

Derby St Chad's CofE (VC) Nursery and Infant School

Gordon Road, Derby, DE23 6WR

Inspection dates

18–19 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	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.

- All groups of pupils make good progress due to effective teaching. Pupils behave well and are keen to learn. Lessons are interesting and well prepared.
- Standards are rising in reading, writing and mathematics. A higher proportion of pupils are reaching higher levels, especially in mathematics.
- Pupils are all valued and well cared for. As a parent put it: 'Teachers all care and work hard'.
- A strong emphasis on positive relationships and teamwork helps to make the school a happy, safe and vibrant community for all.
- The school's leaders make a good contribution to the work of other schools and the wider community by giving advice and support, and organising regular community events.
- Pupils benefit from a very wide range of interesting activities, including the Children's University (a wide range of clubs and activities held outside the school day), annual community firework night, a school camp and a diverse range of faith celebrations.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The activities teachers plan for lessons are occasionally too hard or too easy for some pupils and marking does not always clearly show pupils how to improve their work.
- Leaders do not check lessons frequently enough. They are aware of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching, but do not always ensure that planned improvements are introduced and sustained in all classes.
- The organisation and responsibilities of the senior leadership team are changing, and the precise roles of the headteacher and assistant headteacher have not yet been clearly established.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons and all six of the 10 teachers who work on the days covered by the inspection. Four of these observations were conducted jointly with the headteacher or assistant headteacher.
- Discussions were held with pupils, governors, senior and middle managers, and parents and carers.
- Inspectors received the views of parents and carers through 14 online responses and 33 paper responses to the Parent View inspection questionnaire, as well as informal discussions with 51 parents and carers.
- Inspectors received the views of staff through 20 responses to the inspection questionnaire and discussions, and of pupils through both informal and pre-arranged discussions.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's data on pupils' current progress, leaders' reports on lesson observations, the school's improvement plan, planning and monitoring documents, documents relating to safeguarding, and records relating to behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Jo Curd, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Lynda Smith

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Derby St Chad's is a relatively small school. Most classes contain two different age groups.
- It is situated in very densely populated, culturally diverse, inner city Derby.
- It is federated with a nursery school. The two schools share a headteacher and governing body.
- The vast majority of pupils are from minority ethnic groups and most speak English as an additional language. Over half the pupils are of Pakistani descent.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional money given to schools by the government) is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at the level of school action is higher than the national average, although the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The majority of these pupils have speech, language and communication difficulties.
- The school's second assistant headteacher was promoted to another school last year.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching and pupils' progress to outstanding by:
 - providing lesson activities that are consistently well matched to all pupils' individual ability levels
 - showing clearly, in marking and discussions, how pupils can improve their work
 - improving the frequency and thoroughness with which all aspects of teaching are monitored to ensure that any necessary improvements are implemented fully in all classes and sustained over time.
- Improve the effectiveness of senior leadership by agreeing and establishing clear roles and responsibilities.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- All groups of pupils achieve well. From low starting points they reach standards in line with the national average by the end of Year 2. There are no significant differences between the achievements of any groups over time.
- All groups of children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage due to good teaching and a wide range of activities. Progress occasionally slows slightly when these activities are not accurately matched to children's individual ability levels.
- Attainment is rising, especially in terms of the proportion of pupils who are reaching higher National Curriculum levels in tests. This is particularly true for mathematics. Pupils who learn more quickly or easily are successfully taught mathematics in a separate class. They are challenged and extended well by a teacher who has good skills and subject knowledge.
- Pupils achieve well in reading, even though attainment remains slightly lower than the national average by the end of Year 2. This is largely because most pupils are relatively new to the English language and do not always fully understand words or text. Staff tackle this by taking every opportunity to extend pupils' use and understanding of English through practical tasks and discussion. Even so, the proportion of six-year-olds who succeeded in the national phonic screening test, to see how well they knew and used sounds of letters of the alphabet, was much lower than the national average.
- Leaders successfully use pupil premium funding to employ additional staff to teach reading. They successfully ensure that pupils develop their understanding of text, as well as how to read it. These teaching assistants are experienced and well trained, and have a good understanding of pupils' specific needs. Gaps between the attainment of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding and the national average are closing.
- Disabled pupils and those who have other special educational needs are supported effectively by skilled, well-trained teaching assistants. For example, in an English lesson, two younger pupils were supported well to concentrate on saying and writing different letters of the alphabet through a practical visual task.
- Additional activities contribute well to all pupils' achievement. For example, the range of well-attended clubs, run as part of the Children's University, successfully helps develop language, awareness of the world and social skills.

The quality of teaching is good

- Lesson observations, pupils' work, school monitoring records and discussions show teaching to be good. Relationships are positive and supportive. Pupils are well behaved and keen to learn.
- Teachers use their daily 'learning logs' well to record and reflect on the achievement of all pupils, so they can plan future activities on the basis of pupils' interests and experiences.
- Staff extend pupils' learning and language skills effectively through well-focused and varied questioning, practical activities and discussions. For example, children in the Early Years Foundation Stage developed language skills with each other and staff as they worked on the computer, rode wheeled toys, built models with bricks and explored sand and water. In another

class, older pupils successfully developed mathematical language as they sorted various toys according to their three-dimensional shapes.

- In the best lessons, good organisation sustains a good pace of learning. Occasionally, activities are too easy or too hard for some pupils. For example, a few more-able pupils had to wait for others to catch up because using boxes to make musical instruments was easy for them. In another lesson, less-able pupils struggled to illustrate the words 'countryside' and 'concert' because they were not clear what these particular words meant.
- Parents and carers are encouraged and enabled to support their children's learning. An increasing number are involved, including those that schools have traditionally found hard to reach or whose children are eligible for the pupil premium. Several stay and work with their children at the beginning of each day, look at their children's work and discuss their achievements. They also attend weekly sessions to discuss and extend skills in helping children's learning at home and weekly family learning sessions, where they can develop their own skills in literacy and mathematics.
- Marking is generally up-to-date. Frequent use of praise helps relationships and motivation, but the comments made do not always show pupils how to improve the work. For example, in a counting activity a pupil had counted coins accurately but had not written numerals correctly. She was praised for her counting but not shown how to rewrite the numerals.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Observations, records and discussions with staff, parents, carers and pupils show that behaviour is typically good; the systems to keep pupils safe are also good.
- Attendance has risen to broadly average overall, and is above average in Years 1 and 2. This reflects pupils' enjoyment of school.
- Most pupils behave well in and out of lessons. Behaviour at playtimes is generally good, even though space is very restricted when, due to wet grass, pupils cannot play on the field.
- Pupils are considerate and support each other. They are keen to learn, and all respond quickly to staff requests. Time is generally used well in lessons. Behaviour and attitudes were exemplary in a highly engaging act of collective worship where pupils from all year groups acted out a familiar story that successfully enhanced their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- A few pupils display challenging behaviour. Occasionally there are minor squabbles, especially when pupils' language skills limit discussion, or they find it difficult to take turns or to share. Such difficulties are managed well so that disruptions are few and pupils are safe.
- Pupils are well aware of how to keep themselves safe, for example by avoiding 'stranger danger'. Their moral development is good, and they are very aware of right and wrong. The few incidents of verbal or physical bullying are addressed well.
- Pupils enjoy a range of responsibilities. They keenly act as playground, assembly or dinner monitors. Two very eager older girls confidently and responsibly ask all the adults in the school what they would like for lunch each day. These tasks successfully promote pupils' contribution to the school and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils are actively involved in the school's development. For example, it was their idea to install

a decorative water fountain in the playground and their designs were incorporated into the finished piece. Pupils are very proud of this feature, which successfully promotes reflection and spiritual development.

- A very wide range of experiences outside the school day contribute well to pupils' positive attitudes, enjoyment and motivation. These have included overnight camping for pupils in Year 2, visits to the church and other places of worship, a parade around the area to celebrate the Olympics, and the annual firework night, which is attended by hundreds of people from the local community.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has established a strong and effective vision for the school, shared by all staff and governors. It is firmly based on ensuring well-being and achievement for all. One member of staff summed up the views of most in writing, 'I feel honoured and privileged to work alongside such an inspirational headteacher and with wonderful colleagues, children and families.'
- Leaders know the school's strengths and weaknesses well, and have used this knowledge effectively to drive improvement such as better links with parents and carers and higher rates of attendance. They use lesson observations well to sustain a good quality of teaching and ensure that some aspects improve, and that teachers' pay is linked to pupils' achievement. However, they do not check lessons carefully or frequently enough to ensure that improvements are made in every class or always sustained over time.
- The structure of senior leadership is changing and, whilst effective, is not currently at full strength. One of the two assistant headteachers was seconded to another school last year and has since moved there. The roles and responsibilities of the remaining assistant headteacher have not yet been established. The headteacher has temporarily taken on the role of the special educational needs coordinator. Although she is experienced in this, her workload means that she cannot always respond to specific needs, or initiate additional provision, rapidly enough.
- Leaders make a significant and positive contribution to the work of other schools and the wider community. For example, shared Diwali celebrations with predominantly White British pupils from a school in rural Derbyshire added to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all. Their longstanding experience in the local community, including representation on the neighbourhood board, enables them to promote the well-being of pupils and their families.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - is experienced and astute, keenly initiating and driving improvement; for example, governors are currently compiling plans to improve the playground
 - is knowledgeable and challenging, especially with regard to the performance of the headteacher and the way the school budget is spent, including leaders' use of pupil premium funding
 - has close contact with the school and gains first-hand experience of its work through frequent visits
 - is reviewing the structure of the senior leadership team to ensure that this is fully effective in furthering pupils' achievement and well-being.

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	112873
Local authority	Derby
Inspection number	395710

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	160
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Reverend Phil Crathorne
Headteacher	Maxine Bull
Date of previous school inspection	25 March 2009
Telephone number	01332 345997
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