

St Edmund's CofE (C) Primary School

Church Hill Avenue, Mansfield Woodhouse, Nottinghamshire, NG19 9JU

Inspection dates

30–31 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Teaching and achievement require improvement. There is not enough good or better teaching to ensure that pupils achieve consistently well in writing and mathematics.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage do not have sufficient opportunities to have a go at mark making and writing during activities they choose themselves.
- Activities are not always planned to suit the abilities of all pupils and the pace of lesson is sometimes too slow.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to learn and to think for themselves.
- During lessons, teachers do not always check that pupils understand what they are doing.
- Teachers' marking, particularly in mathematics, does not always provide pupils with clear comments on how to improve their work. Pupils are not given enough time to respond to comments written by teachers.
- Leadership and management requires improvement. Governors do not receive sufficiently clear information on how well different groups of pupils achieve and so they are not able to support and challenge the school effectively.
- The subject coordinators, particularly in literacy and numeracy, are at the early stages of improving teaching in their areas of responsibility.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has driven through significant improvements which have led to improved teaching across the school, better standards in reading and improved attendance. Progress is beginning to accelerate in mathematics.
- The strong partnerships which have been built with parents, governors and the committed staff team have also contributed to improvement.
- Teaching and learning are good in Years 3 and 4 and at least good in Year 6.
- Pupils enjoy school, work hard and treat each other with respect. They behave well and are courteous and polite.
- The programme of activities provided for pupils promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- Pupils feel safe at school and are cared for well.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 15 lessons taken by seven teachers. Two of these were joint lesson observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- They heard two groups of pupils read.
- An inspector and the headteacher undertook a joint scrutiny of pupils' work.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, subject coordinators, parents, pupils, representatives from the governing body, one independent consultant brokered through a partner teaching school and one representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 11 responses to the online Parent View survey.
- The inspection team observed the school's work, looked at data about pupils' achievement, examined records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding, visited the school's website and looked at documents used by leaders to monitor and evaluate the school's work.

Inspection team

Marion Thompson, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Matthew Klimcke

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Edmund's is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils come from White British backgrounds. A few pupils come from minority ethnic groups.
- Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- An average proportion of the pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average for those supported at school action. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational need is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the previous inspection, staff turnover has been high particularly for senior leaders and managers. The headteacher took up post in September 2011 and the deputy headteacher joined in April 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, particularly in writing and mathematics, so that all lessons are good or better, by ensuring that:
 - the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage always have good opportunities to choose activities which promote mark making and writing
 - teachers always plan activities that are accurately matched to the needs and abilities of all pupils so lessons run at a brisk pace and pupils remain interested
 - teachers check learning regularly to make sure that all pupils learn effectively.
 - teachers' marking in mathematics always provides clear guidance on what pupils need to do to improve and pupils are given time to respond to teachers' comments in literacy and mathematics.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - providing governors with better quality information on the progress of different groups of pupils so that they can challenge the school more effectively
 - enabling subject coordinators, particularly in literacy and numeracy, to become more involved in improving teaching in their areas of responsibility.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage start school with levels of skills and knowledge that are below those expected for their ages. By the time they join Year 1, their skills and knowledge remain below expected levels. Progress for these children requires improvement.
- By the time they leave school, Year 6 pupils reach standards that are broadly average. Pupils' achievement requires improvement because their progress is uneven. In some year groups progress is too slow in writing and mathematics. However, in other year groups especially in Year 6 pupils make better progress enabling them to make some catch up.
- Over the last three years, attainment at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2 has varied, but pupils' overall rate of progress has not been above expected levels.
- Attainment and progress in writing are weaker than in other subjects. The youngest children do not have enough opportunities to practise their writing in activities they choose themselves. The Year 1 phonic screening test shows that pupils' skills in recognising letters and the sounds that they make are below those expected for their age. Pupils do not consistently form their letters correctly and a number of older pupils find punctuation and writing longer sentences difficult.
- There has been a recent, strong focus on mental mathematics and multiplication. Pupils are beginning to make better progress in learning their times tables but progress in mathematics, although improving, is still not good.
- Pupils make good progress in reading. A close partnership has been formed with parents, who read regularly with their children at home. They maintain regular contact with the school through the pupil planner, where parents make comments about what, when and how well pupils have read and aspects of their work. Teachers respond to these on a regular basis. Older pupils read for pleasure and have favourite authors.
- The use of the pupil premium last year to pay for adults to read regularly with pupils known to be eligible for free school meals was effective in raising attainment, accelerating progress and increasing these pupils' enjoyment of reading. There are early signs to show that the use of the pupil premium to employ a part-time teacher to work on improving writing this year is raising attainment for a small number of targeted pupils. However, progress across all areas of learning is too uneven for this group of pupils.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is uneven and is linked to the quality of teaching and support. Many pupils are supported skilfully in small groups. For example, pupils in Year 4 tackled a task they found difficult, identifying verbs in the present tense, with enjoyment because of good support. On the other hand, at times, too much support is provided, which limits progress.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because teachers do not match work to pupils' different abilities. That means that it is sometimes too easy or too difficult for them. This slows the pace of learning. This is particularly an issue in mathematics. For example, in one mathematics lesson, very few pupils understood what was being taught so could not successfully complete

the task set. Teachers are not always aware that pupils find the work too difficult and so do not help them enough to understand what is being taught.

- The teaching of writing requires improvement. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, there are too few opportunities for children to make marks and write during activities where they use their imagination. In Years 1 and 2, when pupils learn about letters and sounds, teaching is occasionally a little dull, so pupils do not always concentrate well. Some pupils, especially lower attainers, do not get enough support in forming simple and longer sentences accurately.
- The teaching of handwriting is too variable: some older pupils try very hard to get their 'pen licence', where they are allowed to write with a pen rather than a pencil, and work is always presented well throughout school.
- The teaching of reading is good and children develop a wide range of strategies to help them to read more fluently. Pupils have many opportunities to read about different cultures.
- Teaching is better in some year groups than in others. It is good in Years 3 and 4. At times, in Year 6, it is outstanding.
- In the best lessons, where learning is good, information from marking and the teacher's knowledge of pupils' abilities is used effectively to plan lessons that are closely matched to pupils' needs and interests. These lessons provide a high but achievable level of challenge and skilful questioning deepens pupils' knowledge. Indeed, pupils challenge themselves, with one Year 4 pupil setting himself the task of multiplying 18 million by 600 in his head for fun. Social and collaborative skills are developed well through group work.
- Marking in literacy and, in some classes, in mathematics provides clear guidance to pupils on how to improve their work. However, few examples were seen of pupils given the time to respond to the comments teachers write on what is needed to improve.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and their behaviour is good. They are confident and polite when talking to visitors.
- In assemblies, pupils listen attentively and contribute with confidence to sensitive discussions about their feelings, imagination and spirituality. In lessons, they are eager to learn and, when given the opportunity, are keen to develop their independence.
- From the earliest years, children are keen to take up responsibilities. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are reliable monitors, taking registers and giving out lunches. Pupils treat each other with care and respect, for example rushing to help when someone falls over in the playground.
- Parents, staff and pupils say that pupils are very safe in school. Pupils were puzzled about questions about bullying as few have ever encountered it. Rare incidents of unacceptable behaviour are dealt with swiftly and effectively.
- Since the previous inspection, pupils' attendance has risen from low to broadly average. This is due to the close links the school has formed with the families of persistent absentees.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in school, outside on roads and when using the

internet. They are cared for warmly by the school and this is appreciated by parents. Good support is provided for pupils experiencing difficulties.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement. Staffing issues and the high turnover of senior staff have hindered developments in the role of the subject coordinators, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Those who are responsible are aware that teaching and learning in writing and mathematics across the school are not good enough in all year groups. They are eager to continue their improvement work, which is already having an impact, for example in improving teaching and achievement in mental calculation in mathematics.
- The headteacher provides purposeful direction for the school's improvement. She is supported well by the recently formed senior leadership team, who have clearly identified the school's strengths and areas for improvement through close tracking of pupils' academic progress.
- The staff team are united in their desire for improvement and the quality of professional dialogue between teachers and leaders is good.
- The range of activities provided by the school reflects pupils' interests. For example, in the Early Years Foundation Stage, careful observation of children and discussion with them about what they enjoy doing helps teachers to plan activities that build on their interests. Teachers promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well, for example by talking about a range of different religions in assembly. Pupils have good opportunities to learn French and they enjoy lively music and physical education (PE) sessions with visiting specialists.
- Strong partnerships formed with parents and carers have contributed to the improvements in pupils' attendance and in reading.
- The school is responding to the new performance management guidance which takes account of new standards set for all teachers. This is intended to hold teachers to account for their performance, setting them robust targets linked to pupil progress. This has been prepared by the headteacher for governors' approval.
- The school promotes equal opportunities appropriately and discrimination of any sort is not tolerated. Pupils who are not making the progress expected of them are given additional support, either in class or through one-to-one or individual support. However, not enough pupils make good progress in writing and mathematics.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors who carry out monitoring visits prepare thorough reports for their fellow governors on their findings during school visits. They have regular meetings on pupil progress with the headteacher. They do not yet have enough detailed and accurate information on the progress of different groups of pupils to hold the school fully to account. Their expertise is being developed through a planned training programme which they have initiated. They have a firm grasp on how the pupil premium is used and of the positive impact it had on reading last year. They are supportive of the headteachers' plan to introduce a more rigorous performance management system, aimed at giving governors to clearer oversight of the link between the quality of teaching and pupils' progress, so that they can ensure that rewards for staff are tied to pupils' rates of progress.

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 pupil's 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 pupil's 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	122741
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	402114

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	218
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ruth Marriott
Headteacher	Mykela Horton
Date of previous school inspection	24-25 November 2009
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