

The Ellis Church of England (Voluntary Aided) Primary School

School Street, Hemingfield, Barnsley, South Yorkshire, S73 0PS

Inspection dates 3–4 July 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
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.

- Given their starting points, almost all pupils at all key stages throughout the school make good progress and achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In the large majority of lessons teaching is good and some is outstanding. This is having a positive impact on pupils' learning.
- This is a very inclusive school where every pupil is equally valued and cared for well. Pupils say they feel very safe in school and parents overwhelmingly support this view.
- Pupils are polite and well-mannered. Their behaviour and attitudes to learning are good.
- The curriculum provides pupils with an interesting range of subjects and topics that ensures that they enjoy school. This contributes well to their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Senior leaders, managers and governors are clearly focused on the continued improvement of teaching and raising pupils' achievement further.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching and a small amount requires improvement in order to be good.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' work does not always help them to improve. Teachers do not always ensure that pupils respond to their written comments.
- Attendance is currently below the national average.
- Pupils do not always apply and develop their writing skills in all subjects and present their work to a consistent high standard.
- Pupils do not clearly know their target levels. This prevents them from aiming higher to achieve even greater success.
- Too few staff do wide enough checks on teaching, especially by looking at pupils' books, to ensure they make more rapid progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 13 lessons taught by seven teachers. Two observations were conducted jointly with members of the senior leadership team.
- The inspectors looked closely at the school’s work, including the school’s analysis of its performance, the improvement plan, documents relating to behaviour and safeguarding, minutes of governing body meetings, the school’s data on pupils’ progress and work in pupils’ books.
- The inspectors met with school staff, three members of the governing body and with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors held meetings with two groups of pupils and listened to some pupils from Year 2 and Year 4 reading.
- The inspectors took account of the 38 responses from parents recorded in the online questionnaire (Parent View), together with the 49 responses to a parental survey carried out by the school, one letter received from a parent and informal conversations with parents. Questionnaires completed by 14 members of staff were also taken into account.

Inspection team

Alan Parkinson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Susan Twaits

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The Ellis Church of England Primary School is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is below the national average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children of service families and those children who are looked after by the local authority.)
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below the national average. There are currently no pupils in the school who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is well below the national average.
- The proportion of those supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- In 2012, the school achieved the Eco-School Bronze award.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is always at least consistently good, particularly at Key Stage 2, and much more of it is outstanding, to raise further pupils' achievement in English and mathematics, by:
 - ensuring that the marking of pupils' work by teachers is consistently used to provide clear and specific guidance on what pupils need to do to improve and that opportunities are always provided for pupils to respond to teacher's written comments
 - ensuring that pupils have a clear understanding of their target levels in reading, writing and mathematics to enable them to aim to achieve even greater success
 - creating more opportunities for pupils to apply and develop their writing skills to a consistent high standard of presentation in all subjects.
- Further develop leadership and management by:
 - increasing the rigour and range of checking the quality of teaching and its impact on learning by involving a wider range of staff, and in particular checking the quality of pupils' work in their books
 - raising attendance to be consistently above the national average.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and abilities that are below those expected for their age, especially in communication, language and literacy. However, good teaching in the Nursery and Reception Years enables children to get off to a 'flying-start' and make good progress. By the end of the Reception Year children's skills in the majority of areas are in line with national expectations. Good communication with parents helps them to successfully support their children's learning.
- At Key Stage 1, pupils continue to make good progress. However, in 2012, standards fell slightly in reading and writing with reading falling to slightly below the national average. An emphasis on improving pupils' reading skills through the whole-school reading programme is successfully raising pupils' attainment once again. Current school data show that standards in reading, writing and mathematics have increased and are higher than are usually seen.
- Although progress at the start of Key Stage 2 slows slightly, it then accelerates and by the end of Year 6 the standards reached in reading, writing and mathematics are above national averages. In 2012, the proportion of pupils making more than expected progress was above the national averages.
- Lesson observations and listening to pupils read confirm that pupils make good progress. However, inspectors' checking of pupils' workbooks shows that pupils do not always apply and develop their writing skills well enough across a range of subjects. This often results in written work being presented that is not of a consistent high standard.
- There are no significant variations in the achievement of different groups of pupils over time. Pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, those eligible for the pupil premium funding, known to be eligible for free school meals and the few from minority ethnic backgrounds, make the similar progress and sometimes better progress than their classmates.
- Pupils at risk of falling behind in their learning are quickly identified and additional support is provided, such as one-to-one or small group work provided for pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding. This has enabled them to develop their literacy and numeracy skills well.

The quality of teaching is good

- In the best lessons, where sometimes outstanding teaching was seen, teaching is very well organised and planned. Teachers have high expectations, explain the work well and use effective questioning that encourages pupils to think for themselves. Learning takes place at a good rate with interesting activities that keep pupils focused on their work.
- Teachers use resources and set activities that carefully match the interests and needs of individual and groups of pupils well. For example, in a well-organised phonics session about letters and the sounds they make, Reception Year pupils worked very well together reading out the sound for the rest of the group to decide if it was correct and matched the word to the picture on the board. This enables pupils to make good and at times outstanding progress.
- Pupils are not always given enough opportunities to apply and improve their writing skills, especially the presentation of their written work, across all subjects.
- Pupils say they enjoy their lessons but are not always sure how well they are doing and what their target levels are in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, they do not have a clear understanding of what they need to do to reach even greater success.
- Although pupils' work is regularly marked, teachers do not always provide pupils with clear and specific written comments on what they need to do to improve. This means chances to take learning even further forward are missed. When teachers' comments do tell pupils what they need to do to improve, teachers do not always ensure that they are followed up by pupils.
- Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to the learning of pupils including the

disabled or those with special educational needs and those identified by the school for additional support. This enables them to make progress that is consistent with all other pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are polite, well-mannered and courteous toward each other and to adults and visitors.
- The vast majority of pupils are well behaved in lessons and around the school. They understand and value the rewards and sanctions system where any poor behaviour can result in losing 'Choice Time'.
- Pupils are fully aware of the different forms of bullying. They report that bullying is rare and any instances are quickly resolved. Pupils feel confident to talk to an adult if they have any concerns.
- Pupils say they feel very safe in school because the adults look after them well. They understand how to keep themselves safe. For example, pupils learn about road safety, how to use the internet safely and about safety on bonfire night.
- Effective partnerships with parents and external agencies ensure that pupils who display any cause for concern are identified early and this ensures that appropriate support is provided. The school's support for pupils whose circumstances make them potentially more vulnerable is very effective.
- The responses to Parent View and to the parental survey carried out by the school are very positive. The vast majority of parents agree that their children are well-cared for, feel safe at school and make good progress.
- The school provides opportunities for pupils to develop as responsible individuals. For example, some pupils make a significant contribution to the school community by taking on positions of responsibility such as the school council, eco-council or as peer mediators to help to help other pupils with any problems.
- The school's Christian ethos and school assemblies contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils work hard to help others by raising money for charities, such as Cancer Research, Children in Need, Red Nose Day and Race for Life.
- Attendance has been improving steadily over the last three years and in 2012 it was slightly above the national average. However, due to a period of illness it has fallen this year and is currently below the national average. Following the recent appointment of a Learning Mentor the school is implementing strategies that are beginning to have a significant effect on reducing the number of persistent absences and improving punctuality.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, senior leaders and the governing body have a clear view of the school's strengths and know what the school needs to do to improve further. There is a strong focus on improving the quality of teaching to raise standards further.
- The school's systems for regular observations of lessons to monitor the quality of teaching are good and provide teachers with accurate feedback on their performance. This information is used well to provide training opportunities for staff and to advise the governing body about teachers' pay awards.
- The school uses data from checking the progress of individual pupils to quickly identify any areas of underachievement and provides additional support when required. This shows the school's commitment to offering equal opportunity for all its pupils. However, senior leaders and other staff do not rigorously check the quality of work in pupils' books to ensure that it is completed to a consistently high standard to enable pupils to make more rapid progress.
- The curriculum is carefully planned so that it is lively and engaging, although there are limited chances for pupils to improve their writing skills in other subjects. A variety of school trips and visitors to the school help to enrich pupils' learning experiences. For example, Year 3 pupils visit the Coal Mining Museum to support their work on the Victorians, the Year 4/5 class visit

Conisbrough Castle to add to their knowledge of 'Medieval History' and the Year 5/6 class go to an Italian restaurant as part of their 'Food Glorious Food' topic.

- The school also offers pupils a range of extra-curricular activities such as gardening, 'Relax Kids', football and baking. The school has also established close links with a school in Nigeria. Pupils write to the children at the school to find out about life in their country. These activities contribute significantly to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and help pupils develop a greater understanding of the world around them.
- The school has benefited from very effective and valuable support from the local authority to improve the quality of teaching and learning and to provide training for governors.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is very well informed and is able to effectively challenge and support school leaders. Governors know the school's strengths and have an accurate understanding of what needs to be done to improve the school further. They use performance management systems to set appropriate and challenging targets. They understand the connection between the quality of work that staff do and the arrangements for pay progression. The governing body has a good knowledge of the school's finances. This includes being aware of pupil premium spending, to provide additional staffing and resources to help improve the literacy and mathematical skills of pupils who are at risk of falling behind. Safeguarding policies and procedures meet the 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	106638
Local authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	400057

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	218
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jean Horner
Headteacher	Pam Randall
Date of previous school inspection	24 May 2011
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