

Tickhill St Mary's Church of England Primary and Nursery School

St Mary's Road, Tickhill, Doncaster, South Yorkshire, DN11 9LZ

Inspection dates 18–19 November 2014

| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Requires improvement | 3 |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------|
| | This inspection: | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Leadership and management | | Good | 2 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| Quality of teaching | | Requires improvement | 3 |
| 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

- Overall achievement is not yet good. Not enough pupils make good progress in mathematics and writing at Key Stage 1 and writing at Key Stage 2. As a result, too few pupils reach higher levels of attainment by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- The information teachers have about pupils' previous learning is not always used effectively to challenge pupils appropriately.
- Occasionally, pupils' learning in lessons is not checked sufficiently and adjustments made to activities to secure faster rates of learning and progress.
- Teaching is not consistently good for all pupils to secure good progress over time, especially in writing. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to write at length to help them achieve more.
- Not all teachers mark pupils' work well enough so that pupils know how to improve their work, nor check rigorously that pupils respond to marking.
- Marking in subjects other than English and mathematics does not always help pupils improve their writing skills further.

The school has the following strengths

- The number of pupils reaching higher levels in reading and mathematics at the end of Year 6 is rising. Standards in mathematics at the end of Year 6 have been above average for the last two years.
- Provision for children in the early years is good and they make good progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs make good progress because they receive good support.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Music, particularly singing, provides pupils with inspirational delight when they perform at public events.
- Pupils' behaviour has improved and is now good. Pupils enjoy learning and try hard. They feel safe and well looked after at school.
- Pupils' attendance has improved and is now good.
- The headteacher has driven school improvement urgently and is developing the skills of other leaders effectively. Her expectations are high of pupils and staff; weak teaching is being tackled robustly. This gives the school the capacity to improve further.
- Leaders, including governors, are entirely focused on ensuring all pupils achieve well. Governors are holding leaders to account for pupils' progress and checking closely that improvements are effective in raising standards quickly.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching throughout the school including shared observations with the headteacher. In addition, inspectors scrutinised pupils' work in their books and listened to them read.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and four other governors, the headteacher, senior leaders and subject leaders. Inspectors also had a meeting with a representative from the local authority, a meeting with another member of the governing body and a telephone conversation with the lead officer for education from the Diocese.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's evaluation of its own performance, current data on pupils' progress, planning and monitoring documentation. Financial management was reviewed including the spending of funding for disadvantaged pupils and primary school sports funding. Records relating to behaviour and attendance, as well as documents relating to safeguarding were also taken into consideration.
- Inspectors reviewed 56 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and also took account of the views of the four parents they spoke with during the inspection.
- Inspectors also took account of the 18 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaires and talk to staff during the inspection about their views of the school.

Inspection team

Rajinder Harrison, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

David Matthews

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is smaller than the average sized primary school.
- Children in the nursery attend part time until they enter the Reception class.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils deemed disadvantaged and supported through the pupil premium is lower than average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or those children in the care of the local authority.
- The school has had a change of headteacher since the previous inspection and a number of other staff changes. There is currently a temporary teacher in one class.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, 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?

- Secure consistently good or better teaching across all year groups and subjects to improve rates of pupils' progress by:
 - planning activities that are accurately matched to pupils' different abilities and ensuring that the most able pupils are challenged sufficiently
 - adapting activities in response to pupils' understanding so that learning is accelerated in lessons
 - asking pupils questions that deepen their understanding and so strengthening their learning
 - making sure that high quality marking is consistent across all classes and subjects and by checking that pupils take note of this marking to improve their subsequent work
 - making sure pupils check their work before they hand it in to rectify any basic errors.
- In order to raise pupils' attainment in writing across the school and in mathematics at Key Stage 1, ensure that pupils:
 - build on their previous learning successfully in mathematics, particularly their number skills, apply these skills accurately in tasks and activities and work more quickly to speed up their progress
 - have more opportunities to write at length and that pupils apply their writing skills accurately in other subjects.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides strong leadership and has driven rapid improvements since joining the school a year ago. She has not shirked her responsibility to improve the quality of teaching urgently and has, with the support of governors, made difficult decisions. As a result, both the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement, particularly at the end of Key Stage 2, are improving strongly. She has also worked successfully to improve attendance, behaviour and safety; these aspects are now good.
- Staff and governors share the headteacher's aspiration to make the school good or better. They are very positive about the school and particularly about pupils' good behaviour and their positive attitudes to learning. There is strong teamwork throughout the school and pupils benefit from this positive climate for learning where they feel valued.
- Senior leaders check rigorously on the quality of teaching and that pupils' progress is accelerated. They ensure that assessments are accurate and identify priorities for improvement related to raising pupils' performance. For example, the sharp focus on improving the teaching of mathematics, since the previous inspection, has resulted in standards being above average in mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- Systems for checking pupils' progress are robust. The resulting information is used effectively by senior leaders to identify any pupils who are at risk of falling behind in their learning. Additional support is initiated quickly to help them quickly and so ensuring that overall the promotion of equality of opportunities is successful.
- The headteacher has identified key leaders to bolster the effectiveness of leadership and management in order to strengthen the school's capacity to improve. She leads by example, ensuring leaders have the skills they need to be effective. They are increasingly more accountable for their areas of responsibility, including the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- All staff are held to account for the progress their pupils make, including support staff. Performance management is used effectively to set challenging targets based on individual professional needs but specifically focused on the school's priorities to raise standards. Staff are clear that pay awards are linked to their achieving the targets they have agreed. New staff are supported well and all staff have good opportunities to access training and support so that they can achieve their performance targets.
- The curricular topics and themes engage pupils' interests well. They enjoy opportunities to discuss their ideas, for example, as to whether Goldilocks should be punished for breaking into the three bears' cottage. Pupils have many visits and visitors, including members of the local clergy, to enrich their learning. While pupils have opportunities to write in English and other subjects, teachers do not ensure pupils write enough or check that literacy skills are applied accurately in other subjects. In mathematics, pupils in Key Stage 1 do not apply their number skills confidently nor work quickly enough to make good progress.
- Pupils have many good opportunities to broaden their experiences and understanding of life in Britain and the wider world. Religious festivals from other faiths are celebrated and from their studies of other countries and continents, pupils recognise the richness of life across the globe. The church ethos is celebrated through assemblies, opportunities to sing in the church and, to lead, for example, a memorial service to commemorate the lives of fallen soldiers from the local area in the First World War. 'I like going to church because we can learn more about God there', was a typical comment.
- Provision in the early years enables children to make good progress and so prepares them well for Year 1.
- The primary school sports funding is used well. Teachers have benefited from working alongside staff in the partner secondary school to improve their teaching of physical education. Pupils say they enjoy a wider range of activities including basketball, athletics and dance and know that 'sport keeps you fit and healthy'.
- Similarly, the pupil premium funding to support disadvantaged pupils has been used to develop staff expertise and thus improve provision for these pupils. As a result, they make consistently good progress.
- The local authority has provided good support to the school since its previous inspection, for example, to help improve provision for mathematics. It has also supported governors through conducting a review of governance and providing training to help governors fulfil their responsibilities more effectively.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are ambitious for the school. They are clear about their responsibility to pupils and the local community to secure good achievement for all pupils. They have undertaken extensive training to be better informed as to how to challenge leaders regarding pupils' progress and achievement. The appointment of new governors has strengthened the governing body and governors are regularly in school to see for themselves if improvements are having the expected impact on raising standards.

Governors know that the pupil premium funding has been used to good effect and eligible pupils are making good progress. They have supported the headteacher in taking tough decisions to improve the quality of teaching and ensure that pay awards are linked to teachers' performance. Governors also ensure that parents are kept fully informed and involved in school developments.

- Governors ensure that arrangements to keep pupils safe meet current requirements.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils understand the school's systems for rewards and sanctions which all staff implement consistently across the school. Where occasional lapses in behaviour occur, staff address these promptly. Pupils know that they should behave well at all times and try hard with their work; most do. The school is a friendly, orderly community where incidents of bad behaviour are very rare.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and respond well to teachers' high expectations. They enjoy school and learning, falling short only on the occasions when the work they are doing does not hold their attention fully. A typical comment was, 'You come to school to learn if you want a good job one day'.
- Pupils are kind and considerate to others. They listen and cooperate well both in lessons and at play and are quick to help others. For example, older ones look after younger ones in the playground and 'buddies' make sure everyone has someone with which to play.. Pupils generally take pride in their work, particularly the projects they undertake at home, because they know their efforts will be valued.
- Strong relationships between staff and pupils enable pupils to try without fear of being wrong, knowing that they will be corrected kindly. When working in groups, pupils make sure everyone gets a turn. Pupils' levels of maturity by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6 are high and a strength of the school's provision for their personal development.
- Pupils contribute well to school life as councillors and other roles, eager to help staff wherever possible. They participate enthusiastically in sporting events and the school choir to extend their personal skills. Older pupils talk excitedly about going on a residential adventure holiday later this year, because, 'it will be fun'.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Care arrangements in the early years are good and children settle quickly into school routines.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying, including the dangers posed by social media sites and prejudice based bullying. As one pupil said, 'calling people names like 'gay' is hurtful and if it happened to you, you wouldn't like it'. Pupils have confidence that adults will sort out any concerns immediately. They say that bullying is rare in the school because 'teachers will not put up with it'. Lessons and assemblies during anti-bullying week reiterated the importance of treating others with respect.
- Parents are mostly very supportive of pupils' views about good behaviour and the school's work to keep their children safe both in school and whilst outside.
- The school has worked successfully with parents to improve attendance. Parents are encouraged to bring their children to school and most pupils attend regularly throughout the year because. 'My child can't wait to get here because he's worried he might miss something' was a typical comment. Punctuality is now good and, at nearly 97%, attendance is now above average.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is not yet consistently good but is improving strongly. The legacy of weak teaching still remains in that some pupils have in the past not always made good progress. However, weaknesses in teaching are being eradicated and most teachers now reflect on their practice so that they improve quickly. Teaching is strongest in the early years and upper Key Stage 2 where the progress is most rapid.
- The good teaching that exists results in good progress. For example, the teaching of phonics, (letters and the sounds they make), is consistently of high quality, hence standards in reading are good and rising. Senior leaders are working diligently to achieve this same high quality teaching in mathematics and writing, particularly at Key Stage 1, where progress is not as good as in the early years and Key Stage 2.
- Where teaching is having a positive impact on pupils' learning and progress, teachers' expectations are high and pupils are clear about what they have to do to complete work successfully. Activities are planned

effectively to engage all pupils and pupils work at a good pace, responding well to individual challenges. However, this good provision is not always the case, especially for the most able pupils. Questioning to deepen and strengthen pupils' learning is often successful, particularly in Key Stage 2. However, this good practice is not yet routine across all teaching.

- On the whole, the activities pupils undertake engage them well and they try hard in their learning. However, on the occasions where work is not matched well to their ability, being too hard for some and not hard enough for others, for example, for the most able, not all pupils achieve well. This is especially evident in English, and occasionally mathematics, where all pupils start with the same tasks.
- Literacy and numeracy skills are taught effectively in other subjects, particularly in Key Stage 2, where the work in pupils' topic books is as good as that found in their literacy and numeracy books. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are not as confident in their writing and numeracy skills because they are not always challenged sufficiently through their work. However, teachers provide pupils with a good range of activities to increase their vocabulary and reading skills so that they speak and read more confidently. For example, pupils in Year 6 were more than eloquent in their debate on the pros and cons of school uniform.
- Recent strategies to improve pupils' writing have yet to have significant impact on raising achievement in writing across the school. In some classes, pupils do not write enough to practise their skills before they move on to new work. This results in lost opportunities for pupils to consolidate new learning immediately and to be able to apply their skills accurately in other subjects. For example, even some of the most able writers in Year 6 are still not applying capital letters to names of places and people and there are careless errors in spelling and punctuation.
- The teaching of mathematics is good at Key Stage 2, where pupils have a good understanding of number and are more adept at applying their skills accurately and quickly to solve multi-step problems. Pupils are not working as confidently with number and other mathematical skills at Key Stage 1.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have good subject knowledge and expertise that they use effectively to plan interesting work to extend pupils' skills. Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs are identified early and receive good support to help them achieve well. Their progress is checked closely and carefully planned activities ensure these pupils keep pace with their classmates.
- Most teachers follow the school's policy on marking. Where the marking is good, pupils have clear feedback as to what they have done well and how to improve their work. Some teachers insist pupils respond to this feedback but this not routinely the case in every subject and every class. Consequently pupils do not check regularly for errors as they complete their work.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- As a result of the actions taken by senior leaders to improve teaching and raise expectations of pupils, progress is rising, particularly at Key Stage 2. Pupils make the most rapid progress in the early years and Key Stage 2 where teaching is the strongest. Given pupils' individual starting points, overall achievement requires improvement because not all pupils make consistently good progress.
- Standards at the end of Key Stage 1, while average overall, are not as high as they should be given pupils' starting points in Year 1. The most able pupils are not achieving enough, especially in writing and mathematics and too few reach the higher levels of attainment of which they are capable.
- Standards in reading and mathematics are above average at the end of Year 6. The results of national tests and assessments show a rising trend in the numbers attaining at the higher levels. Almost all pupils are now making the required progress and many exceeding this in reading and mathematics. Standards in writing are average because progress in writing is not as good.
- Although, overall the progress of the most able pupils is good in reading and mathematics at the end of Year 6, as seen in the rising number reaching the higher Level 5, progress elsewhere is variable. This is because work is not always hard enough to help pupils achieve more. The most able are not always challenged sufficiently, especially in mathematics and writing to reach the higher Level 3 at the end of Key Stage 1 and the higher Level 5 in writing at the end of Year 6.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. They are supported well throughout the school and challenged appropriately.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress. At the end of Year 6 in 2014, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils was three terms ahead of other pupils nationally in reading and mathematics and at the same level as pupils nationally in writing. Similarly, disadvantaged pupils were three terms in advance of their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics. Gaps in achievement have closed effectively by the end of Year 6, and are doing so rapidly lower down the school because staff identify pupils early and support them effectively.

- Attainment in reading is strong at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, and above average at the end of Year 6, because the teaching of reading is good. The good focus on the teaching of phonics in the early years and Key Stage 1 has led to a significantly higher than average number of pupils reaching the expected standard in the national Year 1 screening assessment check in 2014. Pupils use these skills well to help them read new words, research topics for pleasure and extend their skills. Pupils enjoy reading but some do not do so regularly enough, especially at home, to help them achieve more.
- Standards in writing are not yet rising quickly enough to secure good progress. While early indications suggest that the recent action taken to accelerate achievement in writing is taking effect, most pupils are currently working at average levels and too few are working at the higher levels. Pupils understand how to write in different styles. Most have very good vocabulary and are applying their skills of grammar and punctuation well, particularly at Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1, pupils do not always write enough regularly to practise their basic skills and become confident and fluent writers.
- In mathematics, there is good development of key number skills in the early years but progress slows at Key Stage 1 because pupils are not confident in applying what they know quickly and accurately. By the end of Year 6, pupils are applying their skills confidently to solve multi-step problems, for example, and so an increasing number are attaining at the higher levels.

The early years provision

is good

- Most children start in the Nursery class at levels typical for their age; a considerable number are higher. At the end of the Reception Year in 2014, the number of children reaching good levels of development was above average and a high number exceeded these levels. Children make good progress in the early years because provision for them is good.
- The leader of the early years provides good leadership. Links with home and school are good. Parents are encouraged to support their children's learning at school and at home. 'I read every night to my mum and dad and our neighbour sometimes because I love reading', was a typical comment from children. Children's starting points are assessed carefully. Disadvantaged children and those with special educational needs are identified early and provision put in place to support their individual needs so that they participate in everything their friends enjoy. Children who join after nursery in the Reception class also receive this good attention so that irrespective of when they start, all children make equally good progress.
- Arrangements to introduce children to school life before they start formally are good. Frequent contact with school and home and visits into the nursery help children settle quickly and adjust to class routines. Children form trusting relationships with staff and most accept that they need to share toys and equipment with others. A few initially find this a challenge but quickly learn to act responsibly as lapses in behaviour are managed promptly. In the happy, secure environment children feel safe and behave well.
- Through consistently good teaching, children learn well. They explore new activities confidently and sustain concentration well, for example, in phonics where interesting games and challenges help make learning fun. Children particularly enjoy using hand-held computers to play number and word games and to write. Their coordination skills are developed well. Children quickly adopt high levels of independence when they choose what they are going to do and talk about what they have learnt. Their communication skills, which are often good when they start school, help them achieve well in other areas.
- Children respond well when working with adults, asking questions when they are unsure, but are equally happy to manage their own learning. A few children occasionally find it hard to stay focused for long because they want to try everything. Staff manage this well by observing children closely to make sure they progress well in all areas. For example, while some, particularly the girls, are eager to 'write', boys are steered gently towards activities they find less appealing than perhaps playing with the trains or building blocks.
- Assessments of children's achievement are thorough. The information gathered informs subsequent planning for each child to extend their skills. For example, children enjoyed measuring their 'loopy, wiggly' caterpillars, quickly recognising that they would have to straighten the loops to measure accurately. Occasionally, the level of challenge is not sufficiently high for the most able children who are capable of more, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

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

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| Unique reference number | 106777 |
| Local authority | Doncaster |
| Inspection number | 442237 |

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

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| 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 | 215 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Gareth Rowbotham |
| Headteacher | Janet Sanderson |
| Date of previous school inspection | 12 February 2013 |
| Telephone number | 01302 742569 |
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