

Whitefriars Junior School

Boughton Drive, Rushden, NN10 9HX

Inspection dates 30 April–1 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- The headteacher and governing body have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and have strong systems in place to continue to move the school forward.
- Achievement for all groups of pupils is good and pupils' standards at the end of Year 6 are in line with the national average.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and pupils for whom the school receives extra funding, do equally as well or better than their classmates because teachers are good at planning work that enables them to make good progress.
- Very effective checking of the quality of teaching by the headteacher has rapidly improved the quality of teaching. All teaching is consistently good and there is some outstanding practice.
- Teachers' marking in English ensures that pupils know exactly what they need to do to improve.
- Pupils are excited by learning because the range of subjects is designed to stimulate their interest. Activities develop pupils' skills in reading, writing and mathematics across different subjects.
- Governors have taken every opportunity to ensure that they are sufficiently skilled to challenge the leadership team and ensure all pupils are achieving their full potential.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Their attitudes to learning are unfailingly positive and they are polite and respectful to each other and adults.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Marking in mathematics books does not explain clearly enough what pupils need to do next to improve.
- Pupils do not have enough regular opportunities to respond to teachers' marking.
- Not enough teaching is outstanding.
- Some senior leaders are still developing their skills in how to present data effectively in order to monitor pupil progress even more robustly.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 12 lessons, five of which were joint observations with the headteacher. They also made short visits to classrooms to look at specific areas of learning and small-group work.
- Work in pupils' books was examined during lessons and in a separate scrutiny. Pupils' views were sought through interviews and informally during the inspection.
- Inspectors listened to a sample of pupils read from Year 3 and Year 6.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, including those responsible for special educational needs, English and mathematics, and several members of the governing body. A telephone call was held with a representative from the local authority.
- School documentation was examined, including the school's own self-evaluation, development plans, records of pupils' progress and attainment, records of the checking of the quality of teaching and appraisal reviews.
- Questionnaires from all members of the school staff were analysed together with the 28 responses from parents to the online survey (Parent View).
- Visits were made to the breakfast club managed by the school.

Inspection team

Penny Spencer, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Maxine Clewlow

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Whitefriars Junior School is similar in size to the average primary school. There are two classes in every year group from Year 3 to Year 6.
- Most pupils are White British. A few pupils are from a variety of ethnic backgrounds and most speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is less than half that found nationally. This is extra government funding for pupils who are looked after by the local authority and those who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is lower than the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of educational need is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The governing body manages the school's breakfast club and this was included in this inspection.
- The school shares the site with Whitefriars Infant School from which most pupils transfer.
- There have been several changes to staffing since the previous inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching so that much is outstanding and further raise achievement by making sure that marking in mathematics books clearly identifies the next steps pupils must take to improve their work and that opportunities for pupils to respond to this feedback are more frequent, reflecting the excellent practice seen in English books.
- Further develop the impact of leadership by developing the skills of the assistant headteachers in analysing and presenting school performance information effectively to make it easier for staff and governors to see how much progress is made by all groups of pupils.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The standards reached by pupils at the end of Year 6 have been rising steadily and are average, this represents good progress from their different starting points.
- In all subjects pupils make at least the progress that is expected of them and many are now making better progress across all subjects. The school's own checking of pupils' progress and attainment is accurate and work in pupils' books closely matches the evidence from tests and teachers' assessments.
- In the 2012 tests at the end of Year 6, progress in English dipped for some pupils. Rigorous analysis by the leadership team coupled with further work on moderation with the Infant school will ensure this situation is less likely to occur in the future
- The progress of pupils in reading is good because pupils can accurately link the sound letters make to decode words they may not know. Older readers are enthusiastic and enjoy the opportunity to read books from the school's well-stocked library. Pupils who read to inspectors were confident and keen to show off their skills.
- Improving the quality of writing even further for all pupils, but especially boys, has been a recent focus for the school. Current assessment information shows the projects introduced to support this are having a very positive impact and standards in writing are rising for all groups.
- Pupils for whom the school receives extra funding through the pupil premium make good progress from their starting points and, in some cases, outstanding progress. This is because funds are matched carefully to the needs of each child and provide extra support in the classroom. The attainment in the national tests of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals has steadily improved in both English and mathematics and is now equal or better than that of their classmates.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because their needs are identified early and extra support is of good quality.

The quality of teaching is good

- Consistently good teaching has contributed significantly to the steady rise in standards. Pupils' experiences are overwhelmingly positive because teachers plan lessons that engage and inspire them to do well. In a good English lesson in Year 6, frequent references to real-life experiences of adults working in advertising agencies encouraged pupils to write excellent advertisements for a new brand of breakfast cereal.
- Teachers expect pupils to work hard and to concentrate in lessons. Pupils respond to this positively and inspectors were struck by the level of perseverance from all pupils to tackle and succeed in their tasks.
- Teachers are very good at linking learning across different subjects. In an outstanding lesson in Year 5, pupils were using the outdoor environment to undertake a number of challenges related to their topic on mountains, ending in the creation of a 'base camp'. Pupils used information and communication technology to create a photographic record of the day and to produce high-

quality posters on environmental issues as well as developing their skills in teamwork and cooperation.

- Teaching promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding effectively through a varied range of global and local topics, activities and events. Displays of pupils' work and a palpable sense of collaborative learning from all members of the school community underlined this view.
- Teachers and learning support assistants are very good at using appropriate questions to probe pupils' knowledge and develop their understanding. There is a shared expectation that pupils will respond with sufficient detail and simple one-word answers are actively discouraged.
- Teaching for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is of high quality. Teachers and support assistants make detailed observations of progress and there is a shared sense of accountability for pupils to attain to the best of their ability.
- When marking English books, teachers make sure that the next steps pupils need to take to improve their work are clear. As a result, pupils move forward steadily in their learning. Whilst this is evident in some mathematics books, it is not consistent. Similarly, the opportunities for pupils to regularly respond to this feedback are not the same across all year groups.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils have outstanding attitudes to learning. They are unfailingly keen to do their very best and work hard at all times. Their ability to work together and support each other is excellent.
- Teachers have excellent relationships with pupils and manage behaviour in a consistent way. This has led to significant changes in behaviour for some pupils, contributing to the calm and purposeful atmosphere in all classes.
- Pupils and parents have complete confidence in the ability of the school to keep everyone safe. Pupils have a very good understanding of how to keep themselves safe when using the internet and on the roads in the local community because the school holds frequent lessons on these aspects.
- Frequent learning opportunities, using the outdoor area, allow all pupils to take risks in a safe environment and, as a result, pupils are confident and enthusiastic learners.
- Pupils who spoke to inspectors were adamant that bullying was extremely rare and if any should happen to occur it would be dealt with swiftly by members of staff. Examination of the records kept by the school was consistent with this view, and parents who responded to Parent View were equally positive about the school's ability to deal with any situation.
- Older pupils take their responsibility as buddies to new pupils in Year 3 very seriously, and members of the school council and house captains are active in raising money for different charities and in improving their own environment.
- Specific projects, in conjunction with local community groups, designed to support boys' learning by giving them responsibilities and opportunities to be involved in the local community are having a very positive impact on their self-esteem and their learning outcomes.

- The level of care and support for disabled pupils is excellent and inspectors saw several instances of pupils actively supporting their less mobile friends in the playground.
- The school actively supports any families who may be experiencing temporary difficulties in bringing their children to school, but attendance is consistently above the national average because pupils want to come to school every day to learn.
- Pupils who attend the breakfast club start the day well in a safe and secure environment.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is highly respected by the parents. Supported by the senior leadership team and the governing body, she provides clear direction for the school. Several unforeseen changes in staff, experienced since the last inspection, have been dealt with swiftly and securely to ensure the impact on pupils and learning has been minimal.
- A systematic programme of checks on the quality of teaching and learning has led to continued improvement in achievement for all pupils. Decisions on the rates of pay for teachers are closely linked to pupils' progress.
- Analysis of the responses to the staff questionnaire shows a very high level of satisfaction with the way the school is led and managed. Staff are particularly appreciative of the training opportunities offered as part of their on-going development. Parents show an equally high level of satisfaction with all aspects of school life.
- The leadership team has been restructured and the assistant headteachers have a pivotal role in the professional development of other members of staff. They lead training for teachers and act as excellent role models. They are confident in analysing assessment information but are still developing their skills in collating and presenting this information in a manner that gives an overview of achievement across the school that is easy for others to understand and act upon.
- The curriculum provides exciting opportunities for all pupils to be engaged and is constantly reviewed and refined to make sure it maintains its relevance for all pupils. It provides excellent opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in reading, writing and mathematics across all subjects and so ensures equality of opportunity for all learners. Visits, opportunities for sporting and musical achievement, and special event days all add to this enjoyment. Clubs and after-school activities are popular and often oversubscribed.
- The school has forged good partnerships and relationships with local schools, including the infant school that shares the same site. Recent joint training for both headteachers on alternative methods of presenting assessment information will support future moderation between the schools.
- The local authority provides minimal support for this good school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Recent opportunities for governors to restructure their committees and increase the range of skills within the governing body have been extremely successful. As a result, the governors now offer an enhanced level of challenge to school leaders to maintain the improvements in pupils' achievement. Governors are a highly visible presence in the school, and several governors are actively involved in supporting pupils through a number of projects. They are clear about the quality of teaching in the school and the steps being taken to continue this

improvement. There are good systems to securely link pay rises for staff to their improvement against clear targets. Governors are developing their understanding of information that compares the school with similar schools nationally. Governors understand how the pupil premium has supported individual pupils to succeed and they check that funds are spent wisely. The arrangements to keep pupils safe meet statutory requirements.

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	121904
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	412999

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	238
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Karen Woolley
Headteacher	Helen Woodhouse
Date of previous school inspection	10 June 2010
Telephone number	01933 356351
Fax number	01933 356586
Email address	secretary1@whitefriars-jun.northants.sch.uk

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