

St Margaret's CofE Junior School

Coppice Road, Whitnash, Leamington Spa, CV31 2JF

Inspection dates 30–31 January 2013

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		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Achievement in English and mathematics is good and standards are above the national average.
- Attainment in a wide range of other subjects is good.
- Teachers expect the best of pupils and use their knowledge of what they can already do to plan next steps in learning so that they learn well and often rapidly.
- Teachers give pupils many opportunities to find things out for themselves. Through this, pupils become very efficient at working on their own.
- Pupils are courteous, respectful to others and help create a calm environment. Pupils are safe in school.
- The effective leadership team has helped the school to improve many important areas of its work since the last inspection. This shows capacity to improve further.
- Senior leaders and the governing body have used their checking of teaching well to improve its quality and maintain good academic standards.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The way the work of teaching assistants is organised by some leaders has led to confusion about their roles.
- There is still a small amount of teaching that requires improvement where tasks are not set at the right level or some learning is not reviewed sufficiently at the ends of lessons.

Information about this inspection

- All teachers were observed teaching. Of the 19 lessons seen, 10 were observed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher. Pupils from Year 3 and Year 6 read their books to inspectors.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work in lessons and sampled pupils' work books.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority, the headteacher, deputy headteacher, year heads and those staff with responsibilities. An inspector met a group of pupils and other inspectors held informal discussions with pupils.
- The inspection team took account of 42 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- Questionnaire responses from 23 members of staff were analysed.
- A range of school documents was scrutinised, including policies for safeguarding, records of staff training, the school self-evaluation document and school improvement plans, results of the school's monitoring of teaching, tracking of pupils' progress and lesson planning.
- Inspectors examined records of behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

David Speakman, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Michael Onyon	Additional Inspector
Yvonne Watts	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Margaret's Junior School is larger than the average-sized junior school.
- No alternative off-site provision is used by the school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and a small minority speak English as an additional language. None is at the early stages of learning English.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children with a parent serving in the armed forces and those in local authority care) is below the national average.
- An average proportion of pupils is supported through school action and the proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also close to the national average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There is a breakfast club and after-school care on site. These are run independently of the governing body and are subject to a separate inspection.
- A new headteacher joined the school in September 2011. There are three newly qualified teachers.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the proportion of outstanding teaching, making sure that:
 - all tasks are set at the right level for pupils
 - learning is reviewed sufficiently at the end of all lessons.
- Clarify the roles of teaching assistants and how they are managed.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' achievement across the school is good and has improved since the last inspection. Above average standards have been maintained in reading, writing and mathematics so that by Year 6 pupils are working at levels higher than those expected for their age.
- Pupils read fluently and with understanding. They have good skills to read unfamiliar words and are mostly accurate. They enjoy reading and often read for pleasure. Good reading skills help learning in other subjects such as history, geography and science.
- Writing is of a high quality and is very interesting to read. Older pupils write at length and develop story lines very well. They use expressive words when describing a character. Sentences such as, 'Indeed, the crest crowning the top of its hideous cockerel-like head signalled its enduring reign over man and all other creatures' paints a vivid picture of a character from Greek mythology. Pupils are skilled at drafting and refining their work so that their finished pieces of work are of the best standard possible for their ability.
- Pupils have good learning skills in mathematics, which help them explore and investigate a range of mathematical problems and find things out for themselves. They use their good knowledge of number and skills in problem solving very well. A Year 6 group of pupils who find mathematics more challenging, made excellent progress in estimating capacity and their knowledge of decimals to convert from millilitres to litres very accurately.
- Standards are above those nationally expected for this age in a range of other subjects. Throughout the school, high quality art can be seen on display, showing pupils' imagination and creativity. Their singing is excellent, as heard in assemblies where they sing songs of praise with impressive expression. Work in history and geography is of a high quality and is very effectively supported by pupils' good writing and presentation skills. Pupils have good scientific investigation skills and confidently set up tests to prove or disprove their initial ideas. They use computer expertise to help edit writing in order to improve its quality.
- Taking account of their different starting points, all groups of pupils make good progress. The school monitors progress effectively, quickly identifying any pupil who is falling behind and providing support quickly. School data show that nearly all pupils make at least the expected amount of progress from year to year in English and mathematics with a good number making more.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including with a statement of special needs, make good progress. All make at least the nationally expected progress and the large majority make better. Adults are aware of each pupil's specific needs and provide well-focused support. Those pupils who are vulnerable receive effective personal support which prepares them well for learning.
- The school is effectively closing the gap in attainment between pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and others. Pupils eligible for the pupil premium make good progress through the support of teaching staff and teaching assistants, who provide small-group and one-to-one support and counselling. Some of these pupils receive funding to enable them to join in activities where extra costs would create difficulty.

The quality of teaching is good

- Lesson observations, records of pupils' progress and the schools' checks on teaching show that teaching has improved. The significant increase in the amount of good and outstanding teaching is a result of teachers using what they already know about pupils to plan demanding tasks for them. They expect the best from pupils and give them time to find things out for themselves.
- Teachers plan many exciting chances for pupils to investigate and explore interesting tasks. As a result, pupils try hard to succeed and make improvements in their work. Expert guidance and exceptionally well-planned questioning helps pupils to learn for themselves and to think things out. A strong feature common to all lessons seen was the high degree to which teachers expected pupils to work on their own and not to rely on adults for answers to their questions.
- Teaching of communication, reading, writing and mathematics is good and, during the inspection, was often outstanding. Pupils develop these skills in different subjects. Pupils wrote vivid character descriptions of Greek mythological creatures in history. They used their mathematical skills well in scientific investigation to explore temperature zones.
- Marking of pupils' work is thorough and detailed. All pupils have clear targets and teachers let them know how well they are achieving them. Comments reflect what pupils have done well and identify any areas that could be improved. There is evidence in pupils' books that they respond to this advice, and sometimes add their own comments.
- There is a small amount of teaching that requires improvement. Very occasionally, tasks are not set at the right level for pupils. On other occasions some important learning is not reviewed at the ends of lessons, so pupils are not fully aware of how well they have done.
- Teaching for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and for those known to be eligible for the pupil premium, is effective. In mathematics pupils are grouped, based on their success in previous learning. Teaching assistants offer good support for learning by giving focused help and by breaking tasks down into small achievable steps well matched to pupils' needs.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' outstanding behaviour makes a significant contribution to their learning and personal development. Pupils always pay close attention to the teacher in lessons, follow instructions and listen carefully and thoughtfully to others' views. They show great initiative in helping move their own learning on and have acquired an excellent ability to work on their own. It is common that pupils challenge themselves to make quicker progress.
- Pupils respond extremely well to the management of their behaviour and maintain high levels of self-control, remain focused on learning and do not waste any time. Behaviour in assemblies, at lunchtime and break times and when they move from one class to another is outstanding. Pupils say 'behaviour is great' and refer to 'how sensible people are'. They are safe in school.
- Most parents agree that behaviour is excellent and say their children are safe and happy at school. This is reflected in the above-average attendance over recent years.
- Bullying is very rare and pupils say that it is dealt with effectively should it occur. Pupils have a very good understanding of the different types of bullying and know how to avoid them. There are very few recorded incidents of poor behaviour and there have been no exclusions.

- Pupils are able to reflect on important issues, engage in team building, show initiative and develop a sense of right and wrong. This fosters their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding well. They benefit from a wide range of activities to enrich learning, such as outdoor and adventurous activities, working towards achieving the Arts Mark Gold Award, taking on responsibility within school and for their own learning and the study of a wide range of modern and ancient cultures.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, the deputy head teacher and the senior leadership team have effectively driven improvement, moving all aspects of the school's work to at least good. They work closely with the four year leaders. Together they have inspired a strong commitment for school improvement amongst all staff. However, there is some duplication in the management of teaching assistants and this can sometimes be confusing for them in carrying out their roles.
- Effective arrangements for checking teachers' work have led to improvement. Leaders visit classrooms regularly, look at teachers' planning and check pupils' work to make sure they are making good progress. Class teachers are regularly held accountable for pupils' progress. Any shortcomings are included as priorities for improvement and senior leaders provide good opportunities for training.
- The school's evaluation of teaching is closely linked to the allocation of responsibility and salaries. Clear targets for teachers are set which relate to the 'Teachers' Standards'. Newly qualified teachers receive well-organised and effective support in their first year of teaching.
- Through robust checks, leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas that need attention. They clearly identify the main areas for improvement and set out how each priority will be achieved and by when.
- The way subjects are taught offers good learning experiences for pupils of all abilities, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Equality of opportunity is promoted well and reflected in the narrowing of the gap in the progress of different groups. Funding for the pupil premium is wisely spent on individual and small-group support for eligible pupils and makes sure they are able to take part in all school activities where cost could create difficulty. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- The local authority has a realistic view of the school and is providing useful advice and support, especially in evaluating the school's work in setting clear areas for further development.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Members of the governing body are regular visitors to the school. Individual governors have active links with staff focused on key areas for improvement, as well as subject and management links. Governors have a clear, objective view of the school's work and how it compares to other schools through their understanding of performance information. As a result they know about the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' learning and progress. They use this to ask searching questions of senior leaders in guiding school improvement and in overseeing clear targets for managing the performance of the headteacher and staff. They make sure statutory requirements are met, particularly for safeguarding, where vetting procedures for staff and visitors are thorough and all training, including their own, is up to date. They make careful financial decisions, seeing that the pupil premium is used well in supporting eligible pupils and knowing what difference it makes.

They also make sure that teachers' pay is linked to their performance.

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	125667
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	402346

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	354
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kevin Williams
Headteacher	Barbara Williams-Cooke
Date of previous school inspection	7 July 2010
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