

St John's Primary School

Pendleton Road, Redhill, Surrey, RH1 6QG

Inspection dates 23–24 January 2014

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		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above those usually seen in most schools. Pupils' writing is a strength of the school.
- Pupils make good and often outstanding progress. Despite a slight dip in 2013, overall trends of improvement, both in lessons and pupils' work, are at least good.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress in developing their early learning skills as a result of good teaching.
- Pupils enjoy school and feel extremely safe. Behaviour and attitudes to learning are outstanding.
- Teaching is frequently good, with some that is outstanding. Previous weaker practice has been eliminated.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium funding make good progress. Provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and the progress they make, are good.
- Leadership is outstanding. Governors, senior leaders and managers are relentless in their efforts to improve teaching, achievement and opportunities for pupils.
- Governors are highly knowledgeable and effective. They provide a high level of informed challenge to school leaders in relation to standards and pupils' progress.
- Current revisions to the curriculum are providing an increasingly wide range of experiences which successfully engage and motivate pupils.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils do not make as consistently rapid progress in mathematics as in reading or writing. Staff do not all have a sufficiently good awareness of the progressive development of mathematical knowledge and skills.
- Despite the richness of pupils' experiences, there is a lack of high-quality written work to reflect the extent of pupils' learning, or to further develop literacy and numeracy skills, in science, history and geography.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons, all of which were seen together with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, the school's senior and subject leaders, and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 21 responses to the staff questionnaire and the 47 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of school documents, including records of the school's checks on the quality of teaching, the school improvement plan and records relating to behaviour, attendance, safeguarding and the tracking of pupils' progress. They also looked closely at pupils' written work from the current school year, and listened to pupils reading.

Inspection team

George Logan, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Elaine Hamilton

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St John's Primary School is an average-sized primary school.
- There are currently two classes in Year 1, reflecting a bulge in pupil numbers locally. There is one class in each of the other years.
- The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is well below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those looked after by the local authority and those with a parent in the armed services) is low.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school accommodates a private nursery school. This is managed and inspected separately.
- The school offers a daily breakfast club which was reviewed as part of the current inspection.
- The headteacher and the deputy headteacher both joined the school in 2011. Most of the teaching staff have joined the school within the last two years.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate further the progress pupils make in mathematics, particularly in lower Key Stage 2, by ensuring that:
 - staff have a greater understanding of the progressive development of mathematical knowledge and skills
 - pupils have access to a sufficiently wide range of methods and materials in order to tackle mathematical calculations.
- Give greater priority to the quality of pupils' written work in science, history and geography so that their recorded work reflects the high expectations evident in literacy and numeracy.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Standards in tests at the end of Year 6 are consistently above average. Standards in reading and in pupils' knowledge of grammar, punctuation and spelling were particularly high in 2013. In most years, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 is above average in all subjects. Relatively few pupils attempt the challenging Level 6 tests.
- Pupils' progress in English and mathematics was outstanding in 2011 and 2012. It dipped in 2013, mainly because these pupils had experienced weaker teaching earlier in Key Stage 2. This had a negative impact on their progress, leaving too much ground to make up. Historic teaching issues have been addressed. Current evidence in lessons, and the school's projections for pupils' progress, indicate that pupils, including the current Year 6, now make consistently good progress. The progress of both lower attaining and the most able pupils is good.
- Pupils' rapid progress in reading and writing is a significant strength. Progress in mathematics, while good overall, is not quite as consistent.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 are consistently above average. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 is above average in reading and mathematics.
- The gap between the attainment of Year 6 pupils supported by pupil premium funding and their peers has reduced. In 2013 they were around one term behind the others in English and mathematics. The school now targets available funds precisely, so that eligible pupils across the school make similar good progress to the others.
- Effective teaching of phonics (the linking of sounds and letters) is ensuring that pupils have a secure knowledge of the sounds which letters represent. A well-above-average proportion of Year 1 pupils reached the expected standard in the phonics screening check in 2013. Younger pupils receive a systematic grounding in these skills. Additional support is provided for older pupils who did not benefit from the phonics programme and who are less confident readers.
- Children enter Reception with skill levels at least in line with those found nationally. Good provision ensures that they make good progress and, in most years, reach standards above the national average.
- Provision for the few pupils who are disabled pupils or who have special educational needs has improved. Tracking systems are robust and provide a good overview of progress. A range of support programmes, effectively delivered, contributes to increasingly rapid progress.

The quality of teaching is good

- There is much good teaching, with some outstanding lessons. Senior leaders have successfully addressed the legacy of weaker teaching, rebuilding a team of effective practitioners with shared values and high expectations. Pupils' current good progress and the quality of their work together indicate that they have been largely successful.
- The best teaching is highly challenging. This was seen in a fast-paced Year 6 science lesson on solutions, where pupils had to evaluate what aspects of their planned experiment would reflect Level 5 rather than Level 4 challenge. Year 1 pupils were captivated by the opportunity to hunt for coins in their sand trays. These formed the basis for a series of calculations. Work was planned at several levels of challenge. Teachers are particularly effective in asking pupils thought-provoking questions.
- Where lessons were less effective, it was often because teachers did not take sufficient account of the full range of ability so that work was insufficiently challenging. Not all teachers sufficiently grasp the sequence in which pupils engage with mathematical concepts, or provide the most appropriate resources for learning in this subject.
- The school has consistent systems for checking and improving pupils' progress. Marking is thorough and indicates the next steps in learning. A system of targets enables pupils to identify

the next steps in their learning and how their learning should develop.

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage benefit from well-organised teaching, supporting good progress. Staff regularly observe children when they are working, and understand what is needed to move learning on.
- Detailed tracking of progress and more effective support ensure that pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding make good progress.
- The teaching of reading is good. There is good provision for the teaching of phonics and good opportunities to assist pupils to catch up. Pupils read confidently and with understanding.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. They display exemplary attitudes and their enthusiasm for learning contributes strongly to their good, and often outstanding, progress. This was evident, for example, when Year 1 pupils recounted their experiences following a treasure hunt on the local common.
- Inappropriate behaviour is rare, with no recent exclusions. The school's effective behaviour management systems ensure a consistent response to any issues. Few parents and carers who gave their views indicated any concerns about behaviour.
- Pupils eagerly undertake responsibilities within class and in the playground, so contributing to the school community.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils are involved in ensuring that the school is safe. In response to their requests, for example, site security has been further tightened. Consequently, pupils feel extremely safe and are very confident that adults will manage any difficulties.
- Pupils have a good appreciation of a range of risks. Year 6 pupils understand how to keep themselves safe in situations such as if cyber-bullying occurs, and are thus well prepared for secondary school.
- Bullying is rare. Pupils understand that bullying may take many forms, and that these will be addressed rigorously by the school.
- The well-attended breakfast club provides good-quality care for pupils who arrive early for school.
- Attendance is above average. Pupils arrive at school punctually.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The leadership team is extremely ambitious for the school. All facets of leadership, including governance, are relentlessly focused on improving achievement still further. Leaders have established robust procedures, including rigorous tracking and monitoring systems, to ensure that this will happen. The school has excellent capacity for further improvement.
- The senior leadership team is cohesive, highly effective and 'leads by example'. Middle leaders, although relatively new, have fully evaluated their subjects and are clear as to what improvements are needed.
- Recent staff changes have contributed to the elimination of weak teaching. All staff have similar high expectations. Assessment practice is well established and consistently implemented. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching is very thorough, evaluating all aspects of a teacher's work.
- The school's view of itself is accurate. Senior leaders accurately recognise the remaining inconsistencies. School improvement strategies reflect the correct priorities.
- Performance management systems are comprehensive, informed by aspirational targets and supported by robust professional development opportunities. All staff, including administrative staff, have targets for improvement. These high-quality procedures are supporting ever-higher standards of teaching. There is a very close link between teachers' performance and pay

progression.

- School leaders closely monitor the impact of pupil premium funding and adjust provision to ensure maximum impact on pupils' achievement. This funding is now contributing effectively to better gains in learning for qualifying pupils.
- Current leaders are working to define an exciting and engaging curriculum. Although not yet fully developed, this meets most pupils' needs very well. While there is a significant focus on literacy and numeracy, considerable use is made of the outdoor environment. This engages and excites pupils well. As yet, pupils' recorded work in subjects such as science, history and geography does not fully reflect the quality of their learning. Pupils experience a wide range of visits, visitors, events and residential opportunities to add enjoyment.
- Planning for the use of the primary sports funding is effective. Alongside ongoing staff training to ensure the sustainability of this initiative, the school has introduced several new sports clubs – 15 in total – and four new sports teams. All are well supported by pupils.
- Support from the local authority is 'light touch' reflecting the school's good performance over time.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a significant strength. Community links and partnerships with other schools, including those in the private sector, are excellent. This contributes well to the sharing of best practice. Links with parents and carers are good. The new Parent Forum is strengthening home–school communication.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governance is outstanding. Governors bring considerable expertise, skills and understanding in the field of education, are highly knowledgeable and ensure that the school has a clear strategic direction. They willingly undertake training. They are realistic and are fully involved in school self-evaluation and school development planning. They have a sophisticated understanding of school and national data, can access data interactively and can readily compare the school's performance with that of others. They are focused and highly effective in holding school leaders to account, provide considerable challenge and are determined that any weaker aspects are tackled quickly. Governors' minutes indicate the high level of challenge provided. Governors are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity, tackling discrimination and promoting good relationships. They have an excellent understanding of the quality of teaching. Pay and promotion are firmly linked to evidence about teachers' effectiveness. Governors carefully evaluate the impact of decisions about the use of pupil premium funding to close gaps in pupils' achievement. Governors ensure, along with senior leaders, that safeguarding arrangements meet national requirements. All statutory duties are met.

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	124990
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	431443

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	237
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Glenys Mason
Headteacher	Jan Steel
Date of previous school inspection	24 March 2009
Telephone number	01737 763804
Fax number	01737 770301
Email address	info@stjohns-redhill.surrey.sch.uk

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