

St Sampson's Church of England Junior School

Bath Road, Cricklade, Swindon, SN6 6AX

Inspection dates 27–28 March 2014

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		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because;

- Pupils' progress has not been good enough since the last inspection, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Pupils have not reached the standards of which they are capable by the end of Year 6.
- In 2013, below average proportions of Year 6 pupils attained expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils have too few opportunities to write extended pieces in different subjects or to apply numeracy skills across the curriculum.
- There are inconsistencies in pupils' handwriting and presentation.
- While teaching has improved, it has not been strong enough over time to promote good progress for all groups of pupils.
- Pupils do not always receive sufficient explanation and demonstrations to assist their learning.
- Sometimes, work is not at a suitable level of difficulty for different groups of pupils.

The school has the following strengths:

- The headteacher, other leaders and staff are taking effective measures to improve teaching and to raise achievement. Pupils are making faster progress.
- The school is a positive, safe and welcoming environment for pupils.
- Pupils show enthusiasm for learning and enjoy the activities provided. They are friendly, considerate and respectful to others.
- The behaviour of pupils is good in lessons and around the school. Attitudes and behaviour in Year 6 are often impeccable.
- There are effective procedures to ensure that pupils are safe and well cared for. Pupils say they are safe at school and very well looked after by the adults.
- Attendance levels have improved because of the school's action.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 13 lessons. Some of these were seen jointly with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, staff, representatives from the local authority, a representative from the diocese, governors and pupils.
- The inspectors took account of the 86 responses to the online survey, Parent View.
- Questionnaires from 18 members of staff were analysed.
- The inspectors examined school policies, information about pupils' attainment and progress, teachers' plans, pupils' work, safeguarding procedures and the school's development planning.

Inspection team

Derek Watts, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Anne Barrett

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above average.
- A below average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils in local authority care, those known to be eligible for free school meals and other groups.
- The school did not meet the government's floor standards in 2013, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school is currently at an advanced stage of planning in expanding into an all-through primary school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all teaching promotes consistently good progress for pupils by:
 - always providing clear guidance and instruction so that pupils are clear about their learning
 - making sure that work is always set at the right level of difficulty for different groups of pupils.
 - Raise pupils' achievement, particularly in writing and mathematics, by:
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to write extended pieces in subjects other than English
 - improving the consistency of pupils' handwriting and presentation
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to apply numeracy skills in different subjects.
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Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Most year groups enter Year 3 with broadly average attainment. Some year groups have entered with above average attainment. Pupils' progress has not been good enough in recent years and so pupils have not reached the standards that they were capable of by the end of Year 6.
- In 2013, a below average proportion of Year 6 pupils reached the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' achievement in writing and mathematics was weaker than in reading. However, an average proportion of pupils attained the higher than expected National Curriculum levels.
- Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 was securely average in 2012 but their progress from their starting points in Year 3 was not good enough.
- The headteacher and staff have taken decisive and positive action to raise pupils' achievement across the school. As a result, pupils are now making faster progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This improved performance has yet to have an impact on the school's end-of-Year 6 attainment and progress.
- The school's internal data indicate that attainment for the current Year 6 pupils will be higher than in 2013. An above average proportion of pupils are on course to reach the higher Level 6 in mathematics.
- In 2013, the few Year 6 pupils supported by the pupil premium attained lower standards than their peers in reading, writing and mathematics. These pupils were about 20 months behind in writing, 12 months behind in reading and 10 months behind in mathematics. Effective strategies are being used to raise the achievement of those eligible for the funding. These pupils are now making faster progress so that gaps in learning are starting to close.
- Most disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are making good progress because of effective teaching and the well-planned individual and small-group support they receive.
- Pupils are making good progress in speaking and listening because of the well-planned opportunities for them to discuss their learning and express their ideas and opinions.
- In writing, pupils' achievement is improving. Pupils write for different audiences and purposes. Effective steps have been taken to improve pupils' punctuation. However, there are inconsistencies in pupils' handwriting and presentation particularly with the younger pupils. In addition, pupils do not always have sufficient opportunities to write extended pieces in subjects other than English.
- Pupils are now making good progress in mathematics. They use a range of strategies to solve mathematical problems. For example, pupils in Year 3 were observed making good gains in their knowledge and understanding of rounding and estimating before solving addition problems. Pupils have limited opportunities to apply their numeracy skills in different subjects.
- In science in Year 5, the school's work to improve pupils' achievement was evident when pupils successfully investigated electric circuits. They made clear gains in knowledge when they used electrical symbols correctly in drawing circuit diagrams. They handled components well in finding out the difference between series and parallel circuits.
- Pupils develop healthy lifestyles and physical fitness through their physical education lessons and the additional sporting activities provided. Pupils benefit from being taught by a physical education specialist.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching has not been strong enough to promote consistently good progress for all groups of pupils over time, and in the recent past, progress has not been good enough.
- In lessons, pupils are not always provided with clear enough guidance about how to move forward in their learning. Teachers do not consistently show pupils what they want them to do

or explain this effectively. As a result the learning slows for some pupils. Occasionally, the work set for some groups of pupils is not at the right level of difficulty and their rate of learning slows. The headteacher and staff have taken effective measures to improve teaching. Much teaching is now good but some weaknesses remain. Recent improvements to teaching are leading to pupils making faster progress now. These improvements have not yet led to better attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.

- In nearly all classes, teachers create a positive classroom climate which is helping to promote better learning. Teachers and teaching assistants establish positive relationships with pupils.
- Teachers expect pupils to do their best and in most classes the pupils respond well to the challenges provided and these clear expectations.
- In most cases teachers set challenging and interesting work which engages and motivates a good number of pupils. Teaching is successfully extending the learning of the most able.
- There are examples of outstanding practice which are beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' learning and progress. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils made rapid gains in their learning when solving ratio and proportion problems. The teacher's demonstrations and explanations of how to tackle problems were extremely clear and informative. Skilful questioning checked their understanding. Pupils explained how they solved the problems very clearly.
- The teaching of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is effective. Pupils receive good guidance and support from teaching assistants and, consequently, make good gains in their learning.
- While guidance given to pupils in lessons is not always clear, teachers provide pupils with helpful targets to support them in improving their skills in writing and mathematics. These targets are regularly reviewed so that pupils are challenged and know what they are aiming for. Teachers' marking is often detailed and thorough. Teachers provide praise for good work and constructive comments to help pupils improve.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The headteacher and staff have created a positive, safe and welcoming school environment where pupils can learn and develop. Consideration and respect for others are effectively promoted.
- Pupils clearly enjoy their time at school. They show an enthusiasm for learning and participate well in the learning activities, additional clubs and the visits provided.
- The behaviour of pupils is good. Behaviour is not outstanding because the behaviour of pupils in Year 3 is not consistently good and at times requires improvement. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour develop and improve as they move through the school. By Year 6 pupils' attitudes to learning, their relationships with others and their behaviour are often impeccable. Pupils behave well not only in lessons but also in assemblies. For example, in a successful assembly, pupils were shown a range of interesting optical illusions on a large screen. Pupils were attentive and demonstrated good learning behaviour as they solved the problems. They gained a clear understanding of how illusions can distort the truth and learnt about how to keep an open mind and explore different sides to an argument.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel safe at school and very well looked after by the adults.
- Discussions with pupils show that they have a good understanding of bullying and the different forms it can take, including physical bullying, name calling and cyber bullying. They report that there is very little bullying in the school. Pupils stated confidently that any incidents of bullying would be swiftly dealt with by the headteacher and staff.
- Attendance has improved because of the positive action taken by the school. Attendance is currently above average.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is highly regarded by pupils and staff. She provides strong leadership and conveys high expectations in raising pupils' achievement and teaching back to good levels and in maintaining pupils' good behaviour and safety during recent uncertainties.
- Key leaders and staff share the headteacher's ambition and high expectations. Team spirit among the staff is strong and teachers and support staff strive to do their best for the pupils.
- The school has been through a difficult period when plans to amalgamate with the local infant school did not come to fruition and this caused uncertainty in the local community. The headteacher and staff have worked effectively to improve teaching and raise pupils' achievement. As a result, pupils are starting to make faster progress.
- These improvements however have not yet led to positive outcomes in Year 6 test results. Nevertheless, better teaching, pupils' improved progress and the school's very positive atmosphere form a firm basis for the proposed expansion into a primary school. As one teacher commented, 'We have a vision and light at the end of the tunnel after a difficult few years.'
- Through systematic analysis and checking, the headteacher and other key leaders have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and improvement points. Key leaders are effectively involved in checking performance and developing their areas of responsibility.
- The quality of teaching is carefully checked by the headteacher and the local authority and any inadequate teaching has been tackled. There are good procedures for appraising the performance of teachers. Training and improvement targets are well linked to pupils' progress and to school improvement priorities.
- The school provides an appropriate range of subjects and interesting topics for pupils to study. Pupils enjoy the additional activities, such as clubs and educational visits. The recently introduced primary school sports funding has been used well to extend pupils' physical education activities. A specialist physical education teacher provides good coaching and teaching. Specialist teachers and coaches help to develop the skills of staff.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted successfully. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate and celebrate their achievements in mathematics and writing. Pupils show a good knowledge and understanding of different faiths and their associated customs and traditions.
- Equality is well promoted. All pupils are valued and all have full access to the activities provided. There are no signs of discrimination.
- The pupil premium funding is properly used to provide eligible pupils with additional support. One-to-one tuition and other initiatives are having a positive impact on the progress of those eligible for the funding.
- The local authority and the diocese have provided appropriate support and have total confidence in the leadership of the school and its capacity to expand the school into an all-through primary school
- There was a good response to the online survey, Parent View. The results show that the vast majority of parents and carers are pleased with the care and education provided by the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Members of the governing body bring a good range of experience and skills to the school. Governors show a clear understanding of the school's performance data and the current attainment and progress of pupils. Governors are kept well informed about the quality of teaching and learning. The clear overview that they have of the school's performance enables them to ask searching questions as well as support the school. The governors are up to date on performance management procedures and ensure that promotion and pay awards are based on the positive progress that pupils make. They make sure that the pupil premium funding is used well and check the impact of the funding on pupils' progress. The governors have attended a range of useful courses to help them in their role. All safeguarding requirements are met. The governors have provided considerable input into the school's proposed expansion plans.

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	126317
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	432042

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	183
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Phil Scott
Headteacher	Jennifer Bayne
Date of previous school inspection	March 2011
Telephone number	01793 750452
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