

St Peter's Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior School

Church Avenue, Farborough, GU14 7AP

Inspection dates 20–21 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	4
	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.

- Since the last monitoring visit pupils' achievement has continued to improve rapidly. Data show that progress in English remains better than expected and attainment is high. Progress in mathematics is now better than expected nationally and attainment is above average.
- Teaching is now good in almost all lessons and outstanding in some. It meets the needs of all groups of pupils and is helping them to make good progress.
- Provision for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable and those with special educational needs is very well led. These pupils often make progress greater than that expected nationally.
- Pupils enjoy school and feel very safe. As a result their attendance is high.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. The school's 'Statement of Values' underpins all of its work reflecting a high level of mutual respect between pupils and adults. Pupils' behaviour is impeccable and makes a very strong contribution to the good progress they are making.
- The headteacher's strong but sensitive drive to involve the whole-school community in improvement is creating an effective team with a firm ambition to develop further.
- The school is very well supported in its work by a wide variety of partnerships that offer many enriching learning opportunities for pupils. Parents and carers are very supportive of the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Some successful initiatives to improve teaching, such as marking and dialogue with pupils about the next steps in their learning, are not yet consistent across the school.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to practise their information and communication technology skills across other subjects.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 17 lessons, observing nine teachers. They also talked to pupils about their work and heard pupils read including individual pupils from Years 4 and 6.
- A wide range of documents was scrutinised, including pupils' work, systems for checking progress, records relating to behaviour and attendance, safeguarding procedures, the school's checks on how well it is doing and planning for improvement, records of monitoring the quality of teaching and the minutes of the governing body meetings.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, school staff and groups of pupils. Individual pupils were spoken to in lessons and around the school. A conversation took place with a school advisor from the local authority.
- Questionnaires from 11 members of staff were analysed. The inspectors took account of the views expressed by parents and carers in 53 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and during informal meetings with parents and carers before school. Letters from two parents and carers were also taken into consideration.

Inspection team

Anna Sketchley, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Anthony Byrne

Additional Inspector

Carolyn Steer

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Information about this school

- St Peter's is an average-sized junior school and all pupils are taught in single-age classes. Pupils attend from the local area.
- There are no disabled pupils in the school at the present time.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported through school action is below average, as is the proportion of those at school action plus and those with a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, those known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils with a parent or carer in the armed services) is below average.
- There are a small number of pupils from ethnic minority groups, none of whom is in the early stages of learning English.
- The school exceeds the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in mathematics and English.
- There is a breakfast club on site but it is not run by the school.
- At the previous inspection the school was required to improve achievement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Thoroughly embed recent successful strategies so as to raise the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
 - improving the consistency of dialogue between pupils and teachers in marking and feedback
 - continuing to build upon the coaching programme and share outstanding practice to further improve teachers' skills.
- Improve links between subjects to provide a wider range of opportunities for pupils to use their information and communication technology skills across different subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils are now achieving well in all three areas of reading, writing and mathematics and as a consequence attainment has risen rapidly over the last two years.
- Attainment in reading is particularly high. This is because the school has improved the teaching of reading ensuring that, during group reading times, tasks are challenging and meaningful and properly matched to pupils' needs.
- This was evident in a Year 6 lesson when pupils were grouped according to their ability to practise their reading skills. More able pupils demonstrated their good comprehension skills as they interrogated a leaflet on Oxford Castle. Boys were making good progress because their interest was captured by the appealing text, 'The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas'. Pupils gave clear explanations about what the writer was trying to convey to their audience.
- There is a strong reading culture in the school. Pupils enjoy books and make such comments as 'I have made progress with reading because guided reading groups have helped me to understand more words and become more fluent with my reading.'
- Pupils can be relied upon to work exceptionally well while reading independently because of their excellent behaviour and attitude in lessons.
- Less able pupils make good progress because they are able to use the strategies they are taught to help them read unfamiliar words. They are well supported in their efforts by highly skilled teaching assistants.
- The emphasis on discussing ideas in preparation for writing, very good teacher knowledge about the conventions for writing and practising writing skills daily have also improved standards. Pupils in Year 4 demonstrated the ability to use descriptive language very well when preparing to write about a setting for *The Iron Man*. Productively sharing ideas together they collected such phrases as 'strong as steel', 'gnawing at the rocks' and 'monstrous wind'. They understood features such as similes, alliteration and exciting vocabulary and used them successfully in their writing.
- Evidence in a Year 5 mathematics lesson showed that recent strategies to improve standards have been particularly successful. More-able pupils were able to competently solve a tricky problem to find 47% of 6,524 because their mental skills and knowledge of methods of multiplication and division were very secure.
- Pupils whose circumstances might make them vulnerable, and those with special educational needs, are extremely well supported and as a result make similar and sometimes better progress than all other pupils. Less able pupils were very well supported by the teaching assistant as they were asked to explain aloud their working out of a problem in mathematics. This helped the teaching assistant to spot where the mistake or difficulty was occurring and offer appropriate help.
- Pupil premium funding is being used very effectively to provide help for small groups of pupils to enhance their basic skills or their ability to manage their own behaviour appropriately and be ready to learn. Other smaller initiatives ensure that some pupils enjoy breakfast club, learn to play a musical instrument or take part in after-school activities or visits.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers choose interesting ways of engaging pupils in their learning and pupils say 'learning is interesting and fun'. Pupils' attention in Year 3 was instantly captured when the teacher played a video clip during a writing lesson.
- Teachers begin every lesson with what pupils are expected to learn. Tasks meet the needs of all

pupils and indicate very clearly what everyone should be able to do by the end of the lesson. In addition teachers introduce challenges involving what pupils could or might be able to do, so they are in no doubt of the teacher's high expectations of their learning.

- Pupils have an exceptionally clear idea of their own individual targets for English and mathematics and these are kept fully up to date in the back of their work books. Teachers remind pupils about them before they begin on a task. This focuses pupils' attention well on improving their work in the lesson.
- Most teachers use pupils' targets regularly when marking work, making it very clear what they must do next to improve. There is evidence of a clear dialogue between teachers and pupils about their learning and pupils often respond well to this in the next task. However, this system, although very successful when used, is not wholly consistent throughout the school.
- During the best lessons teachers use 'bite sized' tasks to build pupils' learning and ask focused questions to skilfully check pupils' understanding.
- Lessons are well organised, resources ready and teaching assistants very well briefed, ensuring that lessons move at a good pace.
- In discussion with teachers, inspectors found that it was the emphasis on observing each other, guided initially by an experienced educational coach, that has had most impact on the quality of teaching. Included in this approach are regular meetings about pupils' progress.
- Opportunities for pupils to work together, discussing their ideas with their talk partners and supporting one another in their learning, make a substantial contribution to the excellent development of their social skills.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The school's 'Statement of Values' threads its way meaningfully through all of its work and makes a significant contribution to the excellent provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is reflected in pupils' excellent behaviour, politeness and caring attitude and as a result there is a very high degree of mutual respect between adults and pupils.
- Thought-provoking collective worship affords pupils time for personal reflection, encouraging them to make the right choices.
- There have been no exclusions, and incidents of bullying or bad behaviour are extremely rare. Pupils demonstrate a very good understanding of the different types of bullying, especially when using the internet or mobile phones.
- Pupils told inspectors that they get on very well together commenting that they 'feel very safe and confident about coming to school'. They know they can approach any adult for help should they need to and feel very well cared for. Comments from parents and carers fully support this view. It is also confirmed by pupils' high rate of attendance.
- The many opportunities to take on responsibilities, for example as play leaders or members of the school council, develop pupils' social skills particularly well.

The leadership and management are good

- Since the previous inspection the headteacher has been determined to develop a culture of improvement and has demonstrated very good skills in driving the school forward. He has effectively used support from the local authority's English and mathematics consultants to develop the leadership of middle managers and successfully raise achievement.
- But most significantly, with the help of an independent consultant and the key appointment of an advanced skills teacher, he has involved all staff in improving the quality of teaching. By

creating an 'Improving Standards Team' led by the teachers, and providing training in observation and coaching techniques, all teachers and teaching assistants have thoroughly embraced the need to improve their skills. As a result the school is well on the way to providing a highly skilled workforce.

- Although these initiatives have brought about rapid improvement in progress and attainment, the whole staff team is fully committed to continuing to learn from each other and honing their teaching skills further by carrying on using the coaching strategies that have been successful so far.
- Rigorous and regular monitoring, including robust systems for analysing pupils' progress, provide considerable evidence for checks on how well is the school doing. Consequently the school knows exactly what has to be done next and correctly prioritised action plans are in place to secure it.
- This successful leadership and management demonstrate that the school has a very good capacity for further improvement.
- The different areas of learning are well planned and pupils have good opportunities to practise their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. However, there are currently too few opportunities for pupils to practise their information and communication technology skills.
- Learning is enriched by exciting visits and visitors and a varied selection of after-school activities. These opportunities are very well supported by the school's excellent partnerships with other schools and agencies. Strong links with St Peter's Church and links with a school in Brazil reinforce pupils' cultural development particularly well.
- Equal opportunities for different groups of pupils are promoted well; the school is very inclusive and does not tolerate any form of discrimination.
- The governing body and school staff ensure that safeguarding procedures are followed rigorously and all requirements are fully met.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are regular visitors to the school and take part in a variety of monitoring activities. They are particularly proactive through their 'Raising Standards' committee ensuring that they have a good knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for development. Improving governance has a high profile and governors have attended training, for example, in the use of data about pupils' progress as well as briefings about pay, finance and safeguarding. This is enabling them to ask challenging questions about the school's performance as well as supporting its work to improve. The headteacher's performance is rigorously assessed annually and governors have detailed information about teachers' performance and salary progression. They are well informed about the use of the pupil premium and its impact on the progress of more vulnerable pupils. Governors carry out all their statutory duties diligently.
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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

Unique reference number	116388
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	408884

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	249
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Simon Walker
Headteacher	Matthew Rixson
Date of previous school inspection	14–15 March 2012
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