

St Margaret's School, Tintinhull

School Close, Yeovil, Somerset, BA22 8PX

Inspection dates 9–10 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	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.

- It has improved well since the last inspection and continues to do so because of the hard work and commitment of its headteacher, staff and members of the governing body.
- Pupils achieve well and attainment is above average. Attainment in reading has risen especially well in the younger classes because of excellent teaching of the sounds in words (phonics).
- Teaching is good, with the number of outstanding lessons continuing to rise. Well-planned activities effectively meet the differing needs of pupils.
- Pupils work hard and behave well. Relationships between pupils and with adults are very good so the school is a very happy and safe place to be.
- The school is well led by an able headteacher who has put in place comprehensive systems for monitoring and self-evaluation that allow weaker aspects of the school's work to be quickly identified and effective strategies put in place to address them.
- Effective monitoring and support for teaching has helped improve provision and achievement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Learning is occasionally hampered by a lack of pace in some activities or omitting to set new challenges for pupils who have speedily and successfully completed their work. Marking does not always show pupils how to improve.
- The proportion of Year 2 pupils reaching the levels expected for this age has increased, but the proportion exceeding those levels remains fairly static, limiting attainment from rising further.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed seven lessons of which two were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition the inspector made a number of other short visits to lessons and special groups to support pupils for whom learning is difficult, and heard a sample of pupils read.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff, including senior and middle managers, and a member of the local authority was also spoken to.
- The inspector took account of the 15 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and also spoke to a small number of parents and carers bringing their children to school.
- The inspector observed the school's work and scrutinised a number of documents, including the school's records on current pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance. Documents relating to planning and monitoring and safeguarding were also looked at.

Inspection team

Diane Wilkinson, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average school where pupils are taught in four mixed-age classes: Reception/Year 1, Year 1/2, Year 3/4 and Year 5/6.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, including those supported by school action plus or a statement of special educational needs, is below the national average.
- The very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage and very few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, including those eligible for free school meals or from military families, is below average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching through ensuring that:
 - there is a rigorous pace maintained throughout all activities
 - on all occasions when pupils complete their work accurately and quickly before the end of a lesson, they are provided with new challenges to help them do even better
 - when marking pupils' work, teachers regularly indicate how they can improve it.
- Raise achievement in the younger year groups and increase the proportion of pupils exceeding the levels expected for their age by the end of Year 2 by raising expectations for pupils on the cusp of attaining this.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Achievement throughout the school is good, a strength acknowledged by pupils and their parents and carers. Very well-tailored programmes effectively support pupils who might be at risk of underachieving to catch up. This ensures that disabled pupils, those with special educational needs, those who speak English as an additional language and those supported by the pupil premium achieve as well as their classmates.
- Partly due to small cohorts, attainment on entry varies considerably, with children showing a wide range of abilities although overall it is broadly as expected. They achieve well, increasingly so as provision improves and the level of challenge rises. By Year 1, attainment is slightly above average, securely so in reading.
- Over the past two years an excellent programme for teaching phonics has had a marked impact on pupils' attainment, with reception children quickly learning to read simple words and Year 1 pupils doing exceptionally well in the new phonics screening test.
- Although the full impact of the phonics programme by the end of Year 2 has yet to be seen, most pupils reach the expected Level 2b and attainment is above average. They very confidently read new words and most read fluently and expressively. Attainment is above average by Year 6, showing the good progress pupils make, and pupils are very mature readers, knowing what they like and why. They confidently discuss the plot and characters and use texts effectively to acquire knowledge.
- In writing and mathematics, Year 2 pupils' attainment has risen year on year although there has been a smaller rise in the number of pupils attaining the higher Level 3. Raising the level of challenge for pupils on the cusp of attaining this is a current priority for the school. The school has successfully maintained the above average attainment in Year 6 and this is well placed to rise further as pupils are now starting in Year 3 with better skills and knowledge.
- A strong emphasis on these features ensures that, from a young age, pupils write neatly, punctuate accurately and spell correctly. By Year 6 pupils are skilled at writing in a range of formats such as writing instructions or poetry. Their use of adventurous vocabulary and connectives, similes and metaphors helped them produce very effective 'sun poems'.
- In mathematics a strong emphasis on learning place value helps ensure that, even after half a term, most reception children accurately count to 20 and that Years 1 and 2 pupils calculate correctly. By Year 6, pupils are skilled mathematicians, using their very secure understanding of number to work confidently with a range of measures and data, including when solving problems.

The quality of teaching is good

- Good teaching is a testament to the strong monitoring, support and training opportunities for staff that have brought about the continuous improvement in quality. Pupils and their parents and carers report that the former are well taught and consequently make good progress.
- Exceptionally good teamwork and staff commitment to improving their practice ensures lesson planning consistently provides for pupils' needs and interests and encourages them to do well. However, not all teachers set further challenges for those pupils who have worked hard to achieve the lesson target, which prevents these pupils from doing even better.
- Subject expertise, especially in English and mathematics, is uniformly good and the school capitalises well on staff talents so that pupils benefit from skilled teaching in subjects such as music and religious education. The teaching of phonics is excellent because of the exceptional programme in place and the high-quality in-house training for all staff.
- Teaching assistants are deployed well and make an effective contribution to learning. This

was most notable in the newly organised mathematics lessons where their skilled input has a marked effect on pupils' understanding of new concepts. They also play a successful role in leading special activities to help pupils with specific needs to catch up.

- As teachers build on and extend their practice they are increasingly teaching outstanding lessons where the rigorous pace and the continual adaptation of activities to promote progress produce excellent learning. This was observed in an outstanding lesson where pupils were writing about different inventors. There are however some occasions, especially when pupils are working independently in groups, where they work more slowly or lose concentration and staff do not rectify this quickly enough.
- Pupils are set individual improvement targets and specific targets for each lesson which are regularly referred to throughout activities, with adults and older pupils using these well to check progress. When marking pupils' work teachers consistently identify what pupils have achieved although too often they omit to indicate how work could be improved.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Due to very strong systems in place to encourage this, most pupils behave well, exceptionally so in outstanding lessons when the rigorous pace and exciting activities keep them very focused. This was clearly evident in an excellent storytelling lesson in Reception. Pupils who find good behaviour difficult receive very good support from skilled staff to help them improve.
- Pupils show great respect and courtesy to others especially when moving around the school, with older pupils consistently looking out for younger ones. Relationships between pupils and with adults are very good, but pupils report that there are a few occasions when some are over-boisterous at playtimes although they agree that adults sort this out well.
- Pupils feel very safe and happy in school and say that bullying, associated with general name calling, is rare and always dealt with successfully. They have a good awareness of how to keep themselves and others safe, including when using the internet. Parents and carers agree that pupils greatly enjoy school and praise the support their children receive.
- Largely due to the changing nature of pupils on roll, attendance levels declined since the last inspection, but the school has successfully addressed this and much improved punctuality so that currently levels are average.

The leadership and management are good

- The strong leadership and support of the headteacher have created a committed and determined staff team who work well together, continually reflecting on how to improve their practice in order to provide the best quality education for pupils.
- Subject leaders and the special educational needs coordinator play increasingly effective roles in helping to drive forward improvement, most notably in achievement in literacy and numeracy and in closing the gap for pupils who are at risk of underachieving.
- The school's success is underpinned by successful monitoring and self-evaluation. The effect of learning activities on pupils' progress is constantly checked, enabling accurate self-evaluation and development planning which is successfully addressing emerging weaknesses. This ensures the school is well placed to improve further.
- Very thorough and supportive performance management has helped eradicate unsatisfactory teaching and seen a continuous improvement over the past two years, with increasingly outstanding lessons being seen, including during the inspection.
- The school's strong determination to provide equality of opportunity and prevent discrimination helps ensure the curriculum meets pupils' needs and interests well, with both

boys and girls and pupils who find learning difficult engaging well in lessons. Special programmes for pupils who need extra help ensure that the very large majority of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs reach the expected Level 4 by Year 6.

- Moral, social and cultural development is promoted well, with the school working effectively to ensure that pupils gain a good awareness of cultural and religious diversity. Due to many opportunities for reflection during lessons and excellent assemblies, pupils' spiritual development is outstanding.
- Rigorous attention is given to safeguarding including through strong procedures for site safety, staff vetting and child protection.
- The local authority provides good support and has helped to ensure that the school has improved well since its last inspection.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Members of the governing body work well with staff to bring about continuous improvement.
 - They are well informed and provide an effective level of challenge and support for staff.
 - Their good financial control helps ensure that pupil premium funding is used effectively to enhance achievement, most notably through employing and training extra teaching assistants.

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	123855
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	402205

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	91
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Knight
Headteacher	Lesley McDonald
Date of previous school inspection	18–19 May 2010
Telephone number	01935 822686
Fax number	01935 823643
Email address	office@st-margarets.somerset.sch.uk

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