

St John's CE Primary School

Godly Lane, Rishworth, Sowerby Bridge, West Yorkshire, HX6 4QR

Inspection dates 4–5 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy
	This inspection:	Good 2
Leadership and management	Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Outstanding	1
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.

- All pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. The achievement of pupils in Year 6 is consistently better than pupils nationally.
- Teaching is good. Lessons are interesting and fun and lead to pupils enjoying learning, making good progress and wanting to come to school.
- Reading and writing are well taught because teachers support pupils from an early age to develop their phonic skills (the sounds that letters make) so that they can enjoy reading a variety of lovely books and write more adventurous words.
- Pupils are extremely well behaved and have developed outstanding attitudes to their learning. This is because the social, moral, spiritual and social curriculum is an important aspect of school life.
- This is an exceptionally safe place to learn and play because all adults in school nurture and care for their pupils so very well.
- The new headteacher is an asset to the school because she knows and cares deeply about her school community. She wants every child to do well and has quickly set out her expectations for the school.
- The headteacher and the governing body work well together to ensure teaching and achievement are good and to make sure that the school is improving.
- Governors are exceptionally astute. They are led very well by a highly professional Chair, who has ensured that members have sufficient and varied expertise and that there is the correct balance between support and challenge in school.
- Improvements to the indoor and outdoor learning environments and a strong focus on improving teaching means that provision in the early years is good.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The roles of middle and subject leaders are underdeveloped which means they are not yet fully able to support the headteacher to check on the quality of teaching and the progress of pupils.
- Some pupils do not respond to the helpful feedback teachers provide to help them to move on in their learning.
- In the early years, information about children's starting points and the progress they make is not always used well enough. Consequently staff do not always identify gaps in learning quickly and accurately to plan teaching so that even more pupils make good progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed two assemblies, six lessons and three part-lessons, two of which were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Pupils' books and learning journals were looked at, including those retained by the school from the previous year.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the assistant headteacher and the Class 1 teacher, a group of pupils, seven members of the governing body, the Local Authority School Improvement Partner and the school's independent adviser.
- A group of pupils discussed their opinions about the school and their learning. The inspector listened to several pupils read.
- The inspection took account of 17 staff questionnaires, 54 responses to Ofsted's online parent survey (Parent View) and the results of internal school survey of parents' and pupils' views. Discussions were held with parents at the start of the school day.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including achievement data, the school's evaluation of its own performance and development plan, behaviour and attendance records and information relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Pauline Pitman, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school converted to an academy in the Autumn Term 2012.
- The new headteacher was formally appointed eight days before the inspection, but has been in an acting position since September 2014. She was previously the assistant headteacher.
- The assistant headteacher and subject leaders have not yet been formally appointed. The middle leader with a responsibility for Key Stage 1 was appointed in September 2013. She is currently the acting assistant headteacher.
- This is a much smaller than average primary school.
- There is one full-time reception class and no nursery.
- Reception and younger Year 1 children are in Class 1, while the older Year 1 and Year 2 work in Class 2. In Key Stage 2, Years 3 and 4 and Years 4 and 5 are combined into 2 classes. Year 6 are taught in a separate class.
- There are fewer girls than average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils known to be eligible for funding through the pupil premium is much lower than the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding which supports pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or children who are looked after by the local authority. Figures are too small to generate meaningful statistics.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those with special educational needs or those with a disability is well below the national average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- The school works with other schools in the local cluster of schools and very closely with the parish.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to develop the role of middle and subject leaders in school so that they can support the headteacher to check on the quality of teaching and learning regularly and take swift action to support staff to raise standards even further.
- Further improve the quality of teaching by:
 - making sure that all pupils respond to their teachers' helpful suggestions on how they can improve their reading, writing and mathematics so that they can make even more progress
 - improving systems to gather and analyse accurate information about children's development on entry and during their time in the Nursery, so that staff can quickly address gaps in learning and help even more children to make good progress before they move on to Year 1.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The newly appointed headteacher knows the school well and is determined that every child will be a successful, happy learner in school. She has built very strong relationships with her pupils, staff and the community and makes sure she is out on the yard every day so that parents have an opportunity to talk to her. Good behaviour is seen as essential to good learning. This has allowed outstanding behaviour to flourish.
- The roles of assistant headteacher and subject leaders are still to be confirmed and fully developed. However, the headteacher has worked very closely with her staff to ensure that teaching and learning is as effective as it can be. She has recognised emerging weaknesses in teaching or subject knowledge and has put in place support and mentoring together with some very pertinent professional development. This has had a direct impact on improving the teaching of reading and particularly writing and mathematics.
- School self-evaluation is accurate because the headteacher has scrutinised achievement data and other school information very closely. This has enabled her to quickly establish the strengths and areas for development and the training needs of her staff in order to raise standards even higher.
- Performance management is well organised and includes targets which are linked to the school development plan. All teachers understand the cycle of appraisal and the link between performance and pay. There is also an important and regular review of the work of teaching assistants which is increasingly linked to the achievement of pupils.
- The recent introduction of termly progress meetings with pupils is effective in helping them be clearer about how to improve. In addition, staff meet regularly to identify pupils who may be underachieving and to discuss what actions are needed to support them to progress.
- The governors have been highly supportive of their new and highly skilled headteacher. To support her induction they purchased effective support from an independent adviser. Coupled with support and mentoring from the LA and the cluster, the headteacher is now well placed to manage the school.
- The curriculum is interesting and varied, with plenty of opportunities for pupils to participate in creative work and to broaden their knowledge through topic work. The outstanding social, moral, spiritual and cultural curriculum is very rich and an important part of school life. Academic excellence goes hand in hand with the development of kindness, respect and tolerance. All pupils are taught to respect difference and to understand their place in modern Britain. As a result, equality and freedom from discrimination are the fundamental rights of every child in school.
- Good use is made of the funding the school receives for the small numbers of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium funding. These pupils achieve well. Sports funding has enhanced provision, because all pupils benefit from school sporting activities and there is regular involvement in sport tournaments.
- Safeguarding arrangements are of high quality and meet statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors offer the school a high degree of specialist knowledge, skills and expertise. They know the school well and have a very good understanding of the quality of teaching and achievement data, including the use and the impact of pupil premium funding. This means they are in a very strong position to ask key questions and to challenge the school effectively.
 - The Chair of Governors makes a highly effective contribution. He has ensured that the right people have been appointed to the governing body and that there is a good spread of relevant skills. For example, through their daily work governors have skills in finance, performance management, building and construction, education and leadership and management. Safeguarding has high priority.
 - Key governors take responsibility for school achievement and effectiveness and regularly check on the quality of teaching and learning. They understand the link between performance and pay and have been instrumental in supporting the previous headteacher to develop a robust system for performance management.
 - Financial resources are well managed and funding is always prioritised to support children's learning and well-being. For example, the school built a new classroom to enable children to be grouped for reading, writing and mathematics. More recently a new garden has been established to encourage pupils to understand where their food comes from and to eat locally produced fruit and vegetables.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding because the school puts children at the heart of everything it does and works hard to support all pupils to be thriving members of the school community.
- Pupils respond very quickly to teachers' instructions. Pupils conduct themselves well, bring the right equipment and show pride in their workbooks. They are eager to get things right. They also work extremely well alongside their peers. As a result they display outstanding attitudes to their learning and make good and, in some cases, outstanding progress. Low-level disruptive behaviour in lessons is virtually non-existent.
- The excellent social, moral, spiritual and cultural curriculum fosters a strong sense of mutual respect between adults and pupils. Play time and lunch are enjoyable because pupils understand how to play together and how to socialise. The older pupils are very skilful with the younger children and take great pride in their roles as mentors and helpers. It is commonplace to see Year 6 helping a younger child in the playground or during assembly. Many feel they belong to 'one happy family'.
- School questionnaires reveal a high satisfaction in relation to behaviour in school. The majority of parents say that pupils behave well and pupils and staff agree. During pupil discussions all pupils felt that behaviour is managed very well and occasionally, if pupils fall out over something trivial, they are quickly supported to make friends.
- All pupils are very happy at school, arrive on time and wear their school uniform with pride. There are no issues with attendance which is above the national average. However, the school is not complacent and monitors and acts quickly on the absence of individual children to ensure that attendance remains high.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Parent surveys agree that children are very safe in school.
- The vast majority of pupils say that St John's Primary school is a happy place to learn and is free from bullying of any sort. They thoroughly understand different types of bullying and are horrified at the prospect of racist or other forms of bullying. They talk openly about the Christian values of the school and feel this helps them to treat other people with respect and tolerance.
- All pupils are taught about staying safe. They explore what this means in assemblies, lessons and during special safety weeks. Computer mouse mats display appropriate reminders about staying safe on the internet and pupils understand about keeping safe on the road and within the wider community.
- The headteacher and governors have worked very hard to ensure that the school premises are safe so that pupils can move about the building without risk. This has been a challenge as the school grounds are on several levels; there is uneven ground and a number of steps. The newly developed garden area has improved the safety of available walkways.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good because teachers have good subject knowledge and make lessons interesting and fun. They plan their lessons carefully and set their pupils individual goals so that the learning needs of every child are catered for. This has meant that all pupils enjoy learning and achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics, particularly in Key Stage 2.
- The headteacher has carefully checked the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and progress. She has acted quickly if there have been any relative weaknesses in teachers' subject knowledge. For example, there has been a strong focus on improving writing and phonics. More recently, following a fall in achievement in mathematics in Key Stage 1, teachers have undertaken mathematics training to support all pupils to develop a deeper understanding of mathematical concepts such as fractions. The teaching of mathematics across the school is good, because teachers now provide more focussed support and expect pupils to achieve well.
- Following the evaluation of teaching in mixed-age classes, funding has been used to build a new classroom so that pupils in Years 1 and 2 can be separated to enable reading, writing and mathematics to be taught more precisely. This has had a significant impact on the quality of provision and progress of pupils.
- The teaching of phonics is systematic and effective. Key adults have been well trained to use new resources and there are frequent opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills and to try to read and spell more complex words.

- Teachers mark pupils' workbooks regularly and offer some very helpful feedback to encourage pupils to think about how to improve their work. However, not all pupils respond to this guidance because they do not receive enough time to allow them to do this.
- Pupils enjoy reading and regularly read in school. They keep an up-to-date reading record and describe some of their favourite books and authors articulately.
- The curriculum is varied and interesting and includes many opportunities for pupils to participate in trips, music and art. Pupils are proud to display their attractive and imaginative art work and writing.
- Pupils really enjoy their opportunities to read and write in other subject areas. For example, in humanities, Year 6 pupils explored what it meant to live in modern Britain and why it is important to uphold British values. Good teaching inspired them to write an informative advertising leaflet. Similarly, a recent World War 1 day sparked imagination and resulted in some interesting written work.
- Teaching assistants are deployed well and work with a range of pupils, including the most able. Some work with small groups to develop phonic skills or social skills.
- Provision is good for pupils with special educational needs or those with a disability, because teachers and their assistants support them effectively to develop their reading, writing and mathematical skills. As a result these pupils make good progress from their individual starting points.
- Some parents feel that they do not want their child to receive too much homework while others feel the opposite. The school has balanced the learning needs of its pupils and offers appropriate opportunities to continue their learning at home.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Approximately 30% of children arrive into the Reception with skills below what is typical for their age in communication, literacy and numeracy. By the time they enter Year 1, most have reached a good level of development and made good progress.
- Effective professional development and the purchase of new resources have enhanced the teaching of phonics. For the last two years pupils have achieved better than what is expected of them in the Year 1 national phonics check. The mixed Reception and Year 1 class now work in separate groups, so that teaching can be matched more closely to pupils' age and ability and to support more precise teaching of reading and spelling.
- In 2013, attainment at the end of Year 2 was above the national average in reading and significantly above in writing and mathematics. Although broadly in line with national averages in 2014, attainment dipped. This was partly due to the particular starting points of the cohort and also because assessment data in the early years had been insecure. This made it more difficult for teachers to plan learning effectively.
- Attainment and progress of Year 6 pupils is very strong, with pupils performing significantly better than others nationally in all subject areas. Nearly all pupils make the progress expected of them in reading, writing and mathematics and a good proportion do better than this.
- Scrutiny of the school's achievement data and pupils' workbooks shows that the majority of pupils, particularly those in Year 2, are on track to make good and even better progress this year.
- Provision for the most able pupils in Key Stage 2 is effective, because many pupils make better than expected progress and reach the higher levels. 20% reached a Level 6 in mathematics in 2014. However, at the end of Year 2 the proportion of pupils reaching a Level 3 in 2014 was below the national average in reading and mathematics. Recent improvements in targeted classroom provision, regular meetings with pupils and additional mathematics clubs at lunchtime and after school are having an even greater impact on securing outstanding outcomes.
- Pupils read widely and often, because they enjoy the varied curriculum which includes opportunities to research topics on the computer and to read from a range of very attractive and appropriate books which appeal to boys and girls alike. Younger children frequently take books home and reading records are well maintained.
- There are too few disadvantaged pupils at the school for an analysis of their progress and attainment data to generate meaningful statistics compared with pupils nationally. However, school's test results, assessment data and pupils' work confirm that these pupils are making good and sometimes better progress than other pupils in the school. For example, disadvantaged pupils in mathematics and reading are performing as well as other pupils in school and slightly better in reading.
- The small group of pupils identified as having special educational needs or those with a disability are well cared for and support for their learning is good. Leaders work closely with outside agencies to help them

to plan the best provision for identified pupils. Although numbers are too small to draw any meaningful comparisons with the national picture, these pupils make good progress from their individual starting points.

The early years provision

is good

- Children arrive into the full-time Reception class from approximately six different early years providers. They work alongside some of the younger Year 1 pupils.
- When they arrive, some children do not have the skills expected of them, particularly in communication, literacy and mathematics. By the time they leave Reception and enter Year 1, most have reached a good level of development. This represents good progress and means they are ready to learn in Year 1.
- The leadership and management of the early years are good. The new headteacher, with support from her middle leader who is acting assistant headteacher, checks on the quality of provision well.
- Systems to gather and analyse information about children's level of development are in place, but are not well established in the early years. This means that staff do not always have a clear picture of gaps in children's learning so that they can refine their teaching to help individual pupils make even more progress. The headteacher has enlisted some external support to help improve provision further and to establish accurate baseline and achievement data.
- Teaching is good, providing a range of interesting and absorbing activities, matched to the children's learning needs, to help them make progress in the key areas of learning. For example, an exciting 'Space' theme was explored through creative art work, dressing up, the building of a spaceship and interesting books which helped children to develop their reading, language and listening skills.
- Improvements in indoor and outdoor provision have enhanced opportunities to learn. Children really enjoy learning outside. For example, children were fully engaged and having real fun with a silk parachute used to help them explore feelings and to develop vocabulary.
- Parents can find out what children are learning about from the school website which includes helpful information about the curriculum. Home-school books are beautifully presented and provide interesting examples of children's work. There is an open door policy and parents come into school regularly to discuss their child's progress. Learning journals are sent home prior to parents' evening so that staff can share their child's development.
- Each day children in the Year 1 and reception class are split so that phonics and mathematics can be taught in smaller groups. Specialist staff are used to support phonic work and the teaching of mathematics.
- Children have regular opportunities to read and frequently take books home. They enjoy looking at books and quickly make use of their phonics skills to read and write new words.
- Reception is a very safe place to learn and parents agree. Staff are allocated particular children to care for and facilities continue to improve to enable children to enjoy learning out of doors which include a new garden area.

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	139040
Local authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	449712

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	137
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stephen Byrne
Headteacher	Joanna Wasyliv
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy
Telephone number	01422 822596
Email address	admin@st-johns-rishworth.calderdale.sch.uk

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