

Wakefield St Johns Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior and Infant School

Belgravia Road, Wakefield, West Yorkshire, WF1 3JP

Inspection dates 27–28 September 2012

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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Wakefield St John's is a school where every pupil matters. As a result they are extremely happy, feel safe and enjoy school.
- All groups of pupils, including those who are eligible for the pupil premium, make good progress so that by the time they leave Year 6 attainment is above the national average.
- The progress and attainment of pupils who speak English as an additional language are well above the national average.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy reading.
- Pupils from many different backgrounds work and play together harmoniously. Their positive attitudes towards learning make a significant contribution to their good achievement.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They show respect for themselves and others, and follow the excellent example set by adults in caring for and supporting others.
- The curriculum is well planned and captures pupils' interests. It makes a very positive contribution to improved achievement and pupils' excellent spiritual, moral and social development.
- Leaders and managers, including the governing body, have high aspirations for the school's future. Well-established and accurate systems for self-evaluation ensure they fully understand which areas require improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although teaching is good overall it is not of a consistently high quality to bring about outstanding achievement. It provides insufficient challenge to increase the proportion of pupils at both key stages who achieve the higher levels.
- On occasion, introductions to lessons are too long and the work set for the more-able pupils lacks appropriate challenge.
- The marking of pupils' work and the guidance on how they can improve are inconsistent.
- The role of middle leaders in the monitoring of teaching and learning is not yet fully developed.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons taught by eight teachers. In addition, the inspection team made a number of other short visits to lessons and heard pupils read.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, four members of the school's governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 30 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection.
- They observed the school's work and scrutinised a number of documents including the school's improvement plans, data on pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring files, minutes of the governing body meetings and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Anthony Kingston, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Tony Price

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below the national average.
- The majority of pupils are White British but the proportions of pupils who speak English as an additional language or who are of minority ethnic heritage are above the national average.
- The school meets the current floor standard, which sets the government's minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment and increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
 - ensuring there is always sufficient challenge, especially for the more-able pupils
 - increasing the proportion of pupils who achieve the higher levels at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2
 - ensuring teachers avoid lengthy introductions and allow pupils time to acquire and develop new skills
 - ensuring the marking policy is applied consistently throughout the school
 - extending the role of middle leaders in the monitoring of teaching and learning and sharing the outstanding practice seen in some lessons.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Most children enter the Reception class with overall skills and knowledge below those typically expected for children of this age. From these starting points all children make good progress and enter Year 1 with broadly average attainment.
- The school has consistently ensured that pupils achieve the national average in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1 but increasing numbers are now exceeding the average, showing good progress and attainment.
- Throughout Key Stage 2 all pupils, including disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those eligible for the pupil premium, continue to make at least good progress and attain above average standards by the end of Year 6. Those pupils who speak English as an additional language make outstanding progress and attain well above the national average for all pupils. This is because learning is carefully tailored to their needs and the deployment of teaching assistants is effective.
- The proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels in reading and mathematics is improving rapidly and is now above the national average.
- In writing, the proportion attaining the higher levels is in line with the national average and improving. This is because in most classes pupils are now given many opportunities to practise their skills in, and transfer their knowledge to, a range of contexts across subjects which capture their imaginations and interest.
- All pupils make good progress in developing their early reading skills because the school has implemented a systematic approach to the teaching of linking letters and sounds. This is applied consistently throughout the school, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. As a result pupils tackle unfamiliar words confidently and read with fluency and expression. The levels of challenge are well matched to pupils' abilities and they quickly move on to gaining personal enjoyment from reading books independently and discussing the content with adults.
- Teachers continue to focus on the development of reading skills as pupils move through the school and they encourage them to respond to settings, characters and events. This approach has resulted in a love of reading amongst pupils of all ages. By the end of Year 6 pupils show a great deal of sophistication in their reading ability and understanding of different texts and authors.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Throughout the school teaching is consistently good or better. In Year 6 it is consistently outstanding.
- In the best lessons teachers initiate pace and energy, carrying pupils with them. In one Year 6 mathematics lesson, for example, within minutes of pupils entering the room, the teacher had them working enthusiastically on meaningful problem-solving activities well matched to their needs. The teacher questioned, challenged and consolidated the learning of each group without putting the learning of others on hold. This resulted in promoting excellent understanding and progress, especially for the more-able pupils who relished having time to theorise, put forward their hypotheses and solve challenging problems.
- Teachers have a good understanding of pupils' progress. This information is invariably used well in planning lessons and matching activities to the needs of pupils. However, in a minority of lessons the time pupils have to acquire and develop new skills is restricted because introductions are too long. Sometimes, the more-able pupils do not make as much progress as they should because they are not always given enough time to engage in sufficiently challenging work.
- Highly effective teaching assistants, who have a good range of expertise, deliver various specifically tailored, personalised programmes to disabled pupils, those who have special

educational needs and those pupils who speak English as an additional language. They target support for groups in the classroom and provide focused tuition for individuals and small groups in well-equipped resource bases. This underpins the impressive progress these pupils make.

- Teachers and teaching assistants work in excellent partnership.
- Learning targets are clear and pupils make good use of an excellent range of prompts displayed in all classrooms. As a result they know what is expected of them and are able to evaluate their own progress.
- The marking of pupils' work is up-to-date but does not consistently provide guidance on how to improve and not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to respond to the advice given.
- The school's ethos is evident in all its work and all adults and parent volunteers successfully use every opportunity to promote tolerance and respect for others.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The relationships between the different ages and ethnic groups are harmonious. Pupils demonstrate respect for cultures and beliefs that are different from their own and show care and kindness towards one another. This is because diversity is celebrated throughout the school.
- This was exemplified by a group of pupils who said that the most special aspect of the school was, 'having friends from all over the world. We have learned that the colour of your skin just doesn't matter but what's in your heart does.'
- Pupils enjoy school and have good attitudes to learning. This is reflected in their attendance which is above average and rising.
- Pupils are proud of the contributions they make to the school. This was exemplified by one pupil who said, 'We appreciate everything that our teachers do for us, like spending their time to run the school clubs. By taking on responsibilities ourselves we give something back. It's like saying thank you but better.' Clearly, the opportunities offered to pupils to play a part in the life of the school provide purposeful ways to extend their moral and social development.
- On occasion a very few pupils are distracted from their learning and behave in silly ways. However, staff are skilful at correcting the behaviour without interrupting the flow of the lesson.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of what constitutes bullying. They were keen to tell inspectors that they felt safe and secure and that there was never any kind of bullying in their school. The overwhelming majority of parents who returned the questionnaires agreed with this view.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They fully understand the Christian principles which underpin the school's highly positive ethos of respect and consideration for others. Pupils have a strong sense of reverence, as seen in the time set aside for reflection and in their wishes and hopes displayed on the Prayer Tree.
- Pupils are sensitive to the needs of others, have a strong sense of right and wrong and are tolerant of differences.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides caring, effective and visionary leadership. All staff are fully committed to the very clear direction given by her and they demonstrate a clear commitment to maintain and build upon the strong ethos which pervades the school.
- Leadership and management responsibilities are distributed effectively amongst all teachers. Everyone takes on a key role in improving outcomes for pupils. However, the role of middle leaders in the monitoring of teaching and learning, and sharing best practice is not yet fully

developed.

- Accurate self-evaluation has led to well-considered priorities. For example, a carefully planned programme of professional development, closely aligned to performance management, has resulted in challenging performance targets for staff and pupils, and an improvement in teaching and the rate at which pupils make progress.
- The rich curriculum, enhanced by an extensive range of extracurricular activities, is used very effectively to motivate and inspire pupils to learn. It successfully captures their imaginations, builds on their previous learning and prepares them well for their next stage in education.
- The curriculum provides purposeful opportunities for pupils to transfer and apply their reading, writing, mathematical and information and communication technology skills to real-life contexts. This is further enhanced by the introduction of interactive learning through the learning platform. Pupils speak enthusiastically about this because it enables them to have access to their teachers should they have difficulty completing their homework.
- Leaders and managers have a very positive impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Through their committed, faith-based ethos they promote a climate for pupils to work and play together harmoniously.
- The school promotes and monitors equal opportunities extremely well. It ensures no barriers to learning exist. For example, the pupil premium and the allocation of funds by the school to provide support for pupils who are identified as underachieving and those who speak English as an additional language, are used very effectively to accelerate their progress and raise their attainment.
- Parents say that the school is very welcoming. Good and effective communication between school and home through the innovative use of information and communication technology enables families to be fully engaged with their children's education.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body provides effective strategic direction and is committed to the school's improvement. It provides a good level of challenge to school leaders, informed by regular updates from the senior leadership team and regular monitoring.
 - Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements and child protection procedures are exemplary.
 - The leadership and overriding commitment shared by all staff and governors to raise pupils' attainment means the school's capability to improve is good.

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	108255
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	403059

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	209
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Canon Tony Macpherson
Headteacher	Margaret Young
Date of previous school inspection	20 February 2008
Telephone number	01924 303715
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