

St John the Baptist CofE Primary School

East Avenue, Leicester, LE2 1TE

Inspection dates 9–10 September 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Leaders, including governors, make sure that teaching is good so that all groups of pupils achieve well.
- Senior staff regularly check pupils progress, so that any in danger of falling behind are quickly helped to keep up.
- Governors visit the school regularly to see for themselves how it is doing. They ask leaders challenging questions which hold them accountable for continued improvement.
- Learning activities for children in the Reception classes are varied and enthuse children. Children make good progress, particularly in developing their personal and social skills.
- Pupils make good progress throughout the school. They start Key Stage 1 with average attainment, and standards in writing and mathematics are above average by the end of Key Stage 2. Standards in reading are well-above average.
- Pupils behave well in and around school. They are proud of their school and say that everyone usually gets on well.
- Pupils feel safe in school and know how to keep themselves safe in different situations.
- The school has started a new curriculum this year, based on new national guidance. It is designed well to develop pupils' literacy, numeracy and communications skills effectively in different subjects.
- Teachers accurately assess how well pupils are doing. They have started to implement a new assessment system to meet the requirements of the new way of teaching different subjects.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Pupils have a good understanding of Christianity, and of other religions and cultures, all of which are valued and celebrated.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- More-able pupils make good progress but, occasionally, the most able still find the work easy. They do not always have tasks which develop their learning and help them make as much progress as they could.
- Some subject leaders have not developed the skills to analyse data or to make judgements about the quality of teaching.
- While most parents are very supportive of the school, a significant minority feels that leaders do not communicate well or respond to their concerns.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 30 lessons or parts of lessons, 10 of which were seen together with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other staff, three groups of pupils, four governors, and a representative from the local authority.
- Informal discussions were held with parents.
- The inspectors took account of the 99 responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Parent View, 13 paper copies of the Parent View questions, other individual communications from parents and the 24 completed staff questionnaires.
- The inspectors observed the school’s work and reviewed a range of documentation, including the school’s checks on its performance, its analysis and tracking of pupils’ progress, records of behaviour and safety, school improvement plans, records relating to classroom observations and the management of staff performance, safeguarding arrangements and records of meetings of the governing body.
- The inspectors also looked at pupils’ work, listened to pupils read and checked information on attendance.

Inspection team

Susan Hughes, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Ian Clennan	Additional Inspector
David Westall	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils (those supported by the pupil premium, which is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, or who are looked after by the local authority) is below average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is also above average.
- Eight pupils are currently supported with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. A number of pupils in the school have very complex needs.
- The deputy headteacher joined the school in September 2014 when a new leadership structure was put in place.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching by ensuring that the most-able pupils consistently have work which is not too easy, and so helps them make better progress and attain higher standards in writing and mathematics.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - developing subject leaders' skills of analysing data and making judgements about the quality of teaching so that they can drive improvement in their areas of responsibility
 - improving communication with parents so that they all feel well informed and that their views are considered.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The school is well led by the headteacher and senior leaders who regularly review how they work to maintain a good level of education and help the school continue to improve. Pupils' progress is rigorously checked to make sure that all groups of pupils achieve well. Leaders make sure that teaching is consistently good and that the new curriculum is being taught well. They have developed a thorough new approach to assessment which has already been shared with parents and is being implemented this term.
- Subject leaders help teachers refine their skills and extend their knowledge. However, not all subject leaders analyse data thoroughly or have developed their leadership skills in making judgements about the quality of teaching. This means that they are not driving whole school improvement in their subjects as effectively as they could.
- The new primary sports funding supports developing the skills of staff. It pays for coaches who work alongside teachers. This gives pupils high quality sports lessons while improving teachers' own skills and confidence in teaching the subject. The grant also funds lunchtime and after-school activities. These have introduced pupils to a wider range of sports and encouraged more participation. Pupils recently reached the final of a table tennis competition. They now have both indoor and outdoor tables.
- The subjects pupils learn are interesting and exciting. Pupils talked enthusiastically about school trips, such as to Warwick Castle, which bring their learning to life. During the inspection, pupils in Years 5 and 6 were engrossed in developing their literacy and communication skills through their study of the First World War.
- The curriculum successfully promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They are prepared well for life in modern Britain. Pupils listen to, and value, the views of others. One pupil said that they were encouraged to talk about their own faiths in lessons and they all enjoy celebrating different festivals. Adults in school model respectful attitudes and pupils respond well by showing respect to each other. They learn how to come to shared decisions and say that the 'forest school' encourages them to work together as a team.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity well and makes sure that no groups of pupils achieve less well than others. All pupils, whatever their needs, are fully involved in the life of the school.
- The appraisal system for checking teachers' performance has contributed to the good teaching across the school. Individual targets are used by the headteacher and the governing body to judge whether pay rises and promotion are justified by results.
- The school has formed strong partnerships with other local schools. This means that teachers share expertise and are able to check that their assessments of pupils' achievement are accurate. Pupils have opportunities to work with those from other schools or compete against them in sporting activities.
- The school holds information evenings to update parents about any changes, such as to the National Curriculum and new assessment procedures. While the majority of parents feel that this is helpful, a significant minority do not feel that they receive valuable information from the school or that their concerns are responded to.
- The local authority has accurately judged the school as not requiring substantial support in most areas. However, the local authority has provided a good level of support for senior leaders in making sure that school evaluations are accurate.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and how it can improve. They ask leaders challenging questions to make sure that the school is continuing to improve. Teams of governors visit regularly to talk to pupils and see for themselves how well it is doing. They make sure that teachers encourage tolerance and respect among pupils to help prepare them for life in modern

Britain.

- Governors check that the pupil premium is helping disadvantaged pupils do as well as their classmates. They understand that the primary sports funding is providing more opportunities for pupils to take part in physical activities. Governors also appreciate how the appraisal system has contributed to the good teaching. They make sure that teachers' pay rises are linked to the progress that pupils make and that teachers have high quality training opportunities.
- Governors carry out their statutory duties well, for example, they make sure that national requirements for safeguarding and child protection are met.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The positive impact of the school's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is clear. They are polite and helpful and play well together on the playground. During playtimes, older pupils look out for younger ones, especially as it is early in the school year. They readily acted as guides for the inspectors and shared their thoughts about the school.
- Pupils say the behaviour system of rewards and consequences works well. They all feel that, 'It is good to be green,' which reflects a desire to behave well and do well in lessons. They told inspectors that, although there are three stages for addressing poor behaviour, it is rare for anyone to get further than the first step and receive a red card.
- In lessons, pupils are enthusiastic about their learning. They eagerly share ideas and listen to what others have to say. One pupil observed that learning about subjects such as the First World War prepared them for the future. He said, 'People will expect you to know about this in later life'.
- Pupils say they enjoy coming to school. Most parents agree that their children are happy at school. This is reflected in their above-average attendance, which continues to improve year on year. During the inspection, pupils spoke enthusiastically about the lessons they enjoy and said that teachers made them feel valued.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of what bullying is and the different forms it can take, such as name calling, physical and cyber bullying. They say there is very little in the school and, when it does occur, it is usually dealt with well by an adult. All pupils spoken to felt that there was no racist bullying and said that most people get on well together.
- Almost all parents say their children feel safe in school and all pupils spoken to during the inspection agree. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe in different situations such as on the road, in case of fire and when using the internet.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Leaders ensure that clear procedures are in place and staff are rigorously checked prior to appointment.

The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils make good progress because teachers give clear explanations and have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. For example, Year 2 pupils were writing about Roald Dahl's character 'Mr Twit'. Encouraged by the teacher, they identified and used adjectives and similes to produce high quality descriptions such as, '...eyes like a ghost...' and, 'Smelly Mr. Twit is as revolting as a snail'.
- Teachers and other adults ask searching questions to check learning and this deepens their understanding. For example, teachers probe pupils' answers by asking, 'How do you know?' or 'What evidence supports this?' Pupils use similar techniques when talking to each other about their work or when formulating an argument.
- Following the recently introduced thematic approach to lessons, teachers develop literacy, numeracy and communication skills well across different subjects. For example, while learning the historical facts, pupils

also worked on code breaking in connection with their First World War theme.

- To help develop an understanding of debate and negotiation, pupils are encouraged to weigh up pros and cons of situation and explore feelings and emotions through such activities as 'decision alleys'. This is very effective in improving their understanding, and their speaking and listening skills. When studying the Ancient Greeks, they pondered the accuracy of Herodotus' account of the battle of Marathon. Currently, Year 6 pupils are investigating the linguistic devices used in propaganda posters.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well supported. Well-briefed adults work alongside teachers to make sure all pupils are successful. Those with complex needs are supported both in the classroom and in small groups to help build confidence. All make good progress from their different starting points.
- Teachers provide activities, ask questions and give clear guidance to make sure that pupils of all abilities build on previous learning and make good progress. Occasionally, however, the most-able pupils are given work which is too easy. Teachers' guidance celebrates their achievement but does not move them on to even higher level of learning, so they do not always attain as well as they could in writing and mathematics.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils start in Key Stage 1 with skills broadly typical for their age and make good progress as they move through Key Stages 1 and 2. School data show that standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2014 have improved on the previous year. In 2013, by the end of Key Stage 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics were above average.
- The results of the most recent national screening check at the end of Year 1 on pupils' knowledge of phonics (the sounds that letters represent in words) were above average. During the inspection, pupils used their phonic knowledge well to read and spell unfamiliar words. Standards of reading are high throughout the school and pupils read fluently with excellent expression.
- Pupils continue to make good progress in all subjects throughout Key Stage 2. Disadvantaged pupils do at least as well as their peers. This means that there is no difference in their attainment and the attainment of other pupils. Pupil premium funding is used to provide one-to-one or small group support tailored for each individual's needs. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are equally well supported and also make good progress throughout the school.
- Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve as well as their peers. Those who speak English as an additional language soon acquire the linguistic skills they need and make equally good progress.
- More able pupils make good progress. However, some of the most-able pupils do not always achieve the exceptionally high standards they could. This is because teachers' guidance and the work they are given does not always recognise their higher starting points in learning.

The early years provision is good

- Children start in the Reception classes with knowledge and skills just below those typical for their age. They make good progress, particularly in developing personal and social skills, and leave the classes with skills broadly typical for their age. In 2013, the proportion of who pupils achieved a good level of development was just below the national level. The proportion increased in 2014.
- Supportive relationships between adults and children help develop confidence and a positive attitude to learning. During the inspection, although children had been in school for a very short time, they worked co-operatively, sharing toys and talking confidently to each other and to adults.

- Teaching is good. A good balance of adult-led activities and opportunities for children to explore for themselves means that children can practise the skills they learn as they play. Adults rigorously track the progress children make and use this information to plan future activities which will build on their skills and knowledge.
- All groups of pupils make good progress in the Reception classes. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are well supported. Any specific needs are quickly identified and individual or group activities make sure that the needs are met. Well-briefed adults act as good role models in promoting spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Staff are addressing a slight weakness in the development of writing by providing more opportunities to practise writing skills in the daily activities.
- The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. The provision is checked regularly to make sure children's safety and well-being are assured. Staff are well trained and effectively communicate with parents. Parents told inspectors that the recent home visits have helped their children settle into school life.

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	120230
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	449623

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	456
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Jones
Headteacher	Andrew Marshall
Date of previous school inspection	19 December 2009
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