

Sutton on the Forest Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Main Street, Sutton-on-the-Forest, York, North Yorkshire, YO61 1DW

Inspection dates 23–24 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- Pupils achieve well from their individual starting points in English and mathematics. Standards of attainment are above average by the end of Year 6.
- Reading is a notable strength. Pupils read avidly. This helps them to work independently and make rapid progress.
- Pupils with special educational needs make outstanding progress because they are given the right sort of help when they need it.
- Teaching is good in every class. Lessons are well planned, interesting and often fun.
- Behaviour is outstanding. Pupils give behaviour '9.995 out of 10! Behaviour is brilliant!' Pupils feel very safe and their parents agree.
- The leadership of teaching is good. It ensures consistently good teaching quality and ensures new staff slot in successfully.
- The headteacher and governors accurately judge the school's strengths and what it needs to do to improve further. This is why the school continues to improve at a good rate.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet outstanding. Teachers do not always expect the most from pupils, especially in mathematics but also in writing in Years 2 and 3.
- The new staff team has yet to play a full part in contributing to leadership and management through checking how well teaching is helping pupils to learn.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 10 lessons or parts of lessons taught by five teachers and teaching assistants.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, the Chair and vice-chair of the Governing Body and two governors, a representative from the local authority and two groups of pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6.
- The inspection took into account the 46 responses in the online questionnaire (Parent View). The inspector also talked to over 20 parents informally after the Harvest Festival.

Inspection team

Lesley Clark, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- Only a very small number of pupils are supported through the pupil premium. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- Half the teaching staff and most of the teaching assistants started in September 2013.
- The headteacher teaches on two days a week.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- In order to move teaching from good to outstanding, teachers should:
 - expect the most from pupils
 - let the most-able pupils start on tasks as soon as they are ready to do so
 - make sure that more pupils have the opportunity to do the challenging activities in mathematics
 - give pupils in Years 2 and 3 more opportunities to write independently and at length.
- Develop the skills of the new staff team so they contribute fully to school improvement through the leadership and management role of checking how well teaching is helping pupils to learn.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils achieve well from individual starting points that are generally in line with expected levels. Most reach a good stage of development by the end of the Reception Year.
- The trend in the school's results in national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 is upwards. Standards of attainment are generally above average by the end of Year 2 and well above average by the end of Year 6. Occasional variation is caused by small year groups where the performance of one or two pupils can have a disproportionate effect on overall results.
- Children get off to a good start in Reception. They learn rapidly because every activity is designed to promote investigation and problem-solving skills. For example, children changed the design of their cardboard and plastic ships so they would float properly while others angled a large bottle of water to create a steady flow into the tray below.
- Results in the Year 1 phonics screening check are high. This means that pupils have a head start in reading because they understand how letters and sounds link together to form words (phonics). By Year 6, pupils devour lengthy books and read Shakespeare confidently. They skim read well and scan texts quickly for information.
- Pupils make good progress in writing overall. In Reception and Year 1, children have ample opportunities to use early writing skills because most activities involve writing. In Years 2 and 3, pupils do not write with as much confidence and independence because they do not write much on their own without adult help.
- By Year 6, pupils write well, starting each sentence in a piece of writing differently or using emotive language effectively such as 'wasteland of doom and despair.' They spell accurately and have a good understanding of grammar.
- Pupils achieve well in mathematics, with an increasing proportion working at the level expected of 14-year-olds by the end of Year 6. The proportion of pupils exceeding expected levels overall is generally smaller than the proportion reaching the higher Level 5 in English. This is because the most-able pupils do consistently challenging tasks but other pupils do not always have time to attempt the extra challenges.
- Pupils supported by school action, school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs make outstanding progress. The large majority reach nationally expected standards in literacy and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The pupil premium funding is used well to support individual pupils. They make as good progress as others. The school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination successfully.

The quality of teaching is good

- Typically, teachers make sure that pupils have ample opportunities to work together either in pairs or groups, often giving pupils checklists to encourage their independence and self-reliance.
- Lessons are interesting and enjoyable. Successful teaching methods include clear demonstrations using up-to-date technology or drama so that pupils experience the emotive power of language to help them with their reading and writing.
- Teachers question well to check pupils' understanding and spend time helping those who find new concepts hard to grasp initially. Lessons are carefully planned based on what pupils need to learn next. Thoughtful marking helps pupils to learn from their mistakes.
- Teaching reading is a notable strength. Pupils explained, 'We read all the time. We are taught to use dictionaries and encouraged to read harder and harder books.'
- An outstanding feature is the way that teachers use teaching assistants to help pupils who have special educational needs. Teaching assistants make sure that pupils have similar opportunities

to others to work things out for themselves so they learn to be self-sufficient.

- Teaching is not yet outstanding because teachers do not always expect the most from pupils. Sometimes, the most-able pupils grasp new concepts very quickly but they do not start work immediately because they have to listen to further clarification which other pupils require.
- In lessons where mathematical challenges are open to all who wish to attempt them, achievement soars, as in Year 5 when pupils discovered that they needed to work systematically, using calculations to work out the number of triangles in a pattern. At other times, potential high achievers are held back because they do not get on to the challenges. Pupils' perception is, 'The top group get more interesting things to do.'
- In Years 2 and 3, teachers tend to coach pupils through writing tasks. While this aids their good sentence construction and spelling, teachers give pupils relatively few opportunities to write at length on their own.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils arrive early, keen to learn. Attendance is high because pupils enjoy coming to school. They say, 'The school is so small, it's friendly. When new people come to this school, they're welcomed and they settle really quickly.'
- The Year 6 pupils, including prefects, have a great deal of responsibility. They set an excellent example from running the Harvest Festival or the fruit shop at break times to supervising play equipment. Consequently, younger pupils look up to them and try to emulate their mature attitudes.
- The school council is fully involved and makes sensible suggestions such as enriching the reading materials in the school library.
- Pupils are adamant that there is 'No bullying whatsoever.' They understand the different types of bullying and are very sure 'There is never any bad name-calling' in their school. They have absolute confidence in the headteacher and staff. They explained, 'We know each other really well. Teachers help us if we have little fall outs.'
- Pupils feel extremely safe and their parents agree. The school's evidence supports their positive views.
- Pupils have a mature perspective on school life. They explained how 'when you are told something positive it makes you work even harder.' They say the headteacher is 'emotionally strong' and this helps them to be confident. The school's care for individuals is reflected in pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- A lot of pupils take part in sports activities. This makes an excellent contribution to pupils' healthy outlook and physical well-being.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteachers' well-organised, calm, systematic approach is the hallmark of the way the school is led and managed. Her maxim, 'Those that fail to plan, plan to fail' is the key to the school's consistently good practice over many years.
- New staff quickly slot into the school's way of working because of the headteachers' very clear view of how successful the school can be and the way this can be achieved. Currently, new staff are undertaking training so they can share in the leadership and management's role of checking teaching effectiveness. They can then play a full part in helping the school to achieve its goal of outstanding.
- The leadership of teaching is good and reflected in effective teaching over a long period. Regular checks on teaching quality and helpful pointers to improve are reflected in teachers' confident practice.
- Performance management is used well to set teachers ambitious targets. The school's history

shows that it is not afraid to tackle weak teaching strenuously and to adopt a creative approach to staffing to ensure that pupils get the best deal.

- The school's systems for checking pupils' progress are good. Pupils are known as individuals but the school also checks carefully that different groups are doing as well as they should.
- The pupil premium funding is spent wisely to support pupils' academic achievement and social development.
- The new primary school sports funding is used to employ a sports development officer one day a week to teach alongside staff, run after-school clubs and a play leader course for older pupils. As a result, teachers are more confident and even reluctant pupils join in the exciting range of new sporting activities.
- The local authority gives basic support to the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are exceptionally well informed and very challenging. They make a strong contribution to school improvement. They know how well pupils, including those supported through the pupil premium funding, are progressing. They play a large part in the management of staff and make excellent decisions. In addition, they have very effective systems and procedures to check how well the school is doing and how well teaching is led. They know how good the school is because they come into school regularly and Year 6 school councillors attend governors' meetings.

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	121518
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	425950

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	85
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Martin Wiltshire
Headteacher	Joyce Botham
Date of previous school inspection	18 November 2008
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