

# St John the Evangelist Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary School

Fosseway, Clevedon, Somerset, BS21 5EL

**Inspection dates** 4–5 June 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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

- Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 is above average. They make good progress; and this is accelerating because teaching has improved. In consequence, achievement is good and is rising rapidly.
- Behaviour is outstanding. Pupils are always ready to learn, and they get along exceptionally well together and with adults. They are invariably courteous and considerate in lessons, when moving around the school and playing.
- Teachers plan thoroughly and promote good learning by delivering interesting lessons that provide good challenge and support to all. Pupils enjoy lessons and work very well, both together and independently.
- The new headteacher, ably supported by senior managers, has quickly identified key areas for action. Important reforms have been introduced, and these have substantially improved teaching and boosted pupils' progress.
- The governing body has gained a good understanding of the school. Governors are actively developing their skills, and provide effective support and challenge to school leaders.
- The school's caring ethos is evident in all aspects of its work and promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Sometimes, teaching lacks drive so that the pace of learning in some lessons is slower than it should be. Occasionally, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to participate actively through answering questions and taking part in discussions. Marking is generally constructive but does not always promote high standards of presentation.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 19 lessons taught by 12 teachers and undertook three joint observations with senior staff.
- Inspectors held discussions with pupils, teachers, the headteacher, senior managers, representatives of the governing body and a local authority officer.
- Inspectors examined numerous school documents including policies, assessment information, planning documents and records of all kinds.
- The views of 66 parents and carers were analysed through the Parent View website.

## Inspection team

John Carnaghan, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Robert Eyre-Brook	Additional Inspector
Mary Usher-Clark	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding for looked after children, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those from service families) is below the national average.
- Almost all pupils are White British and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The current headteacher was appointed in November 2012.

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

- Raise pupils' achievement by improving teaching so that a higher proportion of lessons are outstanding through:
  - setting the highest possible expectations, particularly by ensuring teachers keep up a good pace throughout lessons
  - providing opportunities for all pupils to respond actively in lessons
  - making sure the marking and organisation of pupils' work not only offers good advice but also promotes higher standards of presentation.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' attainment rose a little in 2012. However, the impact of the new leadership and management in place from autumn 2012 has accelerated pupils' progress across the school so that attainment is now above average.
- Children make a good start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Working and playing together in a stimulating yet nurturing environment, they quickly develop the basic skills in speaking, reading, writing and number that provide a firm foundation for future learning. They also develop good learning habits such as working cooperatively or independently as required. Children move into Year 1 well prepared to start on the National Curriculum.
- The school has identified and addressed gaps in achievement between different groups of pupils. Boys' achievement has now caught up with girls' because the curriculum is better adapted to their interests and needs. Pupils who started from low levels of attainment make good progress, just like their peers, because their needs are quickly identified and the school acts on this by putting additional support in place. The inclusive nature of the school, and especially the good extra support offered, also helps disabled pupils and those with special educational needs progress at the same rate as others. In this way, the school ensures equality of opportunity and that there is no discrimination.
- The attainment of pupils receiving the pupil premium, as indicated by their average points scores in national assessments in English and mathematics, is lower than that of their peers. However, the school uses its precise analysis of assessment information to ensure this additional money is used wisely to provide a variety of additional support, particularly from well-trained teaching assistants. School assessments show that these actions are rapidly closing the attainment gap and the achievement of this group is good.
- The success of the school in promoting rapid progress and largely eliminating gaps in progress between different groups indicates that pupils' achievement, including in English and mathematics, is good.
- Pupils make good progress in lessons because they find them enjoyable and they are enthusiastic to learn. For example, a Year 3 and 4 science lesson on the skeleton was thoroughly planned for pupils to work in groups of three to investigate all aspects of the human frame. They learnt well because they were enthused by the variety of questions to answer and interesting resources to help with their investigations; pupils worked very well together at great speed to reach their goals.
- The school's efforts to promote reading are thoroughly organised. Letters and sounds are well taught from an early age, so many grasp the fundamentals of reading young. This is confirmed by high attainment shown in the 2012 Year 1 national screening check. Good resources promote numerous reading opportunities so even the youngest pupils quickly become familiar with books of all kinds. Parents and carers provide strong support in helping their children to read. Achievement in reading across the school is good.
- Much of pupils' work in English and other subjects is recorded in the same exercise books. This tends to muddle up work so the quality of presentation is not as good as it should be.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Regular checks by senior leaders, continuous staff training and the effective use of assessment information to hold staff to account have ensured teaching has numerous strengths and promotes consistency of practice across the school.
- This consistency is very evident in marking. The use of a standard system across the school helps pupils to understand what teachers mean. Marking is invariably very thorough, offering encouraging comments and very precise advice to pupils about how to make improvements. However, there is not enough focus on the neat presentation of work. Pupils react well to these

exhortations, striving to make their work better. Children are at times given opportunities to mark their own and others' work, and this enhances their understanding of what is good.

- Typically, lessons are characterised by varied activities, active learning and good planning to provide the correct degree of support and challenge for all groups of pupils. Teaching assistants work proactively throughout lessons, successfully supporting pupils who may otherwise struggle to learn.
- Lessons enjoy a positive atmosphere. Teachers are caring and courteous, consistently fostering good relationships. Pupils respond in kind. They are polite and responsive, listening carefully to their teachers and one another. Pupils report they enjoy lessons because they are fun and interesting. Their exceptionally good behaviour means there is almost no disruption to lessons' smooth progress.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, meticulous planning and preparation provide a stimulating learning environment. Teachers and other adults are very adept at interacting with groups of children to enhance their learning. The environment is one of calm, thoughtful activity.
- Within this broadly positive picture, some lessons are less successful. When this happens, teachers fail to set expectations for a brisk pace, so learning slows. Sometimes, teachers talk for too long and do not provide all pupils with opportunities to answer questions or discuss issues between themselves. This also reduces the pace and quality of learning.
- Much written and other work from English and a variety of other subjects goes into the same exercise book. These tend to become a little muddled and pupils' presentation suffers. This is one element of marking that currently has a lower priority.

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

- The strongly positive ethos that permeates the school underpins exceptionally strong attitudes and excellent behaviour across the school. Teachers promote good behaviour very well, providing good role models with their kind, courteous approach.
- From the earliest age, children and pupils are highly motivated to behave well and show strong self-discipline. For example, when the music system failed in school assembly, there was absolutely no disturbance. Outstanding courtesy from pupils to one another, staff and visitors is the norm.
- Pupils move calmly around the building, holding doors open for adults as a matter of course. Playtimes are harmonious. Older pupils look out for the safety of younger ones and are immediately responsive to adults.
- Parents and carers, staff and pupils all report that excellent behaviour is typical. Pupils feel very safe at school. They say there is virtually no poor behaviour and bullying of all kinds is almost unknown. They report that if there is any disharmony between pupils it is swiftly and effectively addressed by teachers.
- Regular briefings by teachers and visitors maintain pupils' awareness of how to keep safe in their daily lives. They are aware of the risks of unfettered internet use and the potential dangers of cyber-bullying, and know what they should do if they encounter either. Inputs from the emergency services visiting the school promote a good understanding of first aid, fire safety and road safety.

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

- The new headteacher has worked closely with school leaders and the largely new governing body to reinvigorate the school. Her vision for the school and the very clear priorities set for the future are fully shared and endorsed by staff. Improvements in the school, especially to teaching, have swiftly raised achievement. Plans for the future are brief, practical and to the
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point, and the school demonstrates the capacity for continuing improvement.

- The school receives good support from the local authority. Recent changes to leadership and management have brought about better assessment and much more comprehensive support for groups of pupils who had fallen behind. This has quickly had a positive impact on progress and attainment of all groups of pupils across the school.
  - Regular checks on classroom activities and open dialogue with staff promote best practice in teaching. Performance management arrangements are rigorously used to eliminate weaknesses in teaching. Numerous additional staff training opportunities have improved teachers' skills and confidence.
  - Teachers regularly meet with senior leaders to discuss the progress of pupils in their class. These meetings not only hold staff to account but can initiate additional support for pupils. The skills of teaching assistants have been enhanced this year by carefully programmed professional development. This has led to higher-quality work to help pupils with learning difficulties, for example in teaching letters and sounds.
  - Assessment information is gathered and analysed regularly so that all staff are aware of pupils' progress, where it is rapid and where it is not. In the latter case, leaders, managers and class teachers act swiftly to address potential difficulties.
  - The planning of subjects and activities ensures pupils develop important English and mathematics skills well. The school is very effective at promoting early reading by providing numerous opportunities to read in all subjects and offering a rich variety of reading texts. Inspirational story-tellers have also enthused pupils. Pupils' studies are further enriched by visits to contrasting localities, such as linking with an inner city school where most of the pupils are of the Islamic faith.
  - The subjects offered provide excellent opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, theme days for the whole school on 'courage' and 'wisdom' provide opportunities for reflection and discussion of important but intangible values. The planning of religious education influences the approach to many subjects from history to design technology. Powerful relationships and excellent behaviour are a good testament to pupils' moral and social understanding.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - Members of the governing body demonstrate a clear understanding of the school based on the systematic checks they make on aspects of school life. For example, they have a firm grasp of assessment data and how it compares with national averages, and they have a full awareness of how pupils' progress has risen. Good knowledge of pupil performance data helps governors understand how pupils eligible for the pupil premium have lagged behind their peers in the past, and how the gap is now rapidly closing. Close links with staff enable governors to grasp strengths and areas for development in teaching. They are well aware of the links between teachers' performance and their pay progression. New members of the governing body show an excellent understanding of where their inexperience requires additional training, and most have developed their skills quickly by following relevant local authority courses. Members of the governing body undertake their safeguarding responsibilities thoroughly. They work closely with school staff and this ensures that safeguarding procedures 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>	109274
<b>Local authority</b>	North Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	413136

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	292
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Robert Lewis
<b>Headteacher</b>	Catherine Cowell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10–11 December 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01275 873417
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