

St Giles Church of England (Aided) Primary School

Starkholmes Road, Matlock, DE4 3DD

Inspection dates

18–19 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Although teaching is now consistently good, pupils in Key Stage 2 who have a lot of ground to make up, because of poor teaching in the past, do not achieve as well as they should.
- Some pupils are working below the levels expected for their age because of a past legacy of underachievement. As a result, the reading, writing and mathematics skills of Year 6 pupils remain below the national average.
- Pupils' progress and attainment in reading are not as strong as in writing and mathematics.
- There is very little outstanding teaching.
- The outside environment in the Early Years Foundation Stage is in need of improvement to ensure that it is an exciting place for children to learn and play.
- Leaders of subjects other than English and mathematics have not undertaken frequent checks on the quality of teaching and learning.

The school has the following strengths

- The acting headteacher is leading the school well. She demonstrates a strong commitment to school improvement and has high aspirations for all pupils.
- Senior leaders are successfully supporting the acting headteacher in securing improvements to the quality of teaching and pupils' achievements.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good. This is helping pupils to make more rapid progress this year and increasingly to close the gaps in their learning.
- All pupils are making at least expected progress from their starting points.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They are keen to learn, feel safe at school and behave well at all times.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. This is because pupils enjoy a broad and creative curriculum.
- The school has gained the confidence and trust of parents, and relationships with families are strong.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited eight lessons taught by four teachers.
- The inspector looked at pupils' current work across a range of subjects.
- The inspector heard a group of pupils from Years 2 and 4 read.
- Meetings were held with: the acting headteacher; the Early Years Foundation Stage leader; leaders of different subjects; a group of pupils from Key Stage 2; representatives from the local authority; and the Chair of the Interim Executive Board.
- The inspector took account of the reported findings from three previous visits to the school, as well as detailed monitoring reports provided by the local authority.
- The inspector looked at a range of documentation including: the school's own self-evaluation and plans for improvement; the school's evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning; school policies; the school's most recent data on the attainment and progress of pupils; information provided to families; information relating to the safeguarding of pupils; and the school's most recent data relating to attendance and punctuality of pupils.
- The inspector considered the range of and quality of information provided on the school website.
- Consideration was given to the 47 responses from parents and carers to the online questionnaire (Parent View) as well as to the school's own analysis from its recent survey.
- The inspector spoke informally to several parents at the beginning of the school day.

Inspection team

Dorothy Bathgate, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

Information about this school

- St Giles CofE (Aided) Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Pupils are taught in four classes for literacy and numeracy each morning; one for Reception Year children and Year 1 pupils, one for Year 2, one for Years 3 and 4, and one for Years 5 and 6. The Reception Year children and Years 1 and 2 pupils combine each afternoon into one class.
- Most pupils come from White British backgrounds. There are very few pupils from other heritage groups or who speak English as an additional language.
- At 19%, the proportion of pupils with special educational needs is above average.
- At 15%, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is well below that which is found nationally. The pupil premium is additional funding provided to give extra support to those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and to children who are looked after by the local authority.
- There were too few pupils in Year 6 in 2014 for the government's floor standards to be applicable. These set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school is currently undertaking a public consultation on academisation.
- There is a separate after-school club which is held on the school site. This was not included as part of this inspection.
- The substantive headteacher has been absent from school since February 2014. In the interim, an executive headteacher and the deputy headteacher shared leadership responsibilities until the end of the summer term 2014. Since September 2014, the deputy headteacher has been leading the school in a full-time acting headteacher role.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics so that all pupils are working at or above their age-related expectations by ensuring that:
 - pupils who have gaps in their learning are given the right work to help them catch up quickly
 - pupils are given the help they need to develop their comprehension skills.
- In the Reception class, ensure that the outdoor area is fully conducive to learning by improving the layout and providing high-quality resources.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management of subjects other than English and mathematics by providing subject leaders with regular opportunities to check on the quality of teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility, in order to drive further improvements.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The acting headteacher is providing strong and effective leadership. This is evident in the rapid improvements seen since the school was last inspected and confirmed by the exceptionally positive responses to the online parent questionnaire.
- The acting headteacher is supported effectively by the leaders of English and mathematics, who have developed their roles considerably under her guidance. During the last year, they have reviewed many aspects of the school's work and, where required, have put new procedures in place. This has led to more robust systems for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning, as well as more accurate and improved use of assessment data. Leaders at all levels demonstrate that the school has the capacity for sustained improvement.
- The acting headteacher operates a clear system for checking on the quality of teaching and managing teachers' performance. Staff are in no doubt about what is expected. Teachers' performance is managed well and their targets relate strongly to pupils' achievement. Pay and progression is clearly linked to the achievement of these targets.
- All of the teachers in this small school take on leadership roles. Those responsible for English and mathematics are able to identify accurately strengths and weaknesses and can demonstrate the impact their monitoring has had in bringing about improvements and in raising standards.
- Leaders responsible for subjects other than English and mathematics do not undertake checks on the quality of teaching frequently enough.
- The leader responsible for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs has a good understanding of the specific learning needs of each pupil who finds learning difficult. As a result, teachers put clear programmes of support in place; these are reviewed regularly with pupils and parents.
- Leaders successfully ensure that additional funding, including the pupil premium, and the primary sport funding, is used effectively to narrow gaps in achievement and increase participation and excellence in sport.
- Senior leaders have introduced a new curriculum this term in response to statutory requirements. They have retained a topic approach but have revised this to include many new topics which will capture pupils' interests. The introduction of 'Values for Life' is successfully promoting pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As a result, pupils are being well prepared for the next stage in their education, as well as for life in modern Britain.
- The overwhelmingly positive responses from parents and carers show that the school has their confidence. The vast majority who responded to Parent View would recommend the school to other parents and carers.
- The local authority has been instrumental in facilitating the school's significant and rapid improvement. It brokered the appointment of the executive headteacher and has deployed learning consultants to train and advise staff in tackling their key weaknesses. Its support has evolved from intensive to 'lighter touch' as the school now demonstrates its capacity to be self-sustaining.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Prior to the establishment of the interim executive board in September 2014, the governing body had taken appropriate action to become more knowledgeable and effective. Following an external review of governance, it had reviewed its committee structures, had become involved in a range of monitoring activities and was making a good contribution to school improvement by holding the school's leaders to account.

- The interim executive board meets regularly. A considerable amount of time is being spent on overseeing the ongoing consultation on the proposed academisation. The board ensures that parents are kept informed of their decisions and any changes being made.
- The interim executive board is managing the school's finances well and ensuring that additional funding, such as the primary sport funding and the pupil premium, are used effectively to support pupils' academic and personal development. All current statutory duties are met, including those for safeguarding and employment.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite and courteous to each other and adults. All staff model high expectations for behaviour and, as a result, pupils' behaviour is good, both in and out of lessons. Pupils describe how they look after each other and welcome new pupils who join the school.
- Pupils settle quickly in lessons because they are keen to learn and do well. They listen carefully to teachers and other adults during lessons. They enjoy working together in pairs or small groups, and frequently extend their learning through their discussion with each other.
- Older pupils are able to discuss the importance of valuing differences and how it is interesting to learn about faiths and cultures different to their own. Following their recent work on Remembrance Day, they engaged in animated discussion about why war happens, what could be done to prevent it, and its sad consequences.
- The overwhelming majority of pupils and parents say that pupils enjoy coming to school. Senior leaders set high expectations for attendance and follow up any absence. As a result, attendance is above the national average.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Senior leaders have ensured that the weaknesses in safeguarding arrangements reported at the last inspection have been addressed.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations. They have a good understanding of e-safety; pupils were keen to explain what they know about the risks of using the internet, including how 'Harry the hedgehog' picture cues keep them safe and what to do if they feel unsafe.
- Pupils say that bullying is rare and that the school deals with any concerns immediately. An overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire concur with this view. Pupils understand the difference between bullying and being unkind.
- In this small school, all staff know pupils well. Consequently, there is a consistent approach and the needs of all pupils, including the most vulnerable, are well met.

The quality of teaching

is good

- All pupils are making faster progress this year than previously. Those pupils in Key Stage 2 who have the most lost ground to make up are closing the gaps in their knowledge and skills rapidly. This is because the quality of teaching is now consistently good or better.
- All teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and they are effective in providing opportunities for them to succeed. There is a sharp focus on: daily learning targets; skilful questioning; setting challenging tasks; and resolving pupils' misconceptions. This is helping to ensure that all pupils know what is expected of them, do not repeat mistakes and are appropriately challenged and supported to learn successfully.

- Teaching assistants provide high-quality support for all pupils, but particularly for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. This support is monitored rigorously to ensure that it is effective. Teaching assistants use their initiative, as well their in-depth knowledge of individual pupils, to adapt activities to meet pupils' needs as the lesson develops.
- Teachers' marking of pupils work shows them how well they have done. In most cases, marking provides clear guidance on how pupils should improve their work. Pupils are being given increasing opportunities to show how they have improved their work in response to teachers' marking.
- The teaching of reading and phonics (the sounds that letters make) has improved since the last inspection. Reading now has a higher profile and pupils say that they enjoy it. They read regularly, including to volunteers, which boosts their progress. However, their comprehension skills are not as well developed.
- Homework interests the pupils and is linked appropriately to their ongoing classwork. This is helping pupils to review and build upon the knowledge and skills which they are learning in lessons.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Although most pupils are making at least expected progress this year, inadequate teaching in the past means that many, particularly at Key Stage 2, have a lot of catching up to do. The oldest pupils are working particularly hard, and many are making more progress this year than previously because of the consistently good teaching they are receiving. However, achievement requires improvement because, over time, pupils have not made the progress they should.
- Reading is weaker than other subjects. This is because, although pupils are reading with fluency and expression, they are not always able to make deductions and inferences from the text. The school is beginning to take steps to improve the situation by reviewing guided reading sessions and providing pupils with more opportunities for shared discussion, including the use of 'Reciprocal Reading' in Year 6.
- Although the school's most recent data and review of pupils' work show that an increasing proportion of pupils are working at or above their age-related expectations, some pupils are still working below the levels expected for their age because of the legacy of past underachievement.
- Children make good progress in acquiring knowledge and developing their skills during their time in the Reception class. This good start is built upon in Years 1 and 2. By the end of Key Stage 1, attainment is above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- There were too few disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 in 2014 to comment on their attainment without risk of identifying individual children. However, throughout the school, the school's own data and a review of pupils' work show that the gap between disadvantaged pupils supported through the pupil premium and other pupils is reducing. This is because of the well-targeted support they receive which ensures that these pupils have the same opportunities to succeed as all others. No child is discriminated against and the school promotes equality of opportunity successfully.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are making expected progress from their starting points. Intensive tuition in basic skills, alongside sensitive care, boosts their learning and promotes their involvement in all that the school offers.
- The most-able pupils are being provided with better levels of challenge throughout the school. A review of pupils' work and targets in Year 6 show that a number of pupils are being challenged to attain the highest standard of Level 6 by the end of the year.
- Pupils are developing confidence in using their mathematical knowledge to tackle problems. This was evident in the purposeful way that pupils in Years 3 and 4 set about solving some 'Wild West' horse-racing problems.

- Senior leaders are determined to ensure that all pupils achieve success across a wide range of subjects. The school makes effective use of specialist teaching in music, and all pupils in Years 3 and 4 are currently learning to play the ukulele with confidence and skill.

The early years provision

is good

- Children start school with levels of knowledge and skills that are broadly typical for their age. Parents say that children settle quickly because relationships between staff and children are strong. Children are warmly welcomed, well cared for and kept safe.
- Children make good progress during their time in the Reception Year and are well prepared for their next stage of learning. Staff have a good understanding of the needs of very young children.
- Disadvantaged children make good gains in their early language skills and communication skills. They are confident in talking to adults and other children.
- Children are provided with a good range of indoor activities to support their development in all areas of learning. However, when children are learning outdoors, their progress is sometimes not as good. This is because the outdoor area lacks an appropriate range of resources and the layout is not fully conducive to learning.
- Teachers and teaching assistants make accurate assessments of children's learning. These are increasingly being used to inform planning and identify next steps for individual children.
- Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. There is an accurate understanding of the strengths and of the improvements needed. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader recognises the importance of outdoor learning and knows that there is still more work to do here.

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	112928
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	447384

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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	74
Appropriate authority	Interim executive board
Chair	David Wootton
Headteacher	Suzanne Forster (Acting Headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	21 June 2013
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