

The St Faith and St Martin Church of England Junior School

Hampton Street, Lincoln, Lincolnshire LN1 1LW

Inspection dates 10–11 November 2015

Overall effectiveness **Good**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher has acted quickly to improve many aspects of the school since his arrival. He has gained the confidence and support of staff, pupils and parents in a short period of time.
- The school has made leadership stronger by appointing skilled subject leaders, who have already had a positive effect on learning.
- School leaders, including governors, have high expectations and make a strong contribution to a culture where everyone wants to improve.
- The school has developed strong systems for assessing and checking pupils' work. Lessons are almost always planned well.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. They are positive about learning and recognise improvement.
- The school's arrangements to promote attendance are strong. As a result attendance has improved and is now average.
- The very large majority of pupils in the school are making good progress, especially in mathematics, reading and writing.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge, especially in English and mathematics. Pupils like learning because they have a positive relationship with their teachers.
- The school provides a wide range of subjects for pupils to learn. There are a significant amount of extra sporting, artistic and other additional clubs, which enhance learning further.
- Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe and have a good understanding of how to stay healthy.
- Pupils behave well in lessons, around the school and during breaktimes and lunchtimes. They treat the school with respect and pride.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A few disadvantaged pupils and a few with special educational needs are not making as much progress as others in the school, especially in reading and writing. Some planning of the work for these pupils needs to be more effective.
- The improvements made in planning and assessing learning in English and mathematics now need to be replicated across all the other subjects taught. Some work is not presented as well as it could be.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the progress of a few pupils who are disadvantaged and a few with special educational needs by:
 - checking how effective the school’s current plans for improving reading and writing for these pupils are and adjusting them where they are not effective enough
 - making sure that planning takes sufficient account of the needs of these pupils and any extra support provided is effective.

- Improve teaching further across subjects other than English and mathematics by:
 - ensuring that expectations for the presentation of work are clear in each year group and across a wide range of subjects
 - improving the planning and assessment of learning across subjects in order to match the improvements already made in literacy and numeracy.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher took up post in April 2015. He has acted quickly and decisively to identify what the school does well and made improvements in aspects that were less effective. A parent echoed the views of many by stating that '...the change within the school since the new head has arrived is fantastic'.
- Senior staff at the school are fully supportive of changes that have been made and are making a strong contribution to improving the school further. In some cases they are relatively new to their roles, in other cases they have been at the school for a while. They have not wasted any time in identifying what needs to be done and getting on with it. They work together well using the motto 'We are a team that achieve amazing things every day'.
- The systems for rewarding good behaviour have been reviewed and developed since September. Pupils are exceptionally positive about this and strive hard to achieve recognition for their good behaviour and attitudes. Arrangements to promote good attendance are positive and have been effective.
- The school teaches a good range of subjects that cover all statutory requirements and there is a good proportion of time given to learning skills in literacy and numeracy. These are enhanced further by a very good range of extra sporting and artistic clubs, trips and additional activities. Pupils value these highly and a large, and increasing, proportion take part in them.
- School leaders ensure the school teaches and promotes strong values. These are framed around the themes of compassion, creativity, honesty, hope, perseverance and responsibility. This gives a strong focus to the promotion of British values and provides regular and effective development of the pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural understanding.
- Since the last inspection key areas for improvement have been mostly addressed. The rate of improvement has increased since the new headteacher took up post. Systems to assess pupils' progress are very thorough and well organised.
- The school has ensured that its staff are regularly trained and that staff can develop their skills and expertise further. Regular checks on how well staff are performing are used to identify good practice and provide additional support if needed. The links between the performance of staff and possible pay progression are planned well.
- At the previous inspection a significant group of parents had concerns about the communication they received from the school. Almost all parents who responded to Parent View during this inspection felt this was an area that had improved. Staff and pupils speak warmly about the school and are very positive about changes that have been made.
- The local authority has provided a good range of additional support for the school. This has been welcomed and used effectively by school leaders.
- The school has carried out a thorough and accurate review of how well it is doing. This information has been used to plan the priorities for further improvement.
- School leaders have a good understanding of how effectively additional funding for sports activities has been used and how well disadvantaged pupils are doing. Plans are in place to make the progress of some disadvantaged pupils, and some who have special educational needs, a school priority. Some aspects of these plans are too recent to have had enough effect yet.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The governing body has recently been re-organised and now includes a small group of experienced and skilled members.
 - Governors are becoming increasingly effective at checking how well the school is doing. Governors have ensured they check their own skills and attend regular training. They have also checked that the school's arrangements for monitoring the performance of staff are strong and that links to pay are robust.
 - Governors understand how well disadvantaged pupils are doing and have checked that additional funding for sports activities is used well.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Appropriate checks are made to ensure that adults working with pupils are suitable. Staff receive regular training in how to care for pupils and report any concerns they might have. Leaders keep detailed records which record any concerns raised and how they are followed up. Pupils benefit from assemblies and lessons that include information on how to stay safe. Parents report that the school works closely with them and responds quickly to any concerns they report.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teachers have consistently high expectations for what pupils can achieve across different year groups. Despite the recent, relatively high, turnover of staff there is a very good level of teamwork and mutual support.
- Teachers have good knowledge of the subjects they teach, especially in the teaching of literacy and mathematics. Staff use their interests and skills generously to provide a very good range of additional activities for pupils.
- Teachers mark work regularly and carefully. They often give helpful and detailed comments about how pupils can improve. Assessments made by teachers are accurate and are often used to plan work and adjust activities, in order to help pupils to learn effectively.
- Teachers have become increasingly skilled in teaching numeracy since the last inspection. They have received effective support in order to develop their understanding of recent changes to the teaching of mathematics. The school has recently reviewed and updated its policy on the ways that different calculations are taught.
- Teachers often plan activities well so that teaching assistants have a good understanding of how they can support specific pupils. Small groups enable pupils to receive additional support where required. This approach is particularly effective when it takes place immediately after a lesson and enables some pupils to keep up with others in the class.
- Teachers have high expectations for what pupils can achieve. This helps the most able to make consistently good progress.
- The teaching of reading is very strong and well organised. Pupils have opportunities to read regularly and the school has recently developed a greater range of resources to extend the range of reading materials available.
- The teaching of writing is consistently strong. Pupils have a good understanding of spelling, punctuation and grammar. They are often able to write longer passages in a specified style and to great effect. Despite this their approach to presentation, in particular their handwriting, is not always as good as it could be.
- A small amount of the planning for a few disadvantaged pupils and a few with special educational needs has not been effective enough. The school has identified this as priority and recently reviewed how additional support is used. It is too early to know if this has had sufficient effect on the learning of these pupils.
- The planning and assessment of subjects other than literacy and numeracy needs to be developed further, so that expectations are always high enough.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupil's personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils have a very positive attitude to learning in almost all lessons and activities. They like school and feel that they get good support and encouragement from all the staff. They almost all understand what helps them to learn. They feel positive about trying hard and do not mind not always getting things right.
- Pupils are respectful of each other's views and look after each other well. They have very good opportunities to take on extra responsibility and approach these with relish and enthusiasm. They work well together to create a positive ethos.
- Parents and staff feel that the school provides a positive environment for learning. They agree that the school provides a strong culture of tolerance and respect. The pupils spoken to said they felt there was no derogatory language used within school.
- Pupils say they like coming to school and their attendance has improved. It increased significantly in the last full year, so that it was average. This term, so far, attendance is even better.
- Pupils spoken to said that they felt there was no bullying at the school. They also recognised that sometimes people fall out and were clear about how this was different. Parents and staff support this view strongly.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and at break and lunchtimes. A parent, commenting about seeing pupils out on a school trip, said 'I felt proud that my child is part of this school community.'
- The school has introduced a new system of rewards and sanctions to support positive behaviour since September 2015. Pupils say they like this system. They are pleased to receive recognition for their behaviour and many aspire to a reward such as tea with the headteacher.
- Despite the overwhelmingly positive behaviour a small number of pupils occasionally find it difficult to concentrate when they are being taught in small groups or during subjects other than literacy and numeracy. Planning is not always as effective in these subjects. Some work is not presented as well as it could be and, in particular, the expectations for handwriting are not yet consistent enough across different subjects.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Across the different year groups currently in school pupils are making good progress, especially in literacy and numeracy. The work in their books demonstrates the rapid improvements that have been made since April 2015. Tests carried out at the end of October 2015, across the different year groups, confirms this improvement.
- In 2014, the most recent year where national Key Stage 2 test results have been confirmed, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard was above average across all areas. Initial test results for 2015 indicate that results are below average, especially in mathematics and grammar, punctuation and spelling. When inspectors reviewed the work of pupils currently in the school, they found that it showed much stronger outcomes than this across the different year groups.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieved outcomes in 2014 that were about three terms behind other pupils in the school. Initial outcomes for 2015 show that this gap closed, but that on average they were still one term behind their peers in school and nationally. In mathematics, they achieved better outcomes than other pupils, both in school and nationally. Current school data across different year groups, and work seen during the inspection, show that although they are improving in literacy a few are still behind their peers.
- The large majority of pupils are developing good skills in writing. They have a good understanding of punctuation, grammar and can spell accurately. They are able to write in a range of different styles and appropriately for different readers. They use these skills especially well in subjects such as history, geography and religious education.
- Some pupils do not take enough care over the presentation of their work and the quality of their handwriting. Their approach is sometimes too inconsistent so that they will take care in one subject but not have the same expectations in another.
- Pupils are developing strong skills in mathematics. This has been a priority for the school since the last inspection and improvements have been made. Pupils are confident in performing calculations and regularly check to see if they are accurate. For example, they will carry out a sum that requires division and then check the answer by multiplying it as a matter of course.
- Pupils with special education needs or disabled pupils, who have a statement or an education, health and care plan, are making good progress. Regular checks are made on their targets. Careful assessments are used to plan what they need to do next and provide the support they need.
- Pupils with other special educational needs are mostly making good progress. However, a few do not make as much progress as they should because the activities they do are not planned sufficiently well, or because they do not concentrate as well as they can during small group sessions.
- Pupils enjoy the opportunity to learn a wide range of subjects. For example, during the inspection some Year 6 pupils were excited to experience a live Spanish lesson from Buenos Aires. The school has been successful in improving outcomes for literacy and numeracy. Leaders need to ensure that planning and assessment in other subjects are more consistent.

School details

Unique reference number	120561
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10001832

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	215
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ben Hill
Headteacher	Martin Kyle
Telephone number	01522 528063
Website	www.sfsm.co.uk
Email address	enquiries@sfsm.lincs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	25–26 September 2013

Information about this school

- This junior school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is above average. This group of pupils is referred to as disadvantaged in this report.
- A smaller than average proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and a similar proportion speaks English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is broadly average. An above-average proportion have a statement or an education health care plan.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- A new headteacher took up post in April 2015. His appointment followed a period of time when the previous headteacher was only in post for a short period of time and had been appointed following a period of instability in leadership. Six new staff started at the school in September 2015.
- The 'West End Kids Club' is provision for childcare that takes place on the school site. This is subject to a separate inspection and its most recent report is available on the Ofsted website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 35 lessons and part-lessons. These included a joint lesson observation with the headteacher, short visits to classrooms and observing the teaching of literacy and numeracy for smaller groups of pupils. They also listened to pupils read in lessons.
- Discussions were held with pupils, staff, two governors and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' books, the school's progress data, safeguarding information and other documentation.
- Eighty-five responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, were considered, as well as 16 questionnaires completed by school staff.

Inspection team

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Ofsted inspector

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