

# St Mary's Church of England Primary School, Hinckley

Station Road, Hinckley, LE10 1AW

**Inspection dates** 23–24 April 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.

- When children start in Reception, they often have basic skills that are below those typically found. By the time they leave at the end of Year 6, results are above those found nationally. This gain in standards represents good progress.
- Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. The good use teachers make of information they have on each pupil's progress ensures that work is well matched to pupils' abilities and that all make good progress.
- Disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those known to be eligible for free school meals make even better progress than other pupils because the additional support for them is used so well.
- Behaviour in and around school is good and the large majority of pupils really enjoy learning and are proud of their school.
- Leadership and management are good and have improved since the previous inspection, partly because teachers who are responsible for English, mathematics and science are playing a more effective part in raising standards.
- School leaders' careful monitoring of what happens in classrooms ensures effective teaching and pupils' good achievement. Rising standards are reflected in the quality of teaching and learning that have enabled the school to improve since its previous inspection.
- Governors bring a good range of valuable skills to support the school and are effective in ensuring that the school is effective and meets all its responsibilities, especially for the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- While standards are above average, fewer pupils, proportionately, reach higher levels, notably in writing by Year 6 because the more able are not always fully challenged.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a total of 20 lessons taught by teachers from Reception through to Year 6. They also attended a school assembly.
- They spoke formally to groups of pupils and also had informal discussions, both in lessons and more generally around the school.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, key subject leaders, representative governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body, and the school's finance officer. A telephone discussion was held with a representative of the local authority. The views of staff were gathered from their questionnaire returns and from discussions.
- A total of 13 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were taken into account, together with 93 responses to the recent parent questionnaire undertaken by the school. Conversations were held with parents who were dropping their children off in the morning and one telephone call was received.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation including: information on pupils' progress, planning for teaching and learning, the school's self-evaluation and improvement planning, and key policies and procedures, including those for keeping pupils safe.

## Inspection team

Martyn Groucutt, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Rosemary Barnfield

Additional Inspector

Lenford White

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- St Mary's is larger than the average primary school.
- The proportion known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding for those eligible for free school meals, those in the care of the local authority and those with a parent in the armed services) is below average. The only current pupil premium allocation for this school is for those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of pupils being supported through school action is above average, but the proportion supported through school action plus or by a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic communities and those who speak English as an additional language are below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which represent the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

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

- Enable more pupils to reach the higher National Curriculum levels at the end of Year 6 by:
  - ensuring that in every lesson there is always sufficiently challenging work for the more able
  - asking demanding questions of the more able that will really make them think hard
  - supporting pupils in developing their thinking skills, including more complex thinking for the more able
  - ensuring that marking of pupils' work always includes advice on how it might be improved and the 'next steps' for them to take to move their learning forward as quickly as possible
  - always making sure that there is time to allow pupils to make improvements or corrections when their work has been marked
  - enabling teachers to observe the best of their colleagues' teaching to help them improve their own practice.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children usually start Reception with skills and experiences below the levels typical for their age. In some areas, such as their understanding of shape, space and measures, nearly a quarter of the children start well below usual standards.
- Children make good progress in Reception because of effective teaching. When they enter Year 1, they are performing at around the level expected nationally. By the end of Year 2, the school's results are above expectation in both English and mathematics.
- When pupils reach the end of Year 6, they are very well prepared for the next stage of their education. Results have improved steadily since the previous inspection. They are now above the national average in both English and mathematics. However, attainment at the higher levels, notably in writing by Year 6, is less impressive and so pupils' achievement is not yet outstanding.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress and in key areas, such as reading, it is outstanding. Additional help and support are effective and the gap between their attainment and that of others is narrowing considerably.
- Those who are eligible for the pupil premium make outstanding progress. The carefully targeted individual help they receive means that all are helped in the areas they find most difficult. Their success is such that test results show them attaining better than most other pupils in both English and mathematics.
- Teachers use the information collected on pupils' progress well and the school's tracking system records, termly, each pupil's progress and attainment. These data provide a clear picture of individual progress. Where this is not fast enough, additional support is directed where it is needed. This process of directed support is an area that has improved since the previous inspection and is a key element in explaining the rising standards.
- Tracking of progress also shows that there is no difference in the performance of those pupils who come from minority ethnic backgrounds or who speak English as an additional language with that of others.
- There is a sharp focus on reading through the school. From Reception, children are encouraged to know their letters and the sounds that they make (phonics). In the national screening check held at the end of Year 1, they performed above the national expectation in 2012.
- With the focus on meeting the learning needs of every individual, the school promotes equality of opportunity very effectively. It encourages good relationships and avoids discrimination against any individual or group. Learning is harmonious throughout the school.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is generally good and some is outstanding. It enables all pupils, including disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those who attract the pupil premium, to make good and, sometimes, outstanding progress across all year groups. Effective teaching of literacy and mathematics enables pupils to achieve well.

- Teachers plan learning and teach lessons that engage pupils' interest. Consequently, pupils generally enjoy their learning. Topics are well chosen and provide opportunities for studies that motivate the learners, but which also ensure good coverage of the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics.
- Throughout the school and in every classroom, high-quality displays of pupils' work create a positive learning atmosphere that motivates and inspires all pupils. Teaching promotes positive attitudes to learning with very effective questioning to stimulate learning. However, this effective practice is not fully maximised in every lesson and more-able pupils are not always pressed enough to think harder about the subject.
- Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and use the information they have on the progress of every pupil to make work demanding for all. However, on occasions, there is a lack of challenge for the more able to develop the more advanced thinking skills that lead to higher attainment.
- Teachers mark work regularly and there is a clear policy for assessing pupils' work. When the policy is implemented fully, it is very effective. In these situations, it makes clear what is needed to improve a piece of work, or suggest 'next steps' for moving the pupil's learning forward. However, inspectors found this good practice was not always applied. Similarly, while teachers are expected to provide time for pupils to make corrections or improve their work, it did not always happen.
- Teaching assistants work alongside teachers very effectively to promote good learning. This is especially so for pupils who benefit from individually targeted additional support, such as those eligible for the pupil premium. In large part this extra help explains why these pupils are able to do so well and benefit from individualised support.

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

- Pupils are keen to learn and are rightly proud of their school. There is a strong sense of shared values among pupils which leads to supportive relationships with each other and with adults.
- Behaviour in lessons is generally excellent, except in those few lessons where pupils are not fully challenged. In these situations, the lack of stimulation very occasionally leads to a little low-level disruption. However, this is not serious enough to disrupt teaching and learning.
- Parents spoken to at school and those who completed a questionnaire generally agree that behaviour is good and that the school is a safe place where pupils can thrive. There are very few incidents of bullying or racist incidents and pupils say that when there an incident it is dealt with effectively. They have very positive relationships with adults in the school and say they would be happy to report any incident because they know they would be taken seriously.
- Pupils understand the differing kinds of bullying, including cyber-bullying. The dangers of the misuse of the internet and social-networking sites are effectively taught.
- The precise recording of incidents of unacceptable behaviour shows that the school deals with such incidents effectively and that they are decreasing over time, reflecting improving behaviour.
- The school has worked hard to raise attendance in recent years. It shows a rising trend and is now above average, reflecting most pupils' enjoyment of school.

**The leadership and management are good**

- The headteacher has high expectations and is determined to continue the improvement that has taken place since the previous inspection. Together with the deputy headteacher, they make a very effective senior team.
- Since the previous inspection, the roles of the key subject leaders for English, mathematics and science, together with that of the special educational needs coordinator, have been further developed. They play an increasingly positive role in enhancing the effectiveness of the school as they gain in confidence and develop their responsibilities.
- One of the reasons why the school is effective in raising standards is that rigorous monitoring of teaching takes place regularly to ensure the good quality of teachers' classroom practice. Leaders have a detailed knowledge of what is happening throughout the school and readily identify where teachers' practice can be further improved – as in enabling the more-able pupils to achieve even higher standards by teachers' challenging them more in lessons. Teachers are held to account, but are also given good opportunities to develop their professional expertise.
- The school sometimes gives staff opportunities to observe their colleagues who regularly deliver outstanding teaching and learning in lessons, but this good practice is not widespread enough.
- Teachers have clear and ambitious objectives to achieve during the year in enabling pupils to achieve well, and there is a relentless focus on raising standards. There is a clear link between teachers' effectiveness and their rates of pay. Those teachers who move to the upper pay scale take on additional responsibilities to drive forward pupils' progress and attainment.
- The range of subjects taught has become increasingly topic based and allows all pupils, whatever their ability, to gain access to learning at the right level. Care is taken to ensure that sufficient time is allocated to promoting English and mathematics, but opportunities are also taken to use these skills across all work done in lessons.
- There are widespread opportunities to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. Pupils' successful personal development is reflected in the high-quality art work around the school and in the participation of the school in a singing assembly that was of a truly exceptional standard.
- The school's self-evaluation is effective, and from which emerge priorities for continuing improvement. Leaders are constantly looking to raise standards. The school's overall effectiveness is good and the capacity to sustain improvement is strong.
- The local authority has correctly identified that, as an effective school, only 'light touch' support is needed. However, the school is positive that support is there when needed.
- Effective relationships with other agencies support safeguarding of pupil and help to ensure that any additional individual needs are met. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school and, while a specific issue regarding phonics teaching was raised with inspectors, it was found that the school's practice is supporting better standards.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is effective and benefits from the range of professional skills its members bring that enable it to carry out all legal responsibilities, including those for safeguarding and

provision of equal opportunities. Governors also actively participate in training offered by the local authority. They monitor the curriculum and have a clear picture of what is going on in lessons. They have a good understanding of the processes by which the effectiveness of teaching is monitored and how this links to pay and how staff under-performance is tackled. The objectives set for the headteacher are rigorous and monitored effectively. Governors scrutinise the financial situation closely with good support from the school bursar and have a good understanding of how funds such as the pupil premium are being targeted to raise the attainment of those who receive it.

## 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>	120134
<b>Local authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	401911

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 controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	300
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Robert Page
<b>Headteacher</b>	Carol Cooper
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	November 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01455 637477
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