

St Peter's Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior, Infant and Early Years School

Fieldhead Lane, Birstall, Batley, West Yorkshire, WF17 9HN

Inspection dates

12–13 March 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.

- All groups of pupils achieve well in all key stages.
- From their broadly average starting points when children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, pupils make good progress and by the end of Year 6, reach standards that are well above average overall in English and mathematics.
- In Key Stage 2, pupils make outstanding progress in mathematics. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 at the end of Year 6 is significantly above average.
- Most teaching is good and some is outstanding.
- Pupils behave well in classrooms and around the school. This ensures that they can flourish in the plentiful opportunities to work together.
- Pupils are kept safe and secure. They say that they can always talk to teachers and feel safe.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and attend regularly.
- The headteacher provides clear, enthusiastic and determined leadership. She is strongly supported by senior leaders and an effective governing body. Consequently, the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement has improved.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Achievement in writing is not as good as it is in reading and mathematics. Fewer pupils reach the higher levels of attainment in writing. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to use and apply their writing skills in subjects other than English.
- The school's marking system is not consistently applied across all the curriculum subjects.
- Not all teachers regularly review how well pupils are doing in the different subjects and not all pupils are clear about their targets for learning.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 10 lessons and parts of lessons, two jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors also visited an assembly, observed lunch and break times and listened to pupils reading.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, staff, school leaders, and the Chair, and vice-chair, of the Governing Body and three other governing body members. A meeting with the local authority representative also took place.
- Inspectors took account the results of the school's own surveys of parents', staff and pupils' views and 21 responses to the inspection staff questionnaires. There were 34 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). Inspectors also spoke to parents in the playground.
- A number of school documents were examined. These included information about pupils' progress, school improvement plans and records of governors' meetings. The work in pupils' books and records relating to the quality of teaching, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding were also scrutinised.

Inspection team

Jonathan Woodyatt, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Peter Allen

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is similar in size compared to other primary schools.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is much higher than in other schools. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is similar to that in other schools.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium funding is above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after by the local authority.
- There is a breakfast club run by the school on the site.
- The school is part of the Batley and Birstall Excellence in Schools Together (BBEST) partnership of local schools.
- The school is supported by a specialist sports coach as part of a recent arrangement with an outside organisation.
- The school recently re-gained the Investor in Pupils award.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more is outstanding in order to raise pupils' achievement further, particularly in writing, by:
 - sharing more widely the best teaching practices among teaching staff
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to use and apply their writing skills in subjects other than English
 - ensuring that the school's marking system and target setting procedures are applied by all teachers across all subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills, knowledge and understanding that are broadly similar to those expected for their age, although this can vary from year to year. Children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes because the quality of teaching is good. They enter Year 1 well prepared to for the next stages of learning.
- In Key Stage 1, pupils achieve well. In 2013, at the end of Year 2, pupils' overall attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was significantly above average, although very slightly lower in writing. Standards of attainment have risen since 2012, including in writing.
- Pupils continue to achieve well in Key Stage 2. For the last two years, pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 has been well above average overall and significantly so in mathematics. In 2013, the proportion of pupils making the expected rate of progress in reading, writing and mathematics through Key Stage 2 was much higher than the proportion that did so nationally.
- In Key Stage 2, pupils make outstanding progress in mathematics. In Year 6 in 2013, the proportion of pupils making better than expected progress in mathematics was exceptionally high, with over two-thirds of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 and an above average proportion reaching the very high Level 6. This shows that the most able pupils achieve well.
- Achievement in reading is good overall. In 2012, the national screening check of pupils' phonic skills (the knowledge of letters and the sounds they make) carried out in Year 1 showed that an above average proportion of pupils reached the levels expected for their age. Although this proportion dipped slightly in 2013, recent improvements to the teaching of phonics reflect in the better reading standards now evident in the school. Standards in reading at the end of Year 2 in 2013 were significantly above average. In Year 6 in 2013, almost all pupils reached the nationally expected Level 4 and an above average proportion reached the higher Level 5 and the highest Level 6.
- Although overall pupils achieve well in writing, their achievement is not as good as it is in mathematics or in reading. In 2013, attainment in writing at the end of Year 6 dipped and was broadly average. Although this represented good progress for many pupils, including the most able, only about half the proportion of pupils reached the higher Level 5 in writing than did so in reading. Improved teaching in Key Stage 2 however is now ensuring that attainment in writing is starting to rise.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs do much better than similar pupils in other schools nationally. This clearly demonstrates the school's commitment to tackling discrimination and providing equal opportunities.
- By the end of Year 6 in 2013, pupils supported by the pupil premium and those known to be eligible for free school meals were about one term ahead of other pupils in the school who are not eligible overall in reading, writing and mathematics and about three terms ahead of similar pupils nationally. Inspection evidence also shows that gaps in standards between eligible pupils and others in other year groups in the school have almost closed and confirms that eligible pupils achieve well from their different starting points.

The quality of teaching is good

- Most teaching is good and some is outstanding. Teachers create a positive climate for good learning and provide work that stimulates pupils' involvement and interest. Pupils are often given opportunities to work in pairs and groups to discuss their learning. For example, pupils in Year 6 excitedly discussed the evocative words that could describe what a character in a story was feeling. As a result, they produced a high standard of writing.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage provides good opportunities for children to develop their skills, including their personal development. Classrooms are well resourced and offer richly stimulating environments for children's learning and development. Teachers have

good subject knowledge and parents praised them for the level of care they provide.

- Teaching in mathematics quickly builds pupils' key basic mathematical skills so that they can rapidly move onto more complex and challenging work, such as to solve problems. Pupils in Year 5, for example, chose for themselves the most efficient ways in which to complete the tasks. Pupils are able to competently apply a variety of different strategies to solve doubling and halving different size numbers with decimal places. Effective teaching of these skills enables pupils to achieve particularly well in mathematics and enables many to reach the higher levels of attainment.
- Pupils make good progress in reading because they are taught well. Pupils are provided with plenty of opportunities to read widely and often, including reading at home. Recent changes to the way that phonics is taught are quickly improving pupils' skills in understanding the links between letters and their sounds. Younger pupils who read out-loud to inspectors for example, tackled unfamiliar words with skill and confidence.
- Inspection evidence from scrutinising work in pupils' literacy books shows that pupils use and apply increasingly complex writing skills as they get older and progress overtime in writing is good. Key Stage 2 pupils' books show that attainment in writing is improving because teaching is good and sometimes better. However, there needs to be even more opportunities for pupils to practise and apply their writing skills in subjects other than English.
- The most able pupils benefit from effective teaching, including in the many small-group activities in classrooms. The work provided usually extends their skills well and the support from teachers and teaching assistants ensures they achieve well.
- Small-group and one-to-one activities, including those led by teaching assistants, also provide good learning opportunities for pupils who need extra support, such as those who have fallen behind or those with special educational needs. Parents commented to inspectors how well the school meets their children's needs.
- Leaders ensure that the skills of teachers and teaching assistants continually improve by providing regular training. This helps to ensure that any gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills can be quickly closed, such as, those in writing. However, opportunities to share the best teaching practices more widely among staff are still overlooked.
- The agreed system for marking pupils' work ensures that pupils are provided with helpful feedback as to how they can improve their work and are given the time they need to make the improvements following teachers' advice. However, this system is not yet consistently applied by all teachers and in all subjects. This means that errors in pupils' work are not always picked up. Although teaching ensures that pupils are set clear targets for learning that challenge them to achieve well, not all teachers regularly review pupils' progress towards achieving them.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are friendly to each other, staff and visitors and at all times of the school day. They show good respect for others, for example, making sure that each other could have their turn in the queue during lunchtime and waiting by the doors to let visitors go through.
- Pupils work well together in the classrooms. They have many opportunities to discuss and share their ideas with partners or in groups. Pupils' good behaviour reflects in the sensible and mature manner in which pupils discuss their learning. This, in turn, enhances learning.
- Attendance is rising and is now broadly average. Pupils say that they enjoy coming to school and like being with their friends and so attend regularly. The proportion of pupils who repeatedly miss school is low. Staff know the pupils, and their families, well and support them effectively to improve attendance, such as, by attending the breakfast club.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Parents agree. Pupils say that teachers and other staff are always around if they have any concerns or worries and this helps them to feel very safe in school. Staff oversee pupils in the playground as they arrive for school each morning. This enables them to quickly pick up any concerns pupils might have.

- Pupils have a good understanding of the different types of bullying and say that bullying of any kind rarely happens. The school's records show that there are very occasional incidents of bullying and racist behaviour, such as name-calling. However, when this happens, pupils know to tell their teachers and issues are quickly and successfully addressed. Parents, staff and pupils all agree that the school deals effectively with bullying.
- There have been no permanent exclusions in the last in the last three years.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has worked ceaselessly and successfully to make the necessary changes to raise standards. Achievement in mathematics in Key Stage 2 for example, is now outstanding. Improvements in the teaching of reading and writing are helping to raise achievement. Attendance is also rising.
- Senior leaders and governors have an accurate view of how well the school is performing. There are extensive and detailed plans in place to ensure that the school continues to improve. They review regularly the impact of actions on improving achievement and where this is not fast enough they quickly adapt their plans. They know, for example, that efforts to improve achievement in writing are showing signs of success but there is still more to do to ensure achievement is as good as it is in reading and mathematics.
- Middle leaders make an effective contribution to driving improvement forward. They interrogate the school's information on pupils' attainment and progress so that they know how well pupils are performing in different subjects. They ensure that appropriate changes take place where required, such as, to the way in which phonics is taught.
- Parents are highly supportive of the school's work. They particularly appreciate the support provided to help their children achieve well when they have additional needs. Several commented that, in their opinion, the school was 'the best one locally to meet their children's needs'.
- Good leadership of teaching has identified accurately what methods work well and what needs to improve further. This, together with effective arrangements to check on the performance of staff, ensures teaching is at least good because staff's training needs are catered for well. Even so, leaders know that there is scope to share even more widely the best teaching practices among staff.
- The curriculum ensures pupils make good progress throughout the school. It is well enhanced, for example, through trips and residential visits. The school recently re-gained the Investor in Pupils award, which recognises its success in developing pupils' contributions to the school, such as through the school council.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very effective. The school has a vibrant ethos. Pupils consider their faiths in the daily assemblies. The school's inclusive nature is reflected in the way it supports pupils' and parents' different needs well, such as the breakfast club, which is helping to promote good attendance.
- Recent changes are improving achievement in writing, pupils are being provided with more opportunities to practise their writing skills when completing work in other curriculum subjects.
- The primary school sports funding is being used well. Leaders have used it to employ a specialist sports coach in order to develop the staff skills in teaching physical education and to increase pupils' involvement in sport. Pupils' participation in sport such as, in activities within a local school sports partnership, is increasing and is having a positive effect on pupils' health and well-being.
- The local authority recognises that the school is well led and provides light-touch support, visiting the school once per year.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has an accurate understanding of the school's performance. Governors carefully examine a range of evidence provided by the senior leaders and use this to ask probing and challenging questions at meetings. Governors visit the school regularly. They

observe teaching taking place in order to see the quality of learning for themselves. They hold leaders to account for carrying out their detailed improvement plans. Governors ensure that arrangements for managing the performance of staff, including that of the headteacher are in place. They ensure that decisions to award pay rises fully reflect staffs' successful accomplishment of the challenging targets they set.

- Governors manage the school's finances well. They work closely to their budget so that they can maintain the levels of staffing and provision of activities, such as the breakfast club, to fully meet the needs of pupils. They ensure that the pupil premium funding is used effectively to give eligible pupils a good chance to improve their skills. They ensure that the primary school sport funding is used well. They know that pupils' participation in sporting activities has increased. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet 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	107737
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	431342

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	221
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Linda Wootton
Headteacher	Lesley Evans
Date of previous school inspection	25 February 2009
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