

St James' CofE Controlled Primary School

Chadwick Street, Glossop, SK13 8EF

Inspection dates 27–28 November 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 good because

- Not enough pupils are making good progress in mathematics in relation to their starting points.
- In Key Stage 2, some teachers often fail to check pupils' work. This means that they cannot plan lessons that build effectively on what the pupils have learned or correct misconceptions. It also means that the pupils do not receive enough advice regularly on how to improve their work.
- Senior leaders' evaluation of the school's performance is over generous. This is because there is insufficient focus on pupil achievement within the current arrangements for checking how the school is doing.
- School leaders and governors do not have a sufficiently clear understanding of how well pupils are doing compared with other schools nationally.
- Systems for monitoring the quality of teaching are not sufficiently robust. They do not pay enough attention to the progress pupils are making or the quality of work they are producing in their books.
- Subject leaders are not sufficiently involved in checking the effectiveness of teaching and pupils' progress within their own subject area.

The school has the following strengths

- Reading and writing are taught effectively and pupils achieve well by the end of Year 6. Recent improvements to the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) have led to further improvements.
- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Pupils behave well and are keen to learn. They feel safe because they are well cared for. There are good relationships between the staff and the pupils and this contributes to a strong sense of community at the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 lessons, including some joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspectors talked to pupils about their work, looked at the work in pupils' books and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, teachers, pupils, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of 28 responses to the online Parent View survey and 15 questionnaires returned by members of staff.
- A range of information supplied by the school was scrutinised, including the school's own information on how well pupils are doing, self-evaluation and planning documents, appraisal information, records relating to behaviour and attendance and safeguarding documents.

Inspection team

Paul Tomkow, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Clive Moss

Her Majesty's Inspector

Allison Dawes

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- From Year 1 to Year 6 each class caters for two year groups.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium, is below average. This is additional government funding for groups such as looked-after children and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has a nursery class which offers part-time places.
- 'The CATCH', a community organisation which runs a before- and after-school club and provides additional nursery sessions, is based on the school site. It is inspected separately by Ofsted.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in mathematics by making sure that:
 - the work set in lessons gives all pupils the appropriate level of challenge
 - teachers make regular checks on pupils' progress within lessons, so that those of all abilities can learn more quickly
 - high expectations are communicated through regular marking of pupils' work.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - taking full account of data that show how well pupils perform compared with other schools to form a more accurate view about the school's effectiveness
 - making sure that the school's system for assessing the quality of its performance incorporates more regular checks on pupils' work
 - developing the role of subject leaders so that they have the knowledge, confidence and authority to play a more active role in checking their area of responsibility and improving standards
 - developing the role of governors so that they hold school leaders fully to account for the progress that pupils make and for the accuracy of their judgements about how well the school is performing.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Achievement is not good because pupils do not make enough progress in mathematics.
- Children join the school with attainment that is broadly in line with the expectations for their age. The teachers in the Early Years Foundation Stage provide a good balance between activities which encourage the pupils' independence and the development of basic skills. As a result the children have, generally, made good progress by the end of the Reception Year.
- The school has taken effective action to improve the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make). A more structured approach to the teaching of early literacy skills has led to pupils making good progress in understanding letters and the sounds they make. The proportion of Year 1 pupils reaching the required standard in the phonics check in 2013 improved significantly and matched the national average.
- Improvements in the teaching of early literacy are also beginning to have a positive impact on standards in Key Stage 1 and Years 3 and 4. Pupils read with confidence and enjoy reading. Records indicate that the school is working well with parents to improve standards in this key area.
- Over recent years attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 has been close to the national average. In 2013, however, attainment in mathematics was below average, and the proportion of pupils reaching higher levels was well below average.
- Pupils generally make good progress in reading and writing in Key Stage 2. Progress in writing was well above average in 2013.
- Pupils do not make good progress in mathematics. Key Stage 2 test results in 2012 and 2013 show that progress was well below the national average.
- The school makes effective use of the pupil-premium funding. It has been used to provide additional staffing and support a range of activities to support pupils' learning. There is evidence of this funding having a positive impact on the progress pupils are making in literacy so that they reach standards in line with, and sometimes better than, other pupils in the school. In mathematics, however, strategies to support the eligible pupils have not been as effective and the gap in attainment between these and other pupils has not been narrowed.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. This is because they are given effective support both within the classroom and through close liaison with outside agencies.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is not consistently good enough to ensure that pupils make good progress in all subjects as they move through the school.
- Lack of challenge within some lessons often leads to pupils not making the progress they are capable of. For example, in a lesson on measurement in Year 5/6, all of the pupils were given the same task to complete and the teacher failed to explain how the pupils should record their

estimates and measurements. As a result the work produced was of low quality and pupils did not use appropriate units of measure.

- Some teachers do not assess the pupils' progress frequently enough. In Key Stage 2 too much work is left unchecked by the teachers, particularly in mathematics. This means that teachers cannot plan lessons that build effectively on what the pupils have learned and where they have found difficulties. It also means that the pupils do not receive enough advice regularly on how to improve their work.
- In the less effective lessons seen during this inspection some teachers asked too many simple questions that failed to make pupils think deeply. Teachers also missed opportunities to explain to the pupils why some of the answers they provided were wrong. Instead other pupils were asked to provide correct answers. This meant that pupils' learning slowed.
- Where teaching was more effective, teachers asked more open-ended questions. For example in a literacy lesson with less-able pupils, rather than simply asking the pupils what an adverb was, the teacher asked children to list different adverbs that could be used to describe different actions.
- In the best lessons the teachers had high expectations; teachers asked challenging questions and the pupils made rapid progress. This was observed, for example, in a physical education lesson, when quick pace and a good level of challenge kept the pupils fully engaged and committed as they developed their skills in hockey.
- Reading and writing are taught effectively. Pupils read well and results in national tests are above the national average by the end of Key Stage 2. Recent improvements have also been made to the way that phonics is taught.
- Teaching assistants provide effective support and are making a positive contribution to pupils' progress. In a Year 1/2 class pupils who found reading difficult practised initial letter sounds confidently and accurately due to the teaching assistant's precise speech and very positive attitude.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The pupils behave well, both inside the classroom and at playtimes. They are polite and friendly, enjoy school and cooperate well together. There are good relationships between the staff and the pupils and this contributes to a strong sense of community at the school.
- The pupils respond very promptly to instructions from the teachers and other members of staff. The teachers apply the school's ways of managing behaviour very effectively and consistently. As a result, lessons proceed smoothly and the school is an orderly place.
- The pupils show good levels of respect for each other, including those pupils who are disabled, and for members of staff, in all circumstances. Instances of misbehaviour are rare and, when they do occur, they are managed well. This means that the school is a harmonious place in which to learn.
- The pupils and their parents and carers say that the school is a safe place. Parents and carers expressed strongly positive views in discussions with the inspectors, through Parent View and in surveys carried out by the school, about how well the pupils are looked after. The pupils know how to deal with unsafe situations, including cyber bullying.

- The pupils understand about different forms of bullying. They say that, occasionally, bullying does take place and that they hear homophobic language, but that the school deals with it well.
- The school encourages older pupils to model good behaviour. For example a 'buddy' system is used successfully to support anybody experiencing difficulties, or not having anyone to play with during break times. The responsibility of being a 'buddy' is taken very seriously by the pupils and applications for the role are over-subscribed.
- Attendance has improved and is now around the national average. This is because the school has worked successfully with families and has helped parents and carers to understand the effects of absence on their children's progress. Any instances of unexpected or prolonged absence are followed up systematically through the school's good pastoral arrangements.
- Although behaviour in lessons is good, when teaching is less effective some children lose interest. Whilst this does not lead to misbehaviour the pupils do not routinely tell their teacher when they have finished and are ready to move on. There are also limited opportunities for more-able children to show independence in their learning during weaker lessons. Behaviour for learning, therefore, cannot be judged as outstanding.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Senior leaders' evaluation of the school's performance is overgenerous. School leaders do not check pupils' work carefully enough nor do they compare performance data closely with that of other schools nationally. Consequently progress in mathematics, which is an area of underperformance, was not identified promptly enough.
- While leaders and managers have developed an extremely positive ethos at the school, which is valued greatly by parents and carers, governors and the pupils, they have been less successful in improving the pupils' achievement, particularly in mathematics.
- Although the headteacher's judgements on the lessons observed jointly with the inspectors during the inspection were accurate, the school's routine monitoring of teaching does not focus sufficiently on pupils' achievement. Consequently, the school considers teaching to be more effective than the progress data, or work in pupils' books, indicate.
- The role of subject leaders at the school requires improvement. Those leaders spoken to during the inspection lacked a clear and well-informed view of their role. One subject leader saw the role as being related only to the purchase of resources and promoting the subject's 'profile'. Subject leaders were not able to identify areas of strength and weakness because systems for checking on pupils' work and reviewing performance data are not well established.
- The school's curriculum makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There are strong links with the local church and pupils provide thoughtful responses during daily assemblies, engaging fully with and reflecting on, the themes covered. The headteacher is held in high regard by pupils, staff, parents and governors.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.
- Plans are in place to make sure that the new primary school sport funding to support sport and physical education will be used to enhance existing provision. As well as being used to purchase new resources the school is planning to extend its use of sports' coaches and increase pupils'

involvement in competitive sport with local schools. As the school has only recently received funding it is too early to evaluate the impact.

- The local authority has provided 'light touch' support for the school since the last inspection. Consequently it has not challenged the school about declining trends in mathematics nor has it questioned the school's over-generous judgments about its effectiveness.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- There have been significant changes to the governing body over the past 18 months, to the extent that it is effectively a new governing body and a new Chair has only recently taken up post. Governors are becoming familiar with information on pupils' progress. They are kept informed through the headteacher's reports. They are aware that they need to pay greater attention to information about how well pupils are doing compared with other schools nationally. The governors check the performance of the headteacher but do not yet have a complete understanding of how leadership roles are organised at the school and the link between performance, responsibility and pay. They recognise the need to be better informed about these issues and are accessing support and training from the local authority. Governors were aware of how the pupil premium funding had been spent last year. A group of governors recently attended training on the pupil premium so that they can monitor the impact of this additional funding more effectively in future.

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	112818
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	427322

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	320
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Thornton
Headteacher	Chris Jones
Date of previous school inspection	1 March 2011
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