

# Wakefield St Marys Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Charles Street, Wakefield, West Yorkshire, WF1 4PE

## Inspection dates

12–13 March 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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 and make good progress in their lessons and over time. The proportion making better than expected progress is increasing year on year.
- Good, and sometimes outstanding, teaching motivates pupils to do their best. Teachers, aided by experienced support staff, establish a purposeful atmosphere in lessons.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage helps children to make good progress in their reading, writing and number work; they make outstanding progress developing their personal and social skills.
- The curriculum has been carefully planned with good links between subjects. Lessons are practical and fun.
- The school is a safe and harmonious community where pupils' behaviour is consistently good. They enjoy all that this improving school has to offer.
- Leaders, including governors, want the very best for the pupils. They use data very effectively to identify those pupils who could be making better progress and then provide the right support to help them improve.
- Since the time of the last inspection leaders have taken robust action to ensure that the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement have improved significantly.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet strong enough to ensure that all pupils make the best possible progress across the school. As a result, achievement is better in mathematics than it is in reading and writing.
- Although some marking of pupils' work is excellent and helps them understand how to improve, this is not consistent across the school.
- Not all pupils respond quickly enough to teachers' suggestions about how their work could be made better.
- While a larger proportion of pupils than the national average make expected progress, the proportion making better than expected progress is not yet as great.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 lessons or small-group activities. Three of the observations were conducted jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with governors, senior leaders, school staff and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors talked to pupils in lessons about their work, looked at books, listened to pupils read and talked to a group of pupils from Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Not enough responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were available for inspectors to consider. However, they took account of a recent survey conducted by the school and spoke to a number of parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors took account of the 37 questionnaires returned by members of the school staff.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at progress data, performance management information and records relating to behaviour and attendance, as well as documents relating to safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Jim Alexander, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

David Matthews

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- A large proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic groups.
- An increasingly large proportion of pupils do not have English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and supported by the pupil premium fund is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school runs a breakfast club for pupils.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, so a greater proportion is outstanding, by:
  - ensuring all teachers' marking always shows pupils how to improve their work, and then making sure all pupils act swiftly on that guidance
  - ensuring all teaching helps pupils develop accuracy when reading and writing, and providing them with more opportunities to practise their skills in other subjects
  - not jumping in too quickly to provide pupils with an answer, but allowing them the right amount of time to work things out for themselves.
- Further raise achievement by:
  - helping pupils to make as good progress in their reading and writing as they do in their mathematics
  - ensuring the proportion of pupils making better than expected progress continues to improve.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are generally low compared with those typically expected for their age. Communication and language skills are particularly very low. They are helped to make good progress and are increasingly well prepared to start Year 1, particularly because they develop strong personal and social skills.
- Across the school pupils are encouraged to read frequently and they enjoy a wide range of challenging and interesting books.
- At the time of the last inspection attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 was exceptionally low. Since then attainment at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 has improved year on year. At the end of each key stage it is now in line with the average in mathematics, although it is slightly below average in reading and writing.
- The school is exceptionally successful at helping pupils to make expected progress and every year more pupils than previously are making better than expected progress.
- Leaders, recognising that progress in reading and writing could be better still, have organised some small-group and one-to-one activities to help pupils catch up. These are proving very effective, particularly for the growing number of pupils who do not have English as their first language, as well as for pupils from minority ethnic groups.
- Well-tailored support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs helps them to make good and often outstanding progress from their low starting points.
- Those pupils who are supported by extra funding made available through the pupil premium are provided for in small-group and one-to-one activities. This tailor-made approach is helping them make good progress, so that any gaps in their previous attainment are quickly closing and many are now working at the same level as other pupils in their class

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good overall and some is outstanding. Teachers plan enjoyable lessons that meet the needs and interests of pupils well. They do this particularly well in mathematics. As a result, pupils are enthusiastic and keen to learn. They appreciate that lessons are 'hands-on and fun'.
- Teachers ensure that pupils do not spend too much time sitting and listening but quickly settle to number work or mathematical problem-solving activities that are set at just the right level. This effectively helps to develop their independence as well as build their skills to cooperate and work well together.
- Where teaching is at its best, pupils are given a wide range of challenging tasks that cause them to think hard and search for solutions. However, on some occasions adults can jump in too quickly to help provide an answer rather than allowing the pupil to arrive at the answer independently.
- Teachers have also turned their attention to improving the way that reading and writing are taught. While weekly writing tasks and daily reading activities are proving effective, and there are increasing opportunities for pupils to practise these skills across a range of subjects, they are not yet as well established as improvements in the quality of mathematics teaching.
- Teachers are supported by well-trained and highly experienced teaching assistants, who are always very clear about what is required to help pupils make good progress in the time available.
- Across the school the quality of marking is good but it can vary from class to class. When marking is at its best, pupils explain that 'it really helps us know what we should be doing next'. However, some marking, while praising pupils' efforts, offers less in the way of constructive advice about how to improve. There are other examples where pupils have been told what steps to take, but teachers have not always ensured pupils have acted quickly enough to implement the changes required.

- The quality of teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved significantly since the time of the last inspection and is now good. Activities are carefully planned to support all areas of learning, both indoors and outside. Children are encouraged to be independent, taking responsibility for their own learning. Adults use questions well to consolidate children's understanding and extend their thinking.
- Throughout the school the impact of teaching on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. This helps pupils to develop good attitudes to their work and they often encourage one another to do their best.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Pupils' positive attitudes to their work and the respect they display for their teachers are noteworthy strengths in this caring school. In lessons pupils are keen to learn and they cooperate well with one another.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage children are helped to make outstanding progress developing their personal and social skills. From this young age they are helped to develop the skills required to work independently for sustained periods of time.
- Pupils' attendance has been improving year on year. The majority of pupils now have attendance which is above the national average. However, despite the school's actions, some pupils' attendance is not so good and a small number still have extended periods of unauthorised absence.
- The number of exclusions is lower than average and incidents of bullying are exceptionally rare. Pupils are knowledgeable about all types of bullying, for example any type of harassment or name-calling.
- Pupils say they get on well together and any problems are very quickly resolved. They particularly appreciate how 'the worry bin' helps them voice any concerns that they have.
- All parents who responded to the recent school survey or who took the opportunity to speak with inspectors say the school keeps their children safe and happy.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- The determined leadership and high expectations of the headteacher, senior leaders and united staff team have ensured this school has improved significantly since the last inspection.
  - Self-evaluation is accurate and provides a firm foundation for school improvement plans, which focus on the correct priorities.
  - Lessons are checked regularly and feedback given, identifying where improvements are needed. This helps teachers know how to improve the quality of their work.
  - Many assessment data are collected and used exceptionally well to identify who needs additional support. Swift action is then taken to ensure the right help is offered.
  - Since the time of the last inspection the Early Years Foundation Stage has been transformed and now provides a good quality of education. The school has benefited from effective, well-tailored support provided by the local authority.
  - Leaders have allocated the pupil premium funding in a wide variety of ways, for example additional tuition and small-group activities, to help support pupils' reading, during the well-attended breakfast club. This is helping them make rapid progress and is just one example of the school's commitment to equality of opportunity for all pupils.
  - Performance management arrangements are effective. Leaders identify teachers' strengths and weaknesses by using a wide range of evidence and then provide effective support to ensure teaching improves. The headteacher's judgements about the quality of lessons are accurate and
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inspectors observed the effective feedback each teacher received.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors bring a wide range of skills and experience to help them lead the school. They know how well the school is performing in relation to other schools across the country. This information is used, together with looking at work in pupils' books and observing the work of the school, to gain a clear understanding of the school's strengths and what needs to improve. Governors use the information from the performance management procedures to ensure pay awards are justified. They are not afraid to ask searching and challenging questions when required. They are aware of the positive effect of the use of the pupil premium funding on pupils' progress. They ensure safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.
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## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	108269
<b>Local authority</b>	Wakefield
<b>Inspection number</b>	400973

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	229
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Janet Milne
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mark Taylor
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 July 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01924 303625
<b>Fax number</b>	01924 303626
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