

St Mary and St John Church of England Primary School

Meadow Lane, Oxford, OX4 1TJ

Inspection dates 4–5 February 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.

- The headteacher’s clear focus on consistently raising pupils’ achievement and aspirations is shared by staff, senior leaders and members of the governing body.
- There is a good level of communication between staff and leaders at all levels and they are a united, hard-working team. They model high standards and expectations and as a result, pupils and staff always strive to do their best.
- Consistently good teaching has led to a rising trend in attainment, with pupils reaching standards that are significantly higher than those of all pupils nationally at the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6.
- Regular checks on learning highlight any underachievement. Good support at the right level helps to close learning gaps quickly.
- The school’s good partnership with parents and carers helps them to support their children’s learning well.
- Pupils’ good attitudes to learning help them to make rapid progress in lessons. The school’s strong emphasis on safeguarding and its caring ethos ensure that pupils feel safe, everyone is included and behaviour is always good.
- Members of the governing body are knowledgeable about the school and play a significant part in making important decisions which drive the school forward.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- The proportion of teaching which is outstanding is not high enough to ensure all pupils learn exceptionally well.
- Too little time is spent on physical activity during the school week.

Information about this inspection

- During the inspection, 24 lessons or part-lessons were observed.
- Eight joint observations of teaching and learning were conducted with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, members of the governing body, the local authority representatives, staff and groups of pupils.
- The inspectors listened to a sample of pupils read.
- The inspectors spoke to parents and carers and took account of the 59 responses to the online Parent View survey.
- The inspectors observed the school’s work, scrutinised pupils’ workbooks and looked at school policies, including those relating to safeguarding and equality, minutes of meetings of the governing body and planning documents.
- The inspectors took account of the 26 questionnaires returned by staff.
- The inspectors also received eight letters of comments and three telephone calls from parents and carers with regard to the provision and leadership of Early Years Foundation Stage setting attended by reception children on roll at St Mary and St John Church of England Primary School. These areas will be inspected separately and reported in a different inspection related to that setting.

Inspection team

Barbara Atcheson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sarah Conway

Additional Inspector

Stephen Bywater

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Mary and St John Church of England Primary School is a larger-than-average sized primary school.
- About half of the pupils come from White British backgrounds and the rest come from a wide range of multi-ethnic groups, the largest of which are Pakistani and Any other White background.
- About a quarter of pupils are learning to speak English as an additional language, which is higher than the national average.
- Only a few pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is extra funding provided for looked after children, pupils eligible for free school meals and children of service families, and the number is below the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported through school action is above average and the proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has two main sites, one for Key Stage 1 and one for Key Stage 2. Reception children, although on the school's roll, are taught in an Early Years Foundation Stage provision adjacent to the school. This provision, Comper Foundation Stage School, will be inspected at a different time. It is not managed by the school's governing body. However, lessons in the Early Years Foundation Stage provision, which included children on the school's roll, were observed during this inspection.
- The school runs an after-school club for its pupils, which was part of this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching to outstanding by ensuring that:
 - outstanding practice is shared as a model for improvement
 - teachers use inspirational ways to engage pupils' interest so that they all learn exceptionally well.
- Increase the amount of time spent on physical activity during school time.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The majority of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have not reached a good level of development by the time they enter Year 1. However, as a result of good teaching in Year 1 they make rapid progress so that by the end of their first term most pupils have reached a good level of development in reading and mathematics and a large majority have reached a good level of development in writing.
- The school's rising trend in attainment at the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6 reflects improvements that have been made in the quality of teaching. Standards at the end of Year 2 have been significantly above the national average since 2010. In 2013 standards at the end of Year 6 were significantly above all pupils nationally in reading and writing and above in mathematics.
- Over the last three years pupils have made significantly better progress in reading, writing and mathematics than all pupils nationally. In 2013, pupils benefiting from pupil premium did better than their classmates in mathematics and reading but were a term behind them in writing.
- The school places the promotion of equality of opportunity at the heart of all its work. There is no discrimination. All teachers are held to account for pupils' achievement and pupils' progress is checked at regular meetings. Any signs of underachievement are quickly identified and tailor-made support helps pupils to close any gaps in their learning.
- Leaders were quick to act when teachers noted a dip in the performance of pupil premium pupils in the first half term of the new school year. Year 6 pupils were divided up into groups of similar ability. In addition, small learning groups, specifically tailored to the pupils' needs, were set up and this quickly accelerated the progress of pupil premium pupils. By the end of the term they were doing better than their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Accurate identification and an excellent range of extra support, including skilled teaching assistants, enable disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs to make the same good rate of progress as that of other pupils.
- More-able pupils benefit from small-group work with specialist teachers. The proportion of more-able pupils reaching or surpassing the higher Level 5 in 2013 was significantly above the national average in reading and above in writing and mathematics.
- Successful partnerships with parents and carers, through the delivery of workshops after assembly and the provision of a crèche, help all parents and carers, including those who do not normally come into school, to support their children's learning. School information, confirmed by inspectors' analysis of pupils' work in books and lesson observations, shows that pupils' progress has improved as a result.

The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils are focused and attentive because they want to do their best. Their teachers know the pupils well and have high expectations of them. They tailor work to specifically meet pupils' needs. For example, in a Year 5 mathematics lesson, when the teacher checked the work of the more able pupils he judged that they could work at an even higher level, so he increased the challenge, to their obvious delight.
- Teachers are quick to notice when pupils find new skills, knowledge and understanding difficult and build in time for pupils to practise and reinforce their learning. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, less-able pupils were given different ways and more time on converting millimetres to centimetres because the teacher's good questioning skills showed that their learning was not yet secure.
- Pupils say they enjoy being challenged. One Year 5 more able pupil said, 'Mathematics is fun because it is hard and it helps us to do other things.' In the same class a new pupil explained how he divided 384 by eight; he said he knew what to do because the teacher had explained it

clearly.

- Pupils learn well because their teachers model the best practice. In a Year 1 class, clear directions on how to sound out letters using their mouths correctly helped pupils to be accurate. When they moved on to writing the words, a more able pupil put his words into sentences unbidden and another pupil was so involved in his work he was dismayed to realise he had to go for an outside appointment, 'Oh no, I wanted to finish my writing', he cried.
- Pupils learn how to improve their work and gain in confidence because they maintain a meaningful dialogue with their teachers when their work is marked. For example, a more able pupil premium boy had written a good story using rich vocabulary. He improved his work still further by following his teacher's helpful comments on how to put in paragraphs and start sentences in a different way.
- Year 4 pupils were inspired by their teacher's demonstration of blending colour and layer techniques in art. Enthusiasm and enjoyment pervaded the lesson as pupils rose to the challenge, explored their ideas and delighted in the results. However, this is not always the case and there are lessons that do not excite or fully engage pupils. Opportunities are missed for staff to observe, and learn from, each other.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good because there is a strong emphasis on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development which underpins the work of the school and ensures that pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour are good.
- Pupils come in and out of school in an orderly way and chat happily to one another and their teachers. Occasionally there is a bit of good-hearted jostling in the corridors but playtimes are harmonious and lunchtimes quiet and enjoyable. Almost all parents and carers who responded to Parent View say their child is happy at the school.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are consistently positive. Parents and carers who spoke to inspectors were unanimous in their satisfaction for all that the school provides, saying that pupils enjoy coming to school and are happy and feel safe.
- Pupils start their work promptly and respond quickly when asked to carry out a task. They take pride in their work and most do their homework regularly.
- In the very best lessons pupils are motivated and inspired but this is not always the case. There are a few occasions when pupils get bored, do not listen and there is some low-level disruption.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe is good. All parents and carers who responded to Parent View agree that their children feel safe. The school analyses its incident log to check for patterns and highlight any need for concern.
- Pupils are very aware of the different types of bullying including cyber bullying. They say they feel safe in school, because bullying is so rare and that they know that there will always be someone who will listen to them and act quickly if they have any concerns.
- Zero tolerance and a tough line on attendance have produced a trend of continuous improvement. A year ago attendance stood at 95%. At the time of the inspection it was 98%.
- Parents and carers appreciate the benefits of the school's after-school club and pupils enjoy the companionship and games.

The leadership and management are good

- Strong leadership by the headteacher sets a good example. The school shares her high expectations and her aspiration for the school to be an outstanding school. Staff and leaders at all levels work hard to constantly improve. There is an open culture of support where teachers know they can turn to their colleagues for help and encouragement.
- The school benefits from a strong team of senior leaders. They work hard to develop middle leaders who are keen and eager to take on more responsibility and make a bigger impact on

school improvement.

- Highly effective checks on teaching and learning, which identify key areas for teachers to improve their practice, have ensured that teaching is good and an increasing amount is outstanding. Teachers say that support from leaders and good quality professional development have helped to improve their teaching and raise pupils' achievement.
- The local authority rightly provides 'light touch' support for this good school. Staff, senior leaders and members of the governing body have a very clear understanding of the strengths of the school and the areas in need of development because communication is so good. Rigorous checks on the school's performance against local and national levels ensure that the school works successfully towards challenging targets.
- Teachers' performance is managed effectively. Personal targets are set for all staff and any support needed is identified and provided. Reviews of staff performance tackle weaknesses and recognise and reward improvements in teaching.
- The new primary sports funding has provided a very good level of new opportunities for pupils outside of school hours. Dance workshops and additional swimming lessons increase pupils' level of fitness, while a wide range of out-of-school clubs open to all encourages attendance by those who would not otherwise attend. This helps all pupils to benefit from new experiences and improve their health and well-being. However, physical education in school time has been squeezed as the school has concentrated hard to improve reading, writing and mathematics.
- The curriculum is carefully planned to ensure good opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Trips such as those to the Ashmolean and the Pitt Rivers museum excite and inspire. However, the school recognises that there is more work to be done to inject even more enthusiasm and excitement into pupils' learning on a regular basis if they are to learn exceptionally well.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The members of the governing body play an active role in the strategic direction of the school. They know the school well and have an accurate view of the school's performance including the quality of teaching and how pupils' test results compare to those of pupils in other similar schools. They realise that more work has to be done to increase the proportion of outstanding teaching. They understand about the management of teachers' performance and how it must be used to improve the quality of teaching if pay rises are to be awarded. Governors hold the school rigorously to account, ensuring that statutory duties such as safeguarding are met and that financial resources are managed well. They know that pupils known to be eligible for extra funding are beginning to close any gaps they may have in attainment and check that money allocated for this purpose is used appropriately.

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	123213
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	430607

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	408
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sarah Franklin
Headteacher	Liz Burton
Date of previous school inspection	8–9 February 2012
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