

St Martin's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Scarborough

Holbeck Hill, Scarborough, North Yorkshire, YO11 3BW

Inspection dates 2–3 April 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Achievement is good overall. Pupils progress well and are well prepared for the next step in their education.
- Most children start school with skills and knowledge in line with those expected for their age. They make good progress and exceed national expectations overall by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is good and expectations of what children can achieve are very high. Skilful use of questions enables pupils to deepen their understanding and enjoy their learning.
- Parents are delighted with the progress their children make and the way in which they are encouraged to always do their best at school.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Pupils are very well mannered, thoughtful, respectful and polite. Pupils say they feel very safe in school and are very well cared for.
- The school is strongly led and managed by the headteacher. Teamwork is very successful and there is a very clear idea of how to raise the standard of teaching and achievement even higher.
- The governing body makes a very significant contribution to leadership. They hold leaders to account stringently. They evaluate the performance of teachers by comparing the achievement of pupils at the school with those nationally.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Standards and progress in writing are not as high as they are in other subjects, especially for the most able.
- The system for checking on pupils' progress is not fully effective across Key Stage 1.
- Marking does not always provide pupils with precise information about how to improve their work.
- Plans for school improvement do not always have a sharp enough focus on pupils' progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 19 lessons or parts of lessons, four of which were joint observations with the headteacher.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and looked at the work in their books.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and different groups of people involved in the school. These included pupils, the Chair and members of the governing body, members of the teaching staff and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took into account of questionnaires from staff, one letter and two e-mails from parents. There were 57 responses on the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) which were also taken into consideration.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including plans for improvement, records of the school's checks on pupils' and teachers' performance, safeguarding and attendance documents, minutes of meetings of the governing body and school policies.

Inspection team

Pauline Hilling-Smith, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Patrick Hargreaves	Additional Inspector
Sonya Williamson	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Martin's Church of England Voluntary Aided is an above-average sized primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is well below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, is below 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.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which are the minimum expectation 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 teaching and raise achievement even further in writing, especially for the most able pupils, by ensuring that:
 - more attention is paid to improving pupils' grammar, punctuation and spelling skills
 - pupils are given more opportunities to write at length in English and in other subjects
 - expectations of what the most able pupils can achieve in writing are always high enough
 - marking gives pupils precise information about what they need to do to improve their work and they are given sufficient opportunity to respond to that information.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - improving the system to check on pupils' progress in Key Stage 1 so that it provides a more detailed picture of the progress pupils make as they move from class to class
 - ensuring that monitoring documents and plans for school improvement always have a sharp focus on pupils' progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Most children start school with skills that are in line with those typically expected for their age. They make good progress and leave the school with overall attainment above the national average.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make good progress and many reach the level expected of them by the time they start in Year 1, and an increasing number reach beyond this; especially in mathematics.
- Progress overall is good in Key Stage 1. Assessment results at the end of Year 2 in 2013 were above the national average in reading and in mathematics, but below in writing. Currently, reading and mathematics remain above average. Attainment in writing is much improved this year because of a focus on writing skills and standards seen in pupils' work in the present Year 2 are broadly average.
- Reading skills are taught very well using phonics (learning letters and the sounds they make) and pupils use these acquired skills successfully in their initial efforts in reading. As a result, pupils achieved very well in the Year 1 screening check in phonics in 2013.
- In mathematics, effective teaching provides pupils with a good foundation in basic calculation skills.
- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 shows a rising trend over the last three years in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2013, pupils reached above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics, although writing was not as strong as the standards seen in the other two subjects. A check on current work shows that pupils have the confidence to express their ideas in writing and often use imaginative vocabulary. Their grammar, punctuation and spelling skills are improving, but practice varies across the school and is weaker in Years 3 and 4.
- Progress across Key Stage 2 is particularly strong in reading and mathematics. Pupils read often and widely to fulfil their love of reading. Fluent readers are carefully encouraged by staff to read from a wider array of books and other materials. In mathematics, work is presented well and shows that pupils apply their skills successfully to solve problems and explain different methods of calculations.
- Progress of the most able pupils is good. Data shows that, in 2013, the percentage of pupils reaching the higher levels of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 was well above the national average in reading and mathematics. However, in writing their progress varies between classes especially in their accurate use of their grammar, punctuation and spelling skills.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is at least as good as the progress of others in the school. The school is strongly committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for everyone. It provides many bespoke programmes of learning and targeted support.
- The few pupils supported by the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals make similar progress overall to their peers. Their attainment varies year on year because of the small numbers involved varying from above that of their peers in 2012 and below in 2013.
- Most parents who responded on Parent View agreed that their children made good progress.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The quality of teaching is good and helps pupils learn and achieve well during their time at school.
- Expectations of the way pupils present their work and the amount of work to be completed by pupils in a given time is very high. Pupils rise to meet these expectations and work is usually

accurate and presented neatly.

- A focus on improving teachers' use of questions to extend learning has reaped benefits for the pupils. The sharpness of teacher questioning makes pupils really think and develops their speaking and listening skills very well.
- Relationships with pupils are excellent, as is the ethos in which they learn. The atmosphere is one in which it is expected that pupils will receive help and encouragement from peers as well as adults.
- The teaching of phonics (learning letters and the sounds that they make) is good. Pupils can decode and read words well and they have opportunities to develop inference and comprehension skills in their reading. Guided reading sessions are very well organised with a focus on reading for pleasure as well as research.
- The teaching of writing is not consistently effective and, in some year groups, not enough attention is given to the development of grammar, punctuation and spelling. There is a lack of challenge, especially for the most able, because expectations and targets set for pupils in writing are not high enough.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved since the previous inspection because the outdoor area has been developed further and provides many rich learning opportunities. Resources are used well and activities extend pupils' understanding of reading, mathematics and personal development very well. However, some aspects of writing do not always get enough attention; the formation of letters, for example. Some children reverse letters when writing and are not always encouraged to rewrite them the right way round.
- The skills of teaching assistants are good and targeted well to support individuals and small groups to ensure that pupils make good progress.
- Marking does not always give clear and precise information to pupils about what they need to do to improve their work and, when it is given, pupils are not always given sufficient opportunity to respond to it.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. The school's church school ethos forms the basis of the welcome extended to visitors by all staff and pupils alike.
- Pupils are very well mannered and polite. They behave very well at all times and will try their utmost to do what staff ask them to. Sometimes this is a request from the headteacher to try to challenge themselves further in a particular way and then report back.
- Pupils' attitude to learning in lessons and throughout school is often exceptional. Outstanding behaviour characterises many lessons. Pupils listen attentively to each other, and other adults, and persevere when faced with challenges.
- Pupils with additional needs make rapid progress in controlling their own behaviour as well as they are able because staff are knowledgeable and skilful at managing behaviour.
- Pupils are well aware of how to keep themselves and others safe at all times, for example, when on trips and residential experiences. They are well aware of how to keep safe in a variety of situations based on the information they receive from a well planned wide range of visiting experts.
- Pupils are aware of different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying. Records show that incidents of inappropriate behaviour are rare. Any incidents are dealt with effectively and quickly by staff.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils listen and respond well to a wide range of visiting experts who provide more specific information about dangers to avoid; for example, alcohol and drugs.
- All parents who responded on Parent View said that their children felt happy and safe at school.
- The cornerstone of behaviour management in the school is the expectation that pupils know

how to behave in every situation. It is the norm for pupils to regulate their own behaviour; and they do.

- Pupils enjoy school and as a result attendance is above average.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is a strong respected leader. She works alongside the governors so that all have a clear idea about how to move the school forward. One of the keys to success is the careful construction of a full team of staff who are very clear about what they are trying to achieve and work extremely well together.
- The senior leadership team draw up plans to improve the school and turn their vision into reality. Although these plans specify exactly what action is to be taken they do not always focus on their impact on pupils' attainment. This makes it difficult to measure success and slows the pace of improvement.
- Senior leaders use data to analyse the progress made by individuals and groups of pupils. However, tracking of each cohort of pupils from the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage to the end of Key Stage 1 is not yet as finely tuned as the arrangements for tracking pupils' progress across Key Stage 2. This is because targets set in writing are not fully informed by what children have achieved at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Middle leaders contribute well to monitoring the school's performance. They work well together to ensure that leadership of their areas of responsibility is as effective as possible.
- Checks on teaching are regular and effective, but are not as sharply focused on pupils' progress and achievement as they could be. School leaders use information gathered from the observation of teaching, and data about pupils' progress, to set targets for teachers in order to continually improve teaching practice.
- The curriculum is extensively enriched by music, sport and residential visits. Provision for pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is outstanding. It meets the needs of most pupils well and provides guidance on the skills to be taught and how these are to be used across all subjects. The sequence for teaching skills in grammar, spelling and punctuation pupils is not clearly defined for each year, which hampers pupils' progress in developing these skills.
- The partnership with parents is exceptionally strong and parents use words such as incredible and loving when they describe the work of the school.
- The local authority knows the school well and provides good and consistent support to leaders.
- Plans for the use of the primary school sport funding are being implemented in order to increase competition between schools, provide sports coaching in school and offer sports training for teachers.
- Safeguarding procedures meet current requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body makes an extremely positive contribution to the school's leadership. Governors monitor the work of the school, as well as their own work and performance, extremely well. They review data and have up-to-date knowledge of pupils' achievements and the quality of teaching. They ask probing questions and challenge leaders about decisions to sustain the school's improvements. For example, they prioritise areas for improvement and ensure that good practice is very secure before moving on to the next area. However, this is not made easy by the lack of a precise link between actions and impact on pupils' progress and achievement. The governing body ensures financial resources are well managed including the school's use of additional government funding to support pupils, such as those eligible for the pupil premium. Governors are involved in setting targets for the headteacher and they are also fully aware that teachers' pay awards are securely linked to the progress that pupils make.

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	121615
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	430906

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	276
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Graham Scott
Headteacher	Steph Brown
Date of previous school inspection	22 May 2013
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