

Pontefract St Giles Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior and Infant School

Skinner Lane, Pontefract, West Yorkshire, WF8 1HG

Inspection dates 10–11 September 2013

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Requires improvement | 3 |
| | 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 | | Good | 2 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- The quality of teaching is improving but not enough is consistently good or outstanding and, historically, weak teaching has prevented pupils from making good progress.
- Pupils' achievement in English and mathematics is improving but it is not yet consistently good across all year groups.
- Teachers do not always take full account of the differences in pupils' abilities when deciding what pupils should achieve and do in lessons.
- Leaders do not make it clear to parents how they can be more involved in their children's learning and so homework does not contribute enough to pupils' progress.
- Teachers do not always make best use of the school's extensive information about the progress pupils are making to plan work which is hard enough for the more-able pupils.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly but comments do not always make it clear to pupils what they need to do to improve their work. Pupils are not routinely given opportunities to respond appropriately to feedback
- The most successful aspects of teaching and assessment are not regularly shared to ensure greater consistency across the school.

The school has the following strengths

- The leadership team and the governing body have driven forward improvement despite facing some considerable challenges and changes in staffing.
- Senior leaders set high expectations of staff and provide good support to those new to teaching and to the school.
- Pupils are happy and courteous. They feel safe and are well cared for in school.
- Pupils' standards and progress in Key Stage 1 have improved rapidly.
- Teaching assistants provide valuable support to pupils, which has a marked effect on their achievement and behaviour.
- The teaching of letters and sounds (phonics) is highly effective, consequently Year 1 pupils achieved very well in the 2013 national reading check.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and underpins pupils' good behaviour.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 12 lessons, five of which were seen together with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made a number of other short visits to lessons and learning areas.
- Separate meetings were conducted with governors, staff, senior leaders, the learning mentor manager, an adviser from the local authority and two groups of pupils. The inspectors talked to pupils during lessons, listened to pupils read and scrutinised samples of their work.
- The 20 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the results of the school's own surveys of parents' views were taken into account. The views of several parents who communicated with inspectors during the inspection were also taken into consideration.
- The inspectors took account of the 17 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- A number of documents were reviewed. These included the school's development plan, its self-evaluation report, information about pupils' current progress, arrangements for safeguarding and records of pupils' behaviour and attendance. Reports from the local authority about the school's effectiveness were also examined.

Inspection team

Cathy Morgan, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

David Blackburne

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This average-sized primary school has one class in each year group except in Year 1, where there are two classes.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is higher than average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and children who are looked after by the local authority.)
- The school exceeds the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school provides pre-school and after-school provision on site which was included as part of this inspection.
- An Interim Executive Board governed the school from November 2010 and a new governing body was appointed in September 2012.
- The school has experienced the long-term absence of staff and changes to the leadership team since the time of the last inspection.
- A major building project took place during the summer term and new classrooms only became available to staff at the beginning of September 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching and raise pupils' achievement by making sure that:
 - teachers allow pupils, especially the more able, to work on their own as soon as they have understood their teachers' instructions
 - teachers use pupils' progress information to plan challenging work at the right level for every pupil
 - teachers' marking makes it clear how pupils can improve their work and that pupils have time to take notice of the teachers' comments, make corrections and use this information in their future work
 - improvements are made in the effectiveness of homework to progress pupils' learning.
- Strengthen leadership across the school by:
 - sharing and replicating the most successful aspects of teaching and marking from across the school so that there is greater consistency across all classes
 - finding ways to enable parents to play a more active part in helping to improve their children's learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because, over time, pupils have made slower than expected progress in their knowledge and skills in reading, writing and mathematics across the year groups. The proportion of pupils reaching the highest standards in English and mathematics continues to be below that expected because work is not always at the right level of difficulty for pupils of all abilities and ages.
- In 2012 there was a rapid improvement in the proportion of pupils reaching expected standards in both English and mathematics at the end of year 6. This was a big improvement on the well below results in previous years. In 2013, the small cohort of pupils taking the tests was affected by a number of issues, including illness, and so the school's assessments for this group were not reflected in test results that dipped slightly from the level reached in 2012.
- Staff absences, changes in staffing and some ineffective teaching have prevented pupils in Year 3 from making the progress expected of them. Senior leaders have immediately implemented an intervention programme to enable Year 4 pupils to catch up quickly.
- A scrutiny of the prior attainment and work of pupils in Years 5 and 6 shows that almost all pupils are working at the level expected for their age and a significant proportion of Year 6 pupils are on target to reach Levels 5 and 6 in the national tests in English and mathematics in 2014.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are, on average, well below those that are expected of their age but varying year-to-year. They are carefully guided and inspired to work and play imaginatively together. However, in 2013, less than half of the children met the expected levels of development. The school has promptly provided an additional class in Year 1 for this year group to ensure more support for children who need additional time to prepare for the next stage in their learning.
- The leadership has been successful in improving teaching in Key Stage 1. Unvalidated test results for 2013 demonstrate that, following a long period of significant under-achievement in reading, writing and mathematics, pupils' standards have rapidly improved to the levels expected nationally.
- Progress in reading continues to improve because teachers and teaching assistants have been trained well to use the school's 'early birds' intervention programme. Year 1 pupils achieved above the standard expected in the 2013 national check on phonics. The school is confident that improvements in Years 1 and 2 will provide a strong basis for greater progress in Key Stage 2.
- Although the school has a homework policy, it is not effective in progressing pupils' learning and does not provide sufficient opportunities for parents to make an active contribution to their children's learning.
- The progress and achievement of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is similar to that of their peers. Recent changes in the leadership of this area are ensuring that more pupils benefit from the effective specialist support provided by teaching assistants.
- Pupils who receive support from pupil-premium funding were a long way behind other pupils in previous years. School leaders have promoted equal opportunities through well-targeted support, both academic and social, for these pupils. As a result the gap is now closing and these pupils reach similar standards to their classmates by the end of Year 6.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Although teaching has strengths, not enough is consistently good or better to enable pupils, especially the most able, to make as much progress as they could. In the best lessons, work is expertly matched to pupils' learning needs and interests, teachers move learning on with good questions and pupils enjoy the challenge of work which makes them think. This good quality of teaching is not yet evident in all classes or shared widely enough across the school.
- In one successful lesson, Year 5 pupils of all abilities were highly motivated by the opportunity to use 'rainbow writing' methods to construct sentences to effectively convey images. The enthusiasm of the teacher and her assistant inspired pupils to explore a range of interesting resources and accurately use the terms 'simile', 'metaphor' and 'onomatopoeia'. Pupils made at least good progress and their behaviour was excellent because they fully enjoyed what they were learning.
- Teachers in the Early Years Foundation Stage provide a wide range of interesting activities that make learning fun. There is a good balance between work led by teachers and times when children learn through activities they have chosen for themselves.
- In the past, some teachers had low expectations for what pupils could achieve, and accepted work that was not completed or presented to the required standard. Expectations for pupils to work hard are now high and new teachers work hard to provide a range of lively and interesting activities to capture pupils' interest.
- Teachers do not routinely use the school's extensive information on pupils' progress to plan lessons and pitch the work at the right levels for all pupils. On occasion, the more-able pupils sit through explanations they do not need and work through the same tasks as others when they are capable of striding ahead.
- Although the marking of pupils' work is regular and presented in a consistent 'what went well', 'even better if' format, it is not always as helpful as it could be. Teachers sometimes include additional questions for pupils but these are not always answered by the pupil or checked by the teacher. The most effective marking, for example in Year 5, provides pupils with clear guidance about how to improve future pieces of work. This helps these pupils to make rapid progress.
- Teaching assistants play a valuable part in promoting pupils' learning, particularly that of pupils eligible for pupil-premium funding, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Those who find it difficult to behave well or conform to classroom routines make marked improvement over time because teaching assistants sensitively adjust activities to help these pupils to overcome their difficulties.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Staff are sensitive to pupils' personal needs and so relationships are strong. The school is a calm, happy and purposeful community in which pupils experience enjoyment and safety.
- Pupils have good attitudes to their learning. They respond well in lessons and show respect for each other and adults. Creative displays and imaginative spaces in classrooms provide much inspiration for pupils. This has a significant impact on their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying, such as racist, online and physical bullying and they understand the impact these have on individuals. They say there are fewer incidents now than previously and that staff deal with these quickly. Consistent application of the behaviour and reward policies by all staff has helped reduce instances of unacceptable behaviour considerably.
- Pupils enjoy taking responsibility. The school council contributes to decisions about how to improve the school, such as organising play-time resources to help pupils to play together and create a friendly environment in the school playground.
- Pupils benefit from access to effective pre-school and after-school provision. School leaders provided free access to the breakfast club for Year 6 pupils during the week of their tests but,

unfortunately, less than one third took advantage of this facility.

- Pupils and their families experiencing difficulties with behaviour or regular attendance are exceptionally well supported by the school's learning mentor and school leaders. As a result attendance continues to improve, parents have been helped to understand that regular attendance leads to children's better achievement and pupils say they enjoy coming to school. All parents who spoke to inspectors or responded to the online survey of parents' views agreed that their children are safe and happy at the school.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and her deputy provide strong and caring leadership which is highly valued by staff. Both are clearly focused on improving the quality of teaching and raising standards. Since the previous inspection, they have forged a strong and effective team. All staff, including those who are new to the school, share high aspirations for improving the quality of teaching and learning.
- The leadership team has been successful in improving the consistency in the quality of teaching and in minimising the impact of a major building project, staff absence and changes in leadership, since the time of the last inspection. School leaders and governors do not shy away from tough decisions and inadequate teaching has been eradicated. This has led to a marked rise in the standards that pupils achieve in Key Stage 1 and in the progress pupils are now making in Key Stage 2. Accurate identification of the strengths and priorities for improvement by school leaders informs clear action plans and demonstrates a good capacity for further development.
- Recent changes have strengthened the leadership team further, including the strategic leadership of support for disabled pupils and those with special education needs. Leaders and managers clearly understand their roles, responsibilities and lines of accountability.
- Although half-termly reviews of each pupil's progress are not yet used well enough by teachers, the information is used effectively to identify the help needed for pupils who are falling behind in their learning and is beginning to improve their progress. The school is determined to ensure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to succeed. All funding for pupils eligible for the pupil premium is targeted at this group.
- School leaders ensure that performance targets for staff link directly to pupils' achievement and the targets set in the school's improvement plans. Targets and progress towards them are linked closely to pay progression.
- The curriculum is well designed to focus on developing pupils' reading, writing and numeracy skills. Pupils particularly enjoy their music and French lessons and the wide range of clubs and visits which enable them to develop skills not only in the arts but also in sport. Homework activities, however, are not used well enough to develop pupils' opportunities to work imaginatively with their families and involve them in their learning.
- Staff enjoy mainly good relationships with parents who are very supportive of the school and feel it is well led. Those spoken to recognised and valued the improvements made since the appointment of the headteacher and her deputy. One parent said, 'My child has come on in leaps and bounds since they came.' A small number of parents, however, feel that the school does not always provide them with clear information about how they might help with their children's learning.
- The local authority provides good support for school leaders and teachers to improve the school and address the issues raised at the previous inspection.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The relatively new governing body provides effective support and challenge to the school. Governors bring considerable expertise, including in the field of education, to the school. They are well informed about the school's current priorities, the quality of teaching and the way the headteacher sets targets for teachers. Through frequent visits to the school, which includes dropping into lessons, and discussions with staff and pupils, governors directly check on all

aspects of the school's work. They are routinely involved in reviewing the progress pupils make and are quick to question leaders if they feel it is not as it should be. Governors are aware of where teaching is strong and where it requires improvement. They understand how the performance of staff, including that of the headteacher, links to increases in salary. They hold the school to account for efficient financial management, including the spending of pupil-premium funding and the new primary school sport funding. Governors ensure that all statutory duties are met, including arrangements for pupils' safeguarding.

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 | 108268 |
| Local authority | Wakefield |
| Inspection number | 425776 |

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 | 241 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Anne Webb |
| Headteacher | Mary Gibbons |
| Date of previous school inspection | 19 July 2010 |
| Telephone number | 01977 722880 |
| Fax number | Not applicable |
| Email address | admin@st-giles.wakefield.sch.uk |

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

