

St Ann's Heath Junior School

Sandhills Lane, Virginia Water, GU25 4DS

Inspection dates 9–10 July 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not a good school because:

- Pupils do not achieve as well in mathematics as they do in reading and writing. The teaching of mathematics is not consistently good.
- Teachers do not always set work at the right level for pupils in mathematics or give them sufficient opportunities to use and apply their skills across different subjects.
- Leaders do not routinely apply sufficient rigour when checking the progress of pupils in mathematics and so pupils' learning slows.
- Mathematics does not have the same high profile across the school as that given to reading and writing, especially in celebrating pupils' work in displays.
- The extent to which teachers give pupils clear feedback about the next steps in their learning in mathematics varies both in lessons and in the marking of their exercise books.

The school has the following strengths:

- Pupils achieve well in reading and writing.
- Pupils take great pride in presenting their work, especially in topic books.
- Pupils extend their writing across a wide range of subjects to produce work of a consistently good quality.
- Pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to learning. They say they feel safe in school.
- There have been significant improvements this year in teaching and pupils' achievement as a result of actions taken by leaders, managers and governors.
- Parents and carers particularly value the school's caring ethos.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed nine lessons or parts of lessons, some of which were observed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- The inspection team heard pupils read and, with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, looked closely at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors looked at a wide range of school documents, including development plans, policies, self-evaluation reports, monitoring files, safeguarding and curriculum materials, evidence of the school's partnership work and information for families.
- Meetings were held with pupils chosen at random. Discussions were held with senior leaders, subject leaders, the assessment and progress manager, teachers, the vice-chair of the governing body and another governor, and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection team took account of the 49 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and a letter, and spoke with several parents and carers outside school.
- The inspectors considered the staff questionnaires that were completed.

Inspection team

Nick Butt, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jan Edwards

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is average in size. It has two forms of entry; this means that in each year it has places for 64 pupils, normally two classes. Pupils come from six different contributing infant schools.
- Most pupils are White British.
- 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.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- During the inspection rehearsals for the summer production, 'Bugsy Malone', were taking place.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure teaching is consistently good or better, especially in mathematics, by:
 - setting work at the right level for pupils so that they make rapid progress
 - giving pupils more opportunities to use and apply their mathematical skills across different subjects
 - making sure pupils take an active part in lessons and shape their own learning.
- Increase achievement in mathematics by:
 - giving pupils clear feedback about the next steps in their learning both in lessons and through marking
 - raising the profile of mathematics across the school through special events, visits and displays so that it mirrors the creativity seen in other subjects.
- Increase the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - making sure that leaders apply the same degree of rigour when checking pupils' progress in mathematics as they do in reading and writing so that it accelerates.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because progress has not been good over time in mathematics. While pupils make average progress, too few of them make more than that.
- Pupils join the school from a wide area and their attainment varies from year to year. For example the attainment of the current Year 6 pupils was average when they joined the school in Year 3, but the attainment of the current Year 5 pupils was above average. The school makes sure that pupils make progress from their different starting points, but not as much as they should in mathematics.
- Progress in mathematics dipped in 2012. Leaders identified that teachers had become too dependent on following a commercial scheme and moved swiftly to revise planning so that there was a greater focus on written calculation methods and teaching skills in each year group. As a result progress has improved this year and the latest Year 6 tests results show that standards have risen and are now average.
- Standards are high in reading and above average in writing. Reading is a key focus each day and pupils study a wide variety of texts as part of their topic work. For example, Year 6 pupils were considering extracts from Victorian newspapers when researching the history of the Holloway Sanatorium. The school's centrally located library is very well resourced and in constant use.
- School data show that this year most pupils have made good progress, but over time progress has been less consistent, especially in mathematics. This is because the teaching of mathematics is not consistently good. Teachers do not always set work at precisely the right level for the pupils and this slows their progress. Mathematics does not have the same high profile in the school as reading and writing, especially in terms of displays of high-quality pupils' work.
- Over the past two years pupils' progress and standards in writing have been improving. This is because the school focused on teaching the skills of punctuation and grammar and expected pupils to write more at length for a specific purpose.
- Pupils have plenty of opportunities to practise their writing skills across different subjects. For instance, Year 5 pupils wrote as passengers recalling their 'fateful voyage' on 'RMS Titanic' and Year 4 pupils wrote articles describing the discovery of the Sutton Hoo Anglo-Saxon treasure.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs have made good progress this year as a result of effective support from teaching assistants. This is an improvement on previous years when pupils' progress required improvement.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium in 2012 made more progress than others, so gaps have narrowed in their attainment in English and mathematics. The school uses its additional funding well to release teachers to support eligible pupils and to enrich their experiences, such as giving them access to clubs and residential visits.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching varies too much in quality and too much still requires improvement, especially in mathematics. Teachers do not always set work that is sufficiently challenging for all pupils, meaning that for some it is too easy and the pace of their learning slips.
- At times pupils do not take an active enough part in lessons and are required to complete uninspiring tasks. In these lessons they do not have enough scope to shape their own learning and teaching does not make sufficient demands on them. Because of this their learning slows.
- Marking in mathematics books rarely shows pupils the next steps in their learning so that they know how to improve their work. Instead teachers focus on what pupils have done well. While this encourages the pupils, it does not challenge them to move up to a higher level of learning.
- The teaching of reading and writing is consistently good. Lessons are well paced and teachers' good subject knowledge means that they plan interesting and engaging activities that capture pupils' imagination. For example, Year 3 pupils were uncovering the lost Egyptian tomb of Tutankhamen with the teacher in role as the archaeologist, Howard Carter. Pupils avidly took

notes of what they were finding out, were caught up in the excitement of the discovery and very well prompted by the teacher.

- Writing is often planned with a specific purpose to motivate pupils, especially boys. For instance, Year 6 pupils used information from a recent speed survey with the police outside the school to plan posters to deter drivers from speeding.
- Pupils collaborate very well and are used to working together on projects. When given the opportunity they show creativity and imagination in their approach to their work, especially in how they set out their topic books. The presentation of their work is of an excellent quality.
- Pupils' exercise books show that they have made good progress over time in writing, and that marking helps them to understand what to do next to improve their work. There is evidence of consistently good teaching of writing across year groups and between classes, in contrast to the unevenness in the teaching of mathematics. In this way the school promotes equal opportunities well through literacy, but is not so successful in giving pupils the same experiences in mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, as well as pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, benefit from skilled support from teaching assistants who help them to make good progress. Work is set to cater for their needs and their progress is checked carefully.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are polite and well mannered. They treat adults and one another with respect. Their behaviour in the playground and around the school is often outstanding. Older pupils look after the younger ones very well.
- All staff manage pupils' behaviour well and are consistent in following the behaviour policy. Parents and carers who responded to Parent View strongly agree that pupils behave well and are safe in school. They think that St Ann's Heath is a very inclusive school. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- Pupils say there is no bullying and that they have every confidence in adults to sort out any problems that may arise. They stress how well the staff care for them and take an interest in their well-being. A pupil said, 'Teachers make us smile.' Another pupil commented, 'They make it so you'd want to come to school.' Pupils know about different types of bullying, such as cyber bullying, and what to do if they should encounter any of them.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school. They appreciate that adults trust them to use tools such as glue guns and jigsaws in design and technology lessons because they know they will be sensible. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe when facing potentially risky situations.
- Pupils enjoy taking responsibility as monitors. They know about life in other cultures and in a contrasting part of the United Kingdom through their links with partner schools, including a rural primary school they visit in Devon when on their residential school journey.
- Behaviour is not outstanding because in some mathematics lessons, when pupils are not sufficiently challenged, they become compliant and passive and are not engaged enough in their learning.
- Attendance is average and the school has been successful in reducing the number of families who take term-time holidays.

The leadership and management require improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because pupils' achievement has not been sustained well in mathematics. Leaders have not made sure that teaching in mathematics is as strong as it is in reading and writing and too much of it is inconsistent.
- The school is rightly admired for its very positive ethos and the excellent care of pupils, especially those whose circumstances make them vulnerable. All pupils are known as individuals

and staff are very aware of their needs. Parents and carers who spoke or wrote to inspectors said how much they appreciated the care and understanding shown to them and to their children by the headteacher and staff.

- Leaders and managers have developed expertise in checking the effectiveness of pupils' reading and writing, but know that they are not so experienced at seeing how well pupils are doing in mathematics. This year they have begun to consider pupils' progress in mathematics more closely but this is at an early stage. As a result, some pupils have not made the same good progress in mathematics over time as they have in reading and writing because their needs have not been identified and tackled quickly enough.
- The school's plans for improvement have been reduced from having over 20 priorities to just four key ones, which is more manageable. The school's view of itself is accurate and realistic.
- The school engages well with parents and carers and encourages them to get involved with their children's education. Parents and carers who responded to Parent View were overwhelmingly positive about the school and its work.
- The curriculum is varied and dynamic in many respects. Music, art and sport are key features of life at St Ann's Heath and pupils excel in all three aspects. The rounders team won a district championship during the course of the inspection. Excellent displays promote pupils' writing and artwork in particular. There are plenty of visits, visitors and clubs for pupils to enjoy. These activities promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- The local authority has provided increasing levels of support for the school and this is proving effective. There are regular meetings between local authority representatives, school leaders and governors to consider the progress the school is making against its priorities for improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body brings a wide range of expertise to support and challenge the school's leaders. Governors make sure they are trained to keep up to date, and take a close interest in data about pupils' performance and how this compares with that of pupils in other schools. They know about the quality of teaching and how the school manages the performance of teachers to bring the best out of them. Governors know what the school is doing to reward good teachers and to tackle any underperformance. They manage the finances carefully and are aware how the pupil premium is being spent and the impact it is having. They make sure that all statutory requirements are met, including the safeguarding of pupils.

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	125073
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	412079

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	251
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stephen Sizer
Headteacher	Graham Bollands
Date of previous school inspection	19–20 November 2008
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