taking the time to talk to us. We enjoyed watching and listening to you in your lessons, reading your work and talking to you. We particularly enjoyed your enthusiastic singing in Assembly. We found that yours is a satisfactory school. We like the way you take responsibility, and how older pupils help out with younger children. You obviously enjoy coming to school and this shows in your good behaviour in classrooms and around the school. We appreciate how your school helps you to live healthily and safely so that you develop into mature young people, ready to move on to secondary education.

The teaching you receive is satisfactory. As a result, you make sound progress and achieve average standards. You say that you like your teachers and the way they take good care of you and you were very positive in your questionnaire responses. To make things even better, we have asked your teachers to help you by changing some of the ways they plan lessons. This will help all of you achieve the best you possibly can and ensure that you make better progress in mathematics. We have also asked that teachers in charge of subjects be given more help in how to develop their subjects. You can do your part by continuing to work hard.

I hope you continue to enjoy school and I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Bernard Jones

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.