

# St John's Church of England (VA) Combined School

Main Road, Lacey Green, Princes Risborough, HP27 0PL

**Inspection dates** 19–20 November 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' standards in both English and mathematics are well above average. Pupils make good progress and achieve well in all subjects.
- Most teaching is good, and some is outstanding.
- Pupils learn to read successfully, and enjoy reading for pleasure.
- Pupils write at length in a number of subjects, so they develop their writing skills well.
- Pupils behave well. They feel safe, attend regularly, work hard in lessons and want to do well.
- Pupils are provided with a range of interesting lessons, visits, clubs and other experiences. This helps them to enjoy school.
- The headteacher, well supported by her senior leadership team, manages teachers' performance well. As a result of regular checks, the quality of teaching is improving.
- The progress that individual pupils are making is checked carefully, and extra help is given to any pupil who falls behind.
- Governors have a clear view of how well the school is doing. They are ambitious for the school, and effectively challenge school leaders to improve the school further.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Teaching is not yet outstanding. Teachers do not often get the chance to observe their more effective colleagues.
- Teachers' marking is detailed, but does not always clearly tell pupils what they need to do to improve their work.
- In some lessons work is not closely matched to the different abilities of pupils.
- School leaders do not closely analyse the progress that different groups of pupils are making in order to get an overview of the performance of the school as a whole.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 part-lessons, including three which were jointly observed with the headteacher. All classes and class teachers were seen. Inspectors also attended two assemblies, listened to children read and looked at pupils' work.
- Inspectors spoke to a number of parents and carers informally at the start of the school day, and took account of the 50 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. They also considered 20 staff questionnaires.
- Meetings were held with staff and school leaders. Inspectors met with two groups of pupils and talked informally to pupils at break and lunchtime. Meetings were held with members of the governing body and with representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a number of documents including the school's plans for improvement, school information on pupils' progress and at nationally published results. They looked at records of pupils' behaviour and attendance, and at how well the school keeps pupils safe.

## Inspection team

Mike Phipps, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jan Edwards

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- Most children join the school in the Reception Year each September. A smaller number join the school for the first time in Year 3.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average. The proportion who speak English as an additional language is also below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is the additional funding provided for children including those in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2011.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more is outstanding, by making sure that:
  - teachers plan work which consistently matches the different abilities of all groups of pupils
  - teachers' marking consistently tells pupils the next steps they should take to improve their work, and pupils are given time to respond to this advice.
- Make sure that leaders and managers at all levels:
  - use data on pupils' performance to analyse more closely the progress being made by different groups of pupils to get an overview of the performance of the school as a whole
  - share the expertise of the good and outstanding teachers in school to support those whose practice is not yet consistently good.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- The standards reached by pupils in English and mathematics are well above the national average. Pupils make good progress across the school and achieve well in all subjects.
- Children join the school in the Reception Year with skills generally above the levels expected for their age. They make good progress and by the time they go into Year 1 their standards are above national levels.
- Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1. By Year 2 pupils' standards in reading, writing and mathematics are well above the national average. A dip in pupils' results in 2012 was quickly corrected the following year.
- Pupils learn to read successfully. Their understanding of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is much better than the national average. Pupils enjoy reading for pleasure, and older pupils talk with enthusiasm about favourite books and authors.
- In Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress overall, although progress is more rapid in some year groups than others. By Year 6 pupils' standards in reading, writing and mathematics are well above national levels.
- Pupils are given chances to write at length in a number of subjects, and they are used to writing for different purposes and audiences. This means they develop their writing skills well.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are supported well. Their individual needs are well understood, and effective help is given. As a result they make similar progress to that of other pupils.
- Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language achieve results in line with those of other pupils.
- Extra funds from the pupil premium are spent on a learning mentor to support vulnerable children, on staffing for small-group work and on helping to fund the cost of school trips. As a result pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium make good progress and achieve standards in line with those of other pupils. There were not enough pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium in 2013 to comment on their attainment without identifying them.
- Pupils who join the school in Year 3 settle in quickly and make good progress. Their standards in English and mathematics by Year 6 are similar to those of other pupils.
- The achievement of more-able pupils is good. The school provides some good small-group support for able mathematicians and talented writers. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is well above the national figure.
- Pupils achieve particularly well in mathematics. All pupils in 2013 made at least the progress that would be expected of them, and the proportion making more than expected progress was well above the national figure.
- The achievement of pupils is not outstanding because of some inconsistencies in their progress, especially in the early years of Key Stage 2, and because of recent fluctuations in attainment in Key Stage 1.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Most teaching in the school is good, and some is outstanding. Relationships between adults and pupils are very positive, and teachers have good subject knowledge and know how to make their lessons interesting and enjoyable. In an English lesson, for example, Year 6 pupils made good progress in understanding how to use prepositions because the pace of learning was brisk, the teacher's questions made pupils think hard and activities were interesting and fun.
- In an outstanding mathematics lesson, Year 4 pupils made excellent progress in learning about three-dimensional shapes because the teacher had carefully planned a lesson which expected a lot from pupils. They were inspired and challenged to investigate for themselves and to think

deeply about their learning.

- Teaching assistants are well used to support those pupils who need extra help. They provide effective but unobtrusive support, and help vulnerable pupils to integrate fully into lessons and to make good progress.
- A small-group session for more-able mathematicians in Year 6 allowed these pupils to make rapid progress in calculations involving the areas of circles. This was successful because the teacher's expectations were very high, and her planning was very effective at moving pupils' understanding forward.
- Teaching is not yet outstanding. In some lessons work is not matched closely enough to the different abilities of pupils in the class. Sometimes pupils, especially the more-able, are not encouraged to work on their own without guidance from the teacher. This was seen in a mathematics lesson in which Key Stage 2 pupils had to complete a number of unchallenging tasks instead of being able to move on more quickly by themselves to more difficult work.
- Teachers' marking is detailed and frequent, but does not consistently tell pupils what they need to do to improve their work. Pupils rarely have the chance to respond to teachers' marking.

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

- Pupils behave well in lessons and around school at playtime and lunchtime. They are friendly, polite, confident and articulate. Pupils say they enjoy learning and are proud of their school.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They work hard in lessons and they told inspectors that they want to do well. They enjoy answering questions in class and sharing their opinions.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school. They understand different types of bullying, but say that bullying in this school is rare. School records confirm this. Pupils are confident that any bullying would stop if they told an adult.
- Racist incidents and pupil exclusions from school are extremely rare.
- Pupils enjoy the rewards they get for working hard and behaving well. Pupils were very excited to be told in an assembly about the number of house points that had been awarded recently.
- Pupils have many opportunities to take on positions of responsibility in school, such as becoming house captains or members of the pupil council. They enjoy representing the school in sports matches and taking part in local events.
- Pupils' attendance is above national figures. Very few pupils are persistently absent. Pupils are punctual to school and to lessons.
- Parents and carers are confident that their children will be well looked after. They have no concerns about pupils' behaviour. Staff also think that pupils' behaviour is good.
- Pupils' behaviour and safety are not outstanding because in the small number of lessons where the quality of teaching is not good, pupils sometimes lose focus and their attention wanders.

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

- Since her appointment the headteacher, well supported by her senior leadership team, has had a very positive impact on the school. Teachers' performance is managed well, and is linked to their salary progression. Judgements are based on pupils' progress. As a result of regular checks, the quality of teaching is improving. There are good opportunities for teachers to improve their skills. However, teachers do not get many chances to observe their more effective colleagues.
- Teachers in charge of subjects and other areas of the school's work are effective, and contribute well to pupils' good achievement. They are developing well in their roles as future leaders.
- Pupils enjoy many interesting lessons, visits, clubs and other experiences. Good links with the local church, the chance to take on positions of responsibility and a series of special themed events contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school plans to spend the extra primary school sports funding on promoting the school's participation in sports festivals and competitions, on specialist sports coaching, on after-school

clubs and on staff training. Plans are in place to evaluate the impact of this spending.

- The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Links with parents and with pre-school settings are effective. Children's achievements are checked closely to make sure that all are making good progress in their learning.
- The school has a caring and inclusive ethos. It is committed to equality of opportunity and to ensuring that discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- The school has a very good relationship with parents and carers. They are very supportive of the school and its leaders. They speak highly of how each child's individual needs are met. One parent or carer spoke for many in saying, 'My daughter loves coming to school, and she has thrived continuously.'
- The school's arrangements to keep its pupils safe meet legal requirements.
- The school has received effective external help and support on behalf of the local authority, particularly in helping to raise the quality of teaching and in improving the school's use of data on pupils' performance.
- The progress that individual pupils are making is checked carefully by school leaders, and extra help is given to any pupil who falls behind. Teachers are held to account for the progress of the pupils they teach in regular meetings about pupils' progress. However, school leaders do not yet closely analyse the progress being made by different groups of pupils to get a strategic overview of the performance of the school as a whole.

#### **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are ambitious to improve the school. They have a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Many governors are frequent visitors to the school and have a good first-hand understanding of what happens in school. They have a good knowledge of performance management, the quality of teaching and how any underperformance is tackled. They have a good understanding of what data on pupils' performance tell them about how well the school is doing compared to other schools nationally, and have recently received further training in data analysis. Their use of these data is less well established. They oversee the budget well, and know how extra funding, for example from the pupil premium, is spent, but they are less clear on its impact. Governors have a good range of skills, and effectively challenge school leaders to improve the school further.

## 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>	110465
<b>Local authority</b>	Buckinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	426579

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>	247
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Robert Healy
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gill Grimsey
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 November 2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	01844 343521
<b>Fax number</b>	01844 274043
<b>Email address</b>	office@stjohn.bucks.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](http://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](mailto: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](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2013

