

St Mark's Church of England Primary School

Danebury Road, Hatch Warren, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG22 4US

Inspection dates 21–22 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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils' achievement throughout the school is good and when the pupils leave at the end of Key Stage 2 they reach higher than average attainment in all subjects.
- Children enter the school with lower than average skills expected for their age, particularly in communication and language. They make good progress and enjoy exploring the stimulating indoor and outdoor environment. Good achievement continues throughout Key Stage 1 and pupils reach above average standards at the end of Year 2.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because of the effective support that they receive.
- Good teaching helps pupils to build on their skills year by year. Teachers provide pupils with work that is interesting and usually challenging. The marking of pupils' work is effective and teachers provide helpful information to help improve pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- Behaviour in school is good. The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is also good. Parents agree that pupils know how to stay safe and healthy. Pupils say that any issues regarding behaviour are usually dealt with quickly and efficiently.
- The leadership team, including governors, works effectively together. Leaders regularly check on the quality of teaching and clear feedback ensures that teachers continue to improve.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In some lessons in Key Stage 2 those who are more able do not get the work they need to make outstanding progress.
- Leadership of the resourced provision has not ensured that pupils' academic progress is regularly and accurately tracked. There is no clear policy as to whose responsibility it is to mark pupils' work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 29 lessons and part lessons, including 10 joint observations with the senior leadership team. In addition, inspectors heard children reading in Years 2 and 6.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils as well as informal discussions at lunchtime. There was a meeting with members of the governing body including the Chair, school staff and a representative from the local authority was spoken to on the telephone.
- Inspectors took account of 202 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) as well as correspondence from members of the school community.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and analysed a large range of documents and policies, including the school's own data on pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring documentation and records relating to behaviour. Safeguarding documents were also scrutinised.
- The views of staff were analysed through the 66 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Liz Bowes, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Linda Rowley

Additional Inspector

Helena McVeigh

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Mark's Primary is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium is below the national average. Pupil premium is additional funding for looked after children, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils with a parent in the armed services.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported through school action is lower than the national average. The proportion of pupils who are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from ethnic backgrounds other than White British is lower than average.
- There is a resourced provision for eight pupils who have behavioural difficulties.
- The school meets the current floor standards, which are the minimum standards for attainment and progress expected by the government.
- There is an onsite nursery which did not form part of this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that work for those who are more able in Key Stage 2 is consistently set at the right level of challenge in every class.
- Improve the leadership of the resourced provision by:
 - regularly and accurately tracking the academic progress of the pupils who attend
 - ensuring that there is a clearly agreed policy on whose responsibility it is to mark pupils' work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Achievement at the end of Key Stage 2 has risen steadily over the last three years. By the time they leave, in Year 6, pupils reach above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In all year groups, pupils make good progress and tracking information shows that rates of progress are improving year on year.
- Children start school with lower skills and knowledge than are typical for their age, particularly in communication and language. Good teaching and a caring atmosphere ensure that children settle quickly and their individual needs are met. There is a focus on developing communication skills and children are given a wide mix of exciting activities which means that they quickly catch up. By the time they enter Year 1 most children are working at levels expected for their age.
- Throughout Key Stage 1, pupils make good, and sometimes outstanding, progress, resulting in pupils attaining well above national expected levels at the end of Year 2. Teachers have high expectations, as characterised in a Year 1 class where the interactive wall display showed pupils the various ways to combine numbers to make 100.
- Pupils are encouraged to develop a love of reading and can talk about their favourite authors. The school is very effective in making sure that pupils are given the exact skills that they need in phonics (sounds that letters make) and pupils in Years 1 to 4 are set into 33 phonics groups. The number of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check is higher than national.
- Pupils make good progress throughout Key Stage 2. Their progress is not outstanding as in a few classes those who are more able are not getting work that fully challenges them.
- Current school information and the 2013 national test results show all groups of pupils make good progress from their individual starting points. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including those in the resourced provision, make similar progress to their peers because of good teaching.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium also make good progress and in many year groups these pupils make better progress than their peers. Gaps in attainment are closing and on average these pupils are about one term behind their peers. The school uses its extra funding effectively and knows what needs to be done to ensure that the attainment of pupil premium pupils is the same or higher than their peers.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good because all teachers have high expectations and set most pupils challenging and interesting activities. Teachers know where each pupil is in their learning and so they set work which is just right for them to achieve the next step. However, this is not always the case for the more able in Key Stage 2 who do not get the work they need to make outstanding progress.
- Teachers are regularly observed teaching by both senior and middle leaders who share good practice throughout the school. Those who are new to teaching have been given very effective support and guidance by their colleagues.
- Pupils describe lessons as being fun. An example of this was a Year 5 French lesson; whilst pupils were playing exciting games, they were simultaneously making exceptional progress, and by the end of the lesson had the confidence to translate a passage of French text.
- Pupils know how to improve their work because they are given careful guidance when teachers mark their work.
- Literacy is a key component in all lessons; for example, in a personal, social, health and education lesson in Year 5 pupils were encouraged to write extensively about a person that they

admired and whether they could learn anything from that person which they could apply to their own life.

- Pupils are very complimentary about support staff, including specialist staff who help those with emotional needs. As one pupil said, 'They calm me down and I feel much happier after talking to them.' In all classes, teaching assistants provide valuable support to both individual pupils and to small groups.
- Homework is regularly set in Key Stage 2 and pupils get more homework as they get older, which prepares them well for the demands of secondary school.
- Teachers in the Reception classes make good use of regular and accurate assessments of each child's skills to plan challenging next steps in their learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good, both in lessons and around the school. Pupils are polite, friendly and courteous. Behaviour in assembly was exemplary. The way the school manages behaviour helps pupils to think carefully about the choices they make. This is effectively illustrated by the enthusiastic support by older pupils of the buddy system when they are teamed up with those who are the youngest in school. As one Year 5 pupil said, 'I really like the buddy system as it helps us make things easy for the little ones.'
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They listen attentively and respond well to teachers' questions. Behaviour is not outstanding because, in a few classes, some pupils do not sustain their concentration when working on their own.
- Pupils respond well to the strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural support they receive. The strong Christian values and attitudes are enhanced through the effective links with the onsite church. Pupils are given a good understanding of their responsibilities to their school and the wider world, for example pupils raise money for a charity based in Ghana.
- The behavioural needs of all pupils are well supported, including those in the resourced provision. These pupils spend much of their time in classes due to effective additional assistance. The behavioural and emotional needs of pupils are carefully tracked by staff. There is close and effective liaison between home and the resourced provision, which enables the school to have a good understanding of each pupil's daily needs.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Parents agree that the school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The Friends of the School have raised money to improve the outside area and the extensive grounds benefit a good range of well-maintained outdoor equipment. School records show that the behaviour of pupils over time is good and there are few incidents of inappropriate behaviour. Pupils report that bullying of any kind is rare and they know who to go to should it occur. They understand the different types of bullying, such as cyber bullying.
- Attendance is rising and is above average. Pupils are punctual to school and those who attend the breakfast club benefit from a healthy start to their day.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, senior leadership team and governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and there has been considerable progress since the last inspection. They have high aspirations for the school and continually make further improvements. All staff are very supportive of the headteacher and work hard to achieve these goals.
- Middle leaders collect a wide range of information within their areas of responsibility. They accurately check pupil progress and the quality of teaching. Follow-up actions from these observations successfully improve teachers' skills.
- The school has very comprehensive systems for checking pupils' progress, which are used to identify those pupils who might need extra support. This underlines leaders' clear commitment to

combating discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity.

- Within the resourced provision, there are effective systems for tracking the behaviour and emotional progress of pupils; however, the systems for tracking academic progress are less developed. Also, pupils' work is sometimes not marked as there is no agreed policy as to whose responsibility it is, this is particularly the case when work has been completed within the resourced provision rather than in the classroom.
- The school enjoys good relationships with parents, who are highly supportive of the school. Responses to Parent View showed that almost all parents would recommend the school to others. Parents have numerous opportunities to be involved in school life and are kept well informed through newsletters and reading record books.
- Performance management for teachers is strong and identifies the skills they need to improve.
- The curriculum provides many exciting opportunities and promotes an active interest in learning. It covers a wide range of subjects and contributes well to pupils' good progress. This provision is also reinforced by a range of extra-curricular clubs.
- Pupils' participation in a wide range of sports is high. The new primary sports funding allows for more activities and hiring of qualified sports teachers, which makes a good contribution to pupils' health and well-being.
- Child protection training is thorough, all leaders implement child protection policies rigorously. The school completes all statutory checks on the suitability of staff to be employed.
- The local authority provides a light touch level of support for the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body provides a good level of challenge and support to the school. Governors are well trained and have a clear understanding of the data and the school's performance. They know how all pupils are progressing and the way that the school is addressing the needs of those who are not progressing as expected. Governors take a keen interest in the way the school is raising the ambitions of those who are supported through the pupil premium and they monitor the impact of any spending decisions carefully. They are aware of the quality of teaching and hold all staff to account through the performance management procedures and link these closely to pay progression. The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements.

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	131450
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	431415

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	616
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Graham Robins
Headteacher	Sally Jenkins
Date of previous school inspection	February 2009
Telephone number	01256 346111
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