

St Richard's CofE First School

Four Pools Lane, Evesham, WR11 1DU

Inspection dates 26–27 February 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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils achieve well. By the time they leave, their standards in English and mathematics are above age-related expectations.
- Good provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage helps children to become confident independent learners.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well. Needs are identified early and appropriate support given.
- Teaching has improved since the last inspection and is consistently good or better.
- Pupils feel safe, behave well and are punctual to lessons. Staff are very good at helping pupils with behavioural, emotional and social needs to manage their feelings and control their behaviour.
- The school is well led and managed. Leaders help all staff to improve their practice, which in turn helps pupils to make better progress.
- The school provides good support for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Relationships are very good and pupils instinctively help one another.
- The school provides a wide range of extra activities so that all pupils have the opportunity to enjoy and succeed at something they like. Provision for art is outstanding.
- Governors support the school well and ensure that the budget is spent wisely for the benefit of all pupils.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Attendance is low. The school encourages full attendance but has not yet succeeded in gaining the support of all families.
- Teachers are less confident when teaching mathematics than when teaching English
- Marking is not consistently good across the school.
- Some pupils lack confidence when speaking aloud in class and this subsequently restricts the progress they make in writing because they cannot express their ideas clearly enough.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 14 lessons and saw all the teachers and most of the teaching assistants teaching. They also observed pupils' behaviour at playtimes and lunchtimes, talked to them about their views and looked at samples of their work.
- Discussions were held with governors, the headteacher, teachers and teaching assistants and a representative of the local education authority.
- In addition to observing the school's work, the inspectors looked at the school's self-evaluation and improvement planning, information about pupils' attainment and progress and documents relating to their safety and behaviour.
- The inspectors took into account the views expressed in the 45 completed online Parent View questionnaires and the responses to recent questionnaires carried out by the school. They also spoke with some parents and carers at the start of the school day.
- The school won a Britain in Bloom gold award in 2012.

Inspection team

Peter Kerr, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Neil Taylor

Additional Inspector

Tracy Stone

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Richard's is larger than the average sized first school and serves an urban area.
- Most pupils are of from White British backgrounds. About 10% of pupils are from minority ethnic groups and speak English as an additional language.
- About 15% of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium (this provides additional funding for looked after children, pupils from families known to be eligible for free school meals and those from service families). This is a broadly average proportion
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The needs include behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, speech, language and communication needs and learning difficulties.
- The school shares a 0-19 Learning Campus with a nursery, a middle school, a high school and a special school. These establishments are inspected separately. Pupils share some of the other schools' facilities. Other than this, no pupils are taught off-site. Some pupils attend breakfast and after-school clubs provided by the nursery.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve provision in mathematics by:
 - providing specialist training for all staff so that they become as confident and skilled in teaching mathematics as they are in English
- Raise standards of spoken English for all pupils by:
 - allocating time in all teachers' weekly planning specifically to the improvement of pupils' spoken English in all subjects
- Improve attendance so that it is at least in line with the national average for primary schools by:
 - adopting the techniques used successfully by other schools to raise pupils' attendance and reduce persistent absence
 - working closely with partner schools on the campus to persuade families who do not send their children regularly to cooperate with the school and improve their attendance.
 - taking action against those families who persistently refuse to comply with legal requirements.
- Make marking more effective by:
 - ensuring that marking in all classes is of the same high standards as in the best examples in the school and consistently gives pupils clear guidance on how they can improve

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Attainment on entry to Reception matches age-related expectations. The children make rapid progress and most meet all the early learning goals by the time they leave Reception.
- Children learn well because they are given interesting and purposeful activities for much of the day and staff closely observe and support their learning. They are particularly good at sharing and co-operating with each other.
- Progress is good throughout the school for all pupils and attainment is above age-related expectations in every year group from Y1 to Y5.
- In most lessons, pupils work enthusiastically and, particularly when working in groups, discuss their work animatedly. They stay focused on the task in hand, collaborate well and support one another.
- More able pupils learn particularly well in English lessons because they have opportunities to improve and extend what they say and write. They concentrate well on these tasks and produce high quality work. Most pupils are enthusiastic readers. They read widely and enjoy talking about what they have read.
- Lower attaining pupils and those with speech, language and communication needs sometimes make less progress than others because they do not have enough time and support to improve their speaking before having to write.
- Pupils enjoy learning independently, which was an area for improvement at the last inspection. For example, two Year 5 boys were proud to discover through an internet search that there was disagreement among experts about whether or not 1 is a prime number.
- Pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties learn well because of good support from both pupils and staff. The school's practice of keeping them in class so that they can take a full part in lessons and other activities works well.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium have lower than the expected age-related attainment in most classes but are making more progress each term than is expected nationally. The school has used the additional funding to train staff in delivering the 'Every Child Counts' programme and improving staff skills in the teaching of phonics. Extra staff have also been appointed to help deliver these programmes. The attainment gap in English and mathematics between these pupils and other pupils in the school is consequently beginning to close.

The quality of teaching is good

- The great majority of lessons seen during the inspection were good or better and some were outstanding. This profile reflects the school's own evaluation of teaching.
- Teachers use accurate assessments of the pupils' previous learning to plan lessons and prepare resources and activities well. Teachers and teaching assistants work closely together to make sure that all pupils know exactly what is expected of them.

- When teaching is outstanding, for example in some lessons in art and mathematics, a brief, well-informed introduction is followed by imaginative practical work or problem-solving. Staff keep all pupils working at a good pace, giving support to lower-attaining pupils and extra challenge to the more able as the lesson proceeds.
- Teachers use questioning well in most lessons to gauge pupils' understanding and make activities simpler or more demanding if pupils' responses demand it. However, some teachers are reluctant to adapt activities in mathematics to reflect pupils' understanding and progress in the lesson and stick too rigidly to the plan because they lack confidence in their subject expertise.
- Good support is given to lower-attaining pupils as they work, including those with learning difficulties. This is effective in helping the pupils to complete the set tasks and to make progress towards their individual targets.
- Teachers respond swiftly to support pupils whose progress stalls. Staff are trained to deliver intervention lessons and the pupils' progress is checked very regularly. The 'Every Child Counts' programme has been particularly successful in helping Year 2 pupils who have fallen behind in mathematics to catch up. Samples of pupils' work show that those who have low attendance make similar progress to other pupils in the same class. This is because the school provides extra support for them to catch up when they have been away.
- Marking has improved and much of it is good, but it is not consistent across the school. In the best examples, teachers give clear pointers to the pupils about how to improve and pupils respond so the work improves rapidly. Some marking is not up to this high standard.
- Phonics (letters and sounds) is taught consistently well and this contributes to steadily improving reading and spelling. Pupils did well in the 2012 national phonics test for six year olds and they read confidently and widely. Those making slower progress read regularly to staff and volunteers, all of whom are skilled at helping them to read more fluently and with increasing understanding and enjoyment. The library is used well to encourage reading for all pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils feel very safe in school. They know how to keep safe and what to do if they feel threatened in school or elsewhere. They say there is very little bullying in the school and if any is reported it is dealt with quickly by staff.
- Only a small minority of parents and carers expressed views of the school on-line. A higher proportion, but still a minority, returned the latest school questionnaire. In both cases a very small number of parents and carers did not agree that behaviour was managed well. The inspection found that behaviour is good and is managed well by teachers. No evidence of bullying was found.
- Attendance is well below the national average for primary schools. The headteacher and governors have tried many ways of improving it, but so far without success. The lowest attendance rates are among pupils whose parents take them back to their country of origin for extended periods, but other groups also have below average attendance.
- A striking feature of the pupils' personal development is their exceptional understanding of the equal value of all individuals and the mutual support they provide for each other. This contributes to good behaviour in lessons and a good climate for learning. For example, one pupil

who had moved from another school where he had had behaviour problems expressed his appreciation of how his classmates persuaded him to behave well. This had helped him to enjoy lessons and learn more quickly.

- Pupils undertake a range of responsibilities in the school, including acting as librarians and being members of the eco council. They are proud of the contribution they make to the school and the community.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher leads the school well. She has raised expectations for the quality of teaching, linking promotion to teachers' contribution to pupils' progress and eliminating inadequate teaching. As a result, teaching has steadily improved, particularly in Years 3 to 5.
- Members of the senior leadership team support the headteacher well. The data manager provides very detailed information and analysis of pupils' progress to staff and governors. The school's data management is regarded as exemplary by the local authority, which now provides light touch support to this good school.
- Staff share expertise available within the school to extend the range of teaching styles used by staff and to enrich the pupils' learning. Expertise is also shared between schools on the campus, for example through joint learning walks by governors and leaders from all the schools.
- The campus partnership offers many benefits for the pupils and aids transition. Pupils share some of the other schools' facilities and staff from all the schools share expertise, for example in special educational needs, art, music and writing. This helps to improve practice across the campus.
- A number of parents make a very good contribution to the work of the school through the 'Teapot Time' group. This enables them to discuss issues of common interest and make parents' and carers' views known to the school.
- A minority of parents and carers do not co-operate with the school, particularly with regard to attendance. Too many families do not send their children to school as often as they should. The school has yet to find a successful way of fully engaging with this group of parents and carers, particularly those who take their children back to their country of origin for extended periods.
- The curriculum offers a rich range of learning opportunities both within lessons and as extra activities. A good range of clubs, from football to engineering, provide something for everybody. Residential trips, including one to France, help to widen the pupils' social and cultural perspectives and prepare them well for the next step in their education.
- High quality art displays show that pupils have closely observed the beauty and mystery of nature. Their sense of social responsibility is strongly fostered, for example through the Eco Council and an awareness of the needs of others is strongly encouraged.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors know the school well, are well-trained and provide good support. They ensure that the pupils are safeguarded well, that there is equality of opportunity and that there is no discrimination against any group. They use their knowledge of data on pupils' progress to form their own view of how well the pupils are doing relative to other schools. They know through the headteacher how effective teaching is and ensure that staff remuneration is linked to

pupils' achievements. They fund any professional development needs and support the headteacher in eliminating any sub-standard teaching. Governors hold the school to account for the effectiveness of all funding, particularly pupil premium spending, and know how the school spends its money. They publish useful information about this on the school's website.

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	116810
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	405668

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

Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–10
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	327
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lucy Vincent-Daviss
Headteacher	Elizabeth Spencer
Date of previous school inspection	22 September 2010
Telephone number	01386 446416
Fax number	N/A
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