

# St. John's Church School

Riseholme, Orton Goldhay, Cambridgeshire, PE2 5SP

**Inspection dates** 9–10 July 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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Pupils in all year groups learn quickly, especially in reading and mathematics. Many pupils join other than in Reception but all are helped to make good progress. Attainment has been rising year on year.
- Pupils are polite and friendly and are proud of the school and their achievements. Their behaviour is good and those who sometimes find it hard to behave are given good support.
- The school supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development especially well through its system of Christian values, enabling pupils to feel safe and to become well behaved and considerate.
- Good teaching supports pupils in their learning and enables them to learn effectively, develop good self-esteem and to enjoy school.
- Lessons, subjects and topics taught provide memorable experiences and interesting activities encourage pupils to learn.
- Good leadership at all levels, including from governors, ensures that teaching is managed effectively and this helps teachers to constantly improve their work.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils do not all do well enough in their letter formation, use of capital letters and spelling.
- Occasionally, teachers do not challenge more able pupils by giving them hard enough work or move learning on quickly when pupils are ready to do something new.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 19 lessons; all of these were observed jointly with the executive headteacher or the school leader.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, teachers, pupils, members of the governing body and representatives from the local authority.
- The inspectors received only three responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) but held informal discussions with a sample of parents and took account of the school's own parental survey.
- A range of information supplied by the school was scrutinised including the school's own information about how well pupils are doing, planning documents, checks on the quality of teaching, the school development plan, records relating to behaviour and attendance and safeguarding documents.

## Inspection team

Alison Cartlidge, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Chris Murrell

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is of average size compared with other primary schools.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is well above average, while the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also well above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, who are looked after by the local authority, or who have a parent in the armed services) is well above average. The school currently has no looked after children or children with a parent in the armed services.
- A high proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. The main first languages of these pupils are Polish or Portuguese.
- A high proportion of pupils join the school after the Reception Year.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school works together with another school in a soft federation. This means that one headteacher is responsible for the two schools, but otherwise they have separate school leaders and governing bodies.
- The private pre-school on the school site was not part of this inspection.

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

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching, by:
  - ensuring more able pupils are always given work that fully challenges them
  - making sure teachers move learning on when it is clear that pupils are ready for the next activity.
- Raising achievement in writing, by:
  - ensuring pupils always form their letters correctly and use capital letters in the right place
  - making sure that pupils learn the spelling patterns of common words.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- The vast majority of children start school in the Reception Year working at below the levels expected for their age. They make good progress in all areas of learning, and do especially well in learning about the sounds letters make (phonics). For example, during the inspection children enjoyed using their phonics to spell foods for their picnic shopping list.
- Pupils in Year 1 did not do as well as other schools nationally in the national phonics check in 2012. The school has improved results rapidly to broadly average this year, by providing more focused teaching to smaller groups of pupils. Pupils are now confident about using their phonics to help with reading. As one pupil said, 'I sound words out'.
- Pupils make good progress between Years 1 and 6 and attainment by the end of Year 6 has been rising year on year since the last inspection. Attainment is broadly average by the end of Years 2 and 6, but achievement is better in reading and mathematics than in writing. In reading, pupils have additional opportunity to share books at the end of the recently extended school day, while in mathematics, staff training and new resources are helping pupils to learn more quickly than in the past. Pupils' writing is interesting but they do not always form letters correctly, use capital letters in the right places or spell well.
- Attainment fluctuates because a high number of pupils join the school other than in the Reception Year. In some years a large number join the school close to national assessments taking place and deflate results. Nevertheless, pupils who are new to the school make good progress because the school checks what they know and can do as soon as they arrive, and provides any necessary support to enable them to make the same good progress as other pupils at the school. This is one way in which the school reflects its commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because their needs are fully understood by staff and additional support is provided by teachers and skilful teaching assistants.
- Pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language do so quickly and apply their skills well to learning across the curriculum.
- Pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding did less well than other pupils at the school in 2012, with attainment being two terms behind in mathematics and a year behind in English. The attainment gap is closing this year with sharply focused one-to-one educational and social support.
- While more able pupils make good progress, they do not always learn as quickly as other ability groups because they are not always given challenging enough work. As one pupil said in mathematics, 'I would like something much harder'.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers have good relationships with the pupils and use praise well to encourage them and to manage behaviour successfully. New words are promoted well, enabling pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language, to extend their vocabularies. For example, in numeracy in Year 2, the teacher encouraged pupils to discuss various words such as 'arrays' and

'divide' as they answered the question 'what do you notice?'

- Purposeful, real life activities help to motivate the pupils and to make learning meaningful. For example, in mathematics in Year 6, pupils were set various tasks requiring a range of calculations to be made ready to provide food, drink and decorations for the end of term party. Reading, writing, communication and mathematics are taught effectively.
- Resources are used well and teaching assistants make a valuable contribution towards supporting various groups of pupils. In addition, pupils are given good opportunities to select and use their own resources to help them with their work. This helps create a positive climate for learning and encourages pupils to develop a range of relevant skills.
- Marking is done regularly and comments help pupils understand how their work could have been made even better.
- Teachers use questioning well to check up on what pupils have learned and to clarify understanding. They use this information to plan work that meets the needs of most pupils, although not all work is challenging enough for the more able.
- Disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those who attract the pupil premium make good progress and achieve well over time because they are taught well.
- Occasionally, teachers do not move learning fast enough. For example, in a few lessons learning is less effective because teachers have talked for too long or do not change activities quickly enough when it is clear that pupils are ready to go on to something new.

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

- Pupils are enthusiastic about coming to school and are willing to learn. They work together well and are keen to take responsibility. For example, pupils are proud that they run their own school radio station. Rates of attendance have risen this year and are now above average.
  - Pupils are polite and friendly, and enjoy discussing what they have learned with adults and each other. They take responsibility for their own learning. For example, pupils in Year 3 chose their own resources to help them make calculations when interpreting bar graphs and, pupils in Years 3 and 4 acted as 'experts' by offering guidance to others.
  - Pupils say that they feel safe at school and that behaviour is mostly good and their parents agree. A few pupils, who find it hard to manage their own behaviour at times, appreciate the 'bee hive' room where they can go to 'calm down'.
  - Instances of bullying are dealt with very well by members of staff. Pupils understand that there are different types of bullying and why they are wrong. The school ensures that pupils have equal opportunities and that discriminatory language or behaviour is tackled robustly. Consequently, pupils are aware that name calling is a type of bullying and is unacceptable.
  - Occasionally, pupils become quietly inattentive when work is not challenging enough or they are expected to continue with a task for too long. More able pupils in particular feel that work is not always 'really hard'.
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- Pupils know that they are valued as individuals and that the school cares for them well and in turn they know how to be kind to each other. As pupils in Year 1 said, 'kindness is when you play with each other' and 'you say nice things to people'.

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

- Leaders work together well within school and with leaders at the other school in the soft federation, to identify strengths and the next steps for development. Consequently, the school is continuing to improve and achievement is stronger than at the time of the last inspection.
- Adjustments are constantly being made to improve teaching and learning. Systems for checking up on teaching and helping teachers to do even better are rigorous, and training is targeted at whole school and individual needs. Expectations are made clear and targets set are ambitious. All members of staff are strongly committed to school development and school self-evaluation is accurate.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptionally strong and enables pupils to be clear about their responsibilities within society. For example, pupils in Year 2 know that we should 'always respect each other' and 'look after everyone'.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. Members of staff are trained in caring for pupils and have been checked for suitability for working in school.
- The school has close links with parents and consequently almost all who responded to the school's questionnaire are pleased with the school. Parents make positive comments such as 'I can't fault it' and 'the teachers are wonderful'. Parents have appreciated the recent art exhibition and pupils are very proud to show their parents around it.
- The local authority provides the right level of support for this good and improving school. The school has strong links with other schools in the area. For example, the school provides support with information and communication technology.
- The curriculum is exciting and motivating. For example in numeracy in Year 4, pupils were very excited about cracking codes for locks and consequently they concentrated exceptionally well and learned very quickly. The creative arts and sport are promoted successfully by specialist teachers and pupils extend their literacy and numeracy skills at a fast rate. Occasionally, more able pupils could learn more quickly, and aspects of writing, such as the importance of correct letter formation and spelling, are not always emphasised enough.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are knowledgeable and supportive. They carry out all their legal responsibilities including those for safeguarding. They understand what is being taught, how well the school is doing compared with other schools and know how weaker teaching is supported and good teaching rewarded. They do not have detailed knowledge about how well teachers are doing towards targets set. Governors monitor the budget carefully, including how the pupil premium funding is being spent. In the past year, this funding has provided on one-to-one support and specific resources for those pupils who receive it, and supported staff training.

## 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>	110856
<b>Local authority</b>	Peterborough
<b>Inspection number</b>	413010

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>	250
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Stuart Reed
<b>Headteacher</b>	Colette Firth
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21–22 April 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01733 237543
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