

Saint Lawrence's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Heslington Road, York, North Yorkshire, YO10 5BW

Inspection dates 25–26 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Pupils' achievement overall has not yet reached the point where it is good because the progress pupils make varies too much between classes. Standards at the end of Year 6 are inconsistent with examples of lower and higher than average performance.
- Pupils' achievement in mathematics requires improvement. Some pupils struggle with the basics, such as times tables, because over time they have not been taught well.
- The quality of teaching varies and requires improvement. In Key Stage 2, it is inconsistent. Sometimes pupils are not challenged well enough.
- Pupils' behaviour is not yet good. In some classes, pupils can become a little restless if the work does not engage them fully.
- Pupils have a patchy understanding of how to deal with any instances of cyber bullying.
- Leaders, managers and governors have not yet managed to ensure achievement and the quality of teaching are consistently good in all subjects and in all year groups.

The school has the following strengths

- Some recent outstanding teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes is now leading to children progressing and learning essential skills quickly.
- The school's work to improve writing has paid dividends, with pupils making good progress across the school.
- The teaching of early reading and how sounds relate to letters has improved and is now good in the Reception class and in Key Stage 1.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress, as do the pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The governing body holds the school well to account and offers a good level of challenge.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 11 parts of lessons, of which two were observed jointly with the headteacher. Additionally, pupils' work was reviewed to check on the progress they had been making over time.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the headteacher, other staff, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. Additionally, inspectors spoke to many pupils at lunchtime and during breaks.
- Insufficient responses were received to the online questionnaire (Parent View) for inspectors to view. Inspectors spoke to several parents as they dropped off their children in the morning.
- Inspectors scrutinised a number of documents including school improvement plans, minutes of the governing body meetings and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Robert Jones, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Fiona McNally

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- An above-average proportion of students are eligible for the pupil premium. The pupil premium provides additional funding for pupils in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- An average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- In 2013, the school met the government's floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Over the past 18 months there has been considerable turbulence in staffing, with several teachers joining or leaving the school. A senior leader joined the school 12 months ago.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to at least good and so raise pupils' achievement, particularly in mathematics by ensuring:
 - that the work pupils tackle in mathematics is challenging and stretches them well
 - pupils are encouraged to respond to teachers' questions by answering in full sentences in order to explain their thinking and are asked questions whether they volunteer answers or not
 - that the new curriculum for mathematics which has been successful in Key Stage 1 is now fully embedded into Key Stage 2.
- Improve pupils' safety, particularly their understanding of the potential threats posed by the internet and mobile phones by:
 - making sure that staff have up-to-date training on how to ensure pupils are kept safe when using the internet
 - working with parents and improving the e-safety information on the school website.
- Improve leadership and management so they become at least good by:
 - continuing to improve teachers' understanding of how to analyse and use achievement data to improve the impact of their teaching
 - ensuring that the recent improvements made in the quality of teaching, particularly in the Nursery and Reception classes and in Key Stage 1 are sustained.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement is not yet good in all year groups and in all subjects and so is inconsistent. Pupils make better progress in writing than they do in mathematics and reading.
- Children enter the Nursery class with skills and abilities that are generally below those typical for their age. In 2013, pupils who started in Year 1 did so having made very slow progress during their time in the Nursery and Reception classes, particularly with their understanding of the alphabet and how sounds relate to letters (phonics).
- In Key Stage 1, standards are generally below average. Pupils' mathematical skills in particular are not as good as they should be.
- In Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress in writing, but weaker progress in reading and mathematics. Some pupils struggle with basic mathematics skills, such as times tables and calculations. Aspects of mathematics, such as algebra, are not well understood by pupils in Year 6. Published performance data available at the time of the inspection indicates that pupils' standards vary between subjects. They compare favourably with national averages in writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation. However, they are below average in mathematics and reading.
- However, inspection evidence indicates that things are beginning to improve. For instance, children in the Nursery and Reception classes are now making overall good progress, and some outstanding progress.
- Standards have not risen in Key Stage 1 yet but pupils are making rapid progress and are now catching up with mathematics and English skills they missed due to weak teaching when they were younger.
- The new curriculum for mathematics is helping pupils to gain better skills in calculating and basic mathematics skills in Key Stage 1. It has not yet led to positive improvements in Key Stage 2 because it is not yet fully embedded in that key stage.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress as a result of carefully structured courses that make sure they catch up, particularly with their reading and writing.
- The school tracks the progress of those known to be eligible for free school meals well. There is no gap in their attainment in English and mathematics between this group and other pupils in the school.
- The most able make similar progress to other pupils, so their achievement also requires improvement. At times, there are gaps in their learning in mathematics. For example, Year 6 has a weak understanding of algebra. However, the most able make good progress in writing.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is not yet good because there is too much variation in its quality. Not enough teaching has been at least good over time for pupils to make consistently good progress in all classes.
- In mathematics, pupils are sometimes not challenged well enough. Work is sometimes repetitive, occasionally too easy or too difficult. Inevitably, this mismatch affects the progress pupils make.
- Teachers' questioning often relies on pupils putting their hands up to volunteer answers. This means that only some individuals are asked questions while, at the same time, others are not challenged well enough. Sometimes, pupils offer simple one word answers rather than full sentences. This form of response does not help develop their reasoning or thinking skills well enough.
- Phonics teaching has improved significantly. Teachers now have a good understanding of how to

get the best out of pupils and this has had a very positive impact on early reading in the Reception Year and in Key Stage 1. An inspector listened to children in the Reception class reading fluently a story containing common words.

- The feedback pupils receive on their work is good in writing. However, in mathematics, the feedback varies in quality and sometimes pupils do not respond as well to teachers' comments as they do in their writing.
- Teaching assistants give good quality support to disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. They explain things clearly and make topics interesting for pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. While pupils are well behaved in the majority of lessons, they are occasionally a little laid back in their approach to work, particularly when they are not stretched.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement. While pupils say they feel safe on the very secure site, they have a mixed understanding of what to do if faced with cyber-bullying. This is because the advice they receive depends on their teacher's own understanding. The school has a suitable plan in place to improve pupils' awareness of what to do if faced with threats associated with the internet or mobile phones.
- The school is also aware that more training is needed for staff and that parents' awareness of cyber bullying is not good enough to support their children at home with any issues they encounter. There is not enough good quality information on this subject on the school's website.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Many pupils take part in singing in assembly and consider moral issues, such as how they cope with disappointment, in a mature way. Pupils from different cultures get on well and play together happily.
- At lunchtime, pupils behave well and have good table manners. Dinnertime supervisors remind pupils when they get a little loud and pupils are quick to follow their instructions.
- Pupils wear their uniform proudly and do not drop litter around the clean, tidy site.
- In the playground, pupils get together to play ball games or choose to chat sensibly in small groups.
- Attendance has increased and is now close to the national average. Most pupils arrive punctually.
- Pupils generally respond well to the behaviour policy and can be very well behaved. For example, an inspector saw pupils willingly singing loudly and enthusiastically and behaving well as a local clergyman gave an entertaining, yet thought-provoking assembly.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because the very recent improvements that are apparent in the school, particularly in Key Stage 1 and in the Nursery and Reception classes have yet to be sustained over a longer period. Moreover, achievement is not yet good in all year groups and there are still remaining inconsistencies in the quality of teaching.
- Teachers are improving their understanding of how to analyse achievement data to improve the focus for and impact of their teaching, but some are still reliant on school leaders to do the bulk of this analysis.
- Subject leaders have good subject knowledge and have well-considered plans to improve teaching. In writing, there has been considerable success, since this was a priority for the school as a result of the previous inspection. In mathematics, there are early signs of improvement, particularly in ensuring that mathematics in Key Stage 2 improves at the same rate as it has lower down the school.
- Teachers' performance is managed rigorously and underperformance is tackled decisively by

leaders who train and support those teachers who need it most. A system of pairing teachers together helps one teacher learn from the other effectively.

- Safeguarding meets all current legal requirements.
- The primary school sports funding is well used to employ professional coaches to work alongside school staff to teach sports, particularly swimming lessons. This is enabling staff to develop their expertise and to have the skills to continue this work once the funding ceases.
- The curriculum is improving. In the Nursery and Reception classes, an excellent emphasis on speaking and early reading, writing and understanding of numbers helps children to make rapid progress. Writing is explored through various subjects, which makes the subject interesting and relevant to pupils. In mathematics, work has yet to be done to ensure pupils' skills are good by the time they leave the school. A range of sport, music and drama activities adds to pupils' enjoyment of school.
- The school generally works well with parents, although some are still hesitant in setting foot in the school or engaging with teachers at events, such as parents' evenings.
- The local authority has given suitable support to the school, particularly in providing resources for managing staff changes and improving the quality of governance. However, the local authority, through the school's view of its own performance, has been too quick to judge achievement and teaching quality to be good based on very recent improvements which have yet to be sustained.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body challenges school leaders well on matters relating to the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. Members have a good understanding of how to interpret achievement data and are given good quality information from the headteacher on pupils' achievement. They are well aware of the recent improvements that have been made but know equally well how there are still some remaining challenges to face for these improvements to be sustained. Their knowledge of the quality of teaching in the school is good. The governing body has supported the headteacher well with the management of teachers' performance. Its members keep a close watch on how the pupil premium is being used to the benefit of those who are eligible and that any gaps in achievement are closed.

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	121607
Local authority	York
Inspection number	442276

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	234
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Rundle
Headteacher	Jane Nellar
Date of previous school inspection	16 October 2012
Telephone number	01904 625131
Fax number	01904 651477
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