

# Pontefract St Giles Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior and Infant School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	108268
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wakefield
<b>Inspection number</b>	337047
<b>Inspection dates</b>	19–20 July 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Andrew Clark

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	250
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs M Murray
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Stephen Smith
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 February 2007
<b>School address</b>	Skinner Lane Pontefract West Yorkshire WF8 1HG
<b>Telephone number</b>	01977 722880
<b>Fax number</b>	-
<b>Email address</b>	headteacher@st-giles.wakefield.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 11 lessons and observed eight teachers. The inspectors held meetings with governors, staff, parents and carers, and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation including policies, the school improvement plan and an analysis of the school's records of pupils' progress and attainment. The inspection team analysed 31 questionnaires returned by parents and carers as well as a number of questionnaires completed by pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the quality and consistency of leadership at all levels
- the progress pupils make in English, mathematics and science
- the effectiveness of teaching and use of assessment
- pupils' attendance.

## Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The vast majority of pupils are White British. There is an after-school club on site which is managed by a private provider and is not a focus for this inspection. The school has achieved Healthy Schools status.

There has been considerable instability in leadership including a series of acting headships since the last inspection. The governing body and diocesan board are seeking to recruit a permanent headteacher as soon as possible. Until this appointment is made, the school will be led by an acting headteacher supported for one day each week by a consultant headteacher.

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

4

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

4

### Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

The positive picture of pupils' standards of work seen at the last inspection has not been sustained due to the impact of significant staff turbulence, especially on leadership and management. Children enter the school with skills which are generally below the levels typically expected for their age. They do well in the Early Years Foundation Stage and reach broadly average levels by the time they enter Year 1. However, since 2007, attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 has declined and is too low. Pupils' achievement is inadequate. Inspection evidence indicates that, despite some recent improvement, attainment remains too low, and particularly so for more-able pupils, in all subjects. Progress is inadequate. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, however, make satisfactory progress overall from their starting points because of the focused support they receive from knowledgeable teaching assistants.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Pupils are generally keen to learn. They are enthusiastic when activities in class are lively and interesting. However, teaching is not consistently good enough to bring about the necessary improvement to pupils' progress, given the level of underachievement that has resulted from weak teaching in the past. The curriculum is satisfactory and provides well for pupils' personal development. Projects for developing reading and writing skills are beginning to have a positive impact. There are not, however, enough opportunities for pupils to develop and apply their independent learning skills, especially in science.

Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory. The school is harmonious and there is no racist behaviour or discrimination. Pupils say they feel safe in the school and that there is no bullying. They particularly enjoy practical and physical activities and, when provided with such opportunities, learn effectively through them. However, inadequate basic skills and a pattern of below average attendance for some pupils leave them insufficiently prepared for the next stage in their education.

Significant staff turbulence means self-evaluation lacks accuracy and the school's development planning is imprecise. Not enough has been done to address weaknesses and establish clear procedures for improving the quality of provision to address quickly the underachievement and low attainment. The governing body is supportive and ambitious for the future. Governors receive the support of the local authority and have

strived to maintain effective leadership. However, despite their best efforts, the future leadership of the school is uncertain and, combined with the underachievement and only satisfactory teaching, the evidence indicates that the school has an inadequate capacity to improve.

## **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Take immediate action to ensure that a strong, stable leadership and management team is in place in order to promote a secure capacity to improve.
- Improve pupils' progress and raise attainment, particularly in English, mathematics and science by:
  - establishing and implementing robust procedures to monitor, evaluate and improve the quality of teaching
  - making learning consistently relevant, exciting and challenging for pupils of all abilities
  - creating more opportunities for independent learning.
- Improve attendance by:
  - regularly and rigorously analysing patterns of attendance of different groups of pupils
  - building the partnership with parents and carers and continuing to work with the local authority's education welfare service to reduce term-time holidays and persistent absence.

## **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

**4**

Pupils do not learn enough and their progress is inadequate. However, they do engage in activities and work responsibly on their own or collaboratively in small groups. As they get older, pupils take care to present their written work neatly but their handwriting and punctuation skills are under-developed for their age. The good start made in the Early Years Foundation Stage is not sustained in Key Stage 1 and attainment has declined to be below average. The picture is similar in Key Stage 2 where attainment in English, mathematics and science has been too low in recent years. This is reflected in the National Curriculum tests and assessments. Pupils' progress shows some slight recent improvement, especially for those working at average levels in Key Stage 2. Too often, more-able pupils are not given the opportunity to use independently the skills they have learned and this hinders their progress. Attainment in science is low, partly because pupils do not often undertake their own investigations and work is not always exciting enough to stimulate their curiosity. Although pupils made satisfactory progress in most lessons observed, and very occasionally good progress, this is not good enough to make up for the significant gaps in their learning. Pupils are underachieving and not reaching the standards of which they are capable. The low attainment of some pupils, especially in Key Stage 1, has had a detrimental impact on the progress they make in school. Pupils conduct themselves safely and considerately and look out for their classmates.

They are less attentive when the pace of learning is too slow. They say that bullying is not an issue and they know where to seek help should the need arise. They know how to recognise and avoid unsafe situations and have a good understanding of the dangers of the internet. The school is effective in helping pupils have a good understanding of the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle and they participate in a range of physical activities. As school councillors and through their support of charitable activities, pupils make a satisfactory contribution to their school and local community. Opportunities in assemblies, history, religious education, art and music, together with a structured approach to personal, social and emotional aspects of learning, all play a key part in fostering pupils' satisfactory spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	4
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Teachers establish good relationships with pupils and generally manage classes well. In the best lessons seen, skilful questioning, good use of interactive whiteboard technology and interesting group work stimulated pupils' involvement and learning. Teachers are increasingly involving pupils in assessing their own progress during the lesson towards

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

agreed success criteria. However, sometimes the lessons are not exciting or fast-paced enough to engage and motivate pupils fully, especially the more-able. The work set is not always challenging enough for them because teachers do not always have sufficiently high expectations. There is improvement over this last year in the quality of marking, particularly in literacy, to help pupils improve their own work. Teaching assistants are deployed well to provide focused support for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, there are inconsistencies in teaching between subjects and classes so the overall quality is only satisfactory.

The curriculum meets statutory requirements and work is linked by themes which make learning relevant to pupils. These themes are often supported well by visits and visitors which lead to exciting events such as Tudor and Second World War re-enactments and role play. The use of the Every Child a Reader and Every Child a Writer programmes is beginning to boost pupils' learning of literacy skills. Opportunities are missed to build pupils' scientific skills through practical investigations. Pupils make satisfactory use of information and communication technology as a tool for learning in several subjects. The range of sporting and before- and after-school clubs enrich pupils' lives and contribute to their personal development.

The school successfully promotes a friendly, positive atmosphere among pupils. Good pastoral care assures pupils' welfare. A safe and caring environment prevails where pupils are happy and at ease with one another. Effective arrangements foster pupils' transition from Reception and to the next phase in their education. Throughout the day, well-trained teaching assistants make a key contribution to helping pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities learn and make satisfactory progress. With the support of the local authority, the school seeks to reduce persistent absenteeism but term-time holidays substantially reduce some pupils' attendance.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>3</b>

## **How effective are leadership and management?**

Changes of headteacher and lack of continuity in middle management roles have led to imprecise evaluation and development planning over time. Procedures to drive improvement are too insecure to ensure that pupils' underachievement is arrested. Staff morale is fragile. The governing body has a realistic and pragmatic view of the school and fulfils its statutory requirements but has been unable to secure the necessary changes. The school has worked with the local authority to review the quality of

education and to plan for improvement. However, leaders have not been robust and consistent enough in embedding procedures to bring about faster improvement. Systems for regularly monitoring and improving the quality of teaching and the patterns of attendance are not established. This limits the effectiveness of middle and senior leaders.

The promotion of equality of opportunity is inadequate because leaders do not ensure that all pupils achieve their full potential. The school participates in enterprise and design projects with local business and has close links with nearby churches. However, the development of global links and pupils' understanding of sustainability is at a relatively early stage of development. As a result, community cohesion is satisfactory. The governing body's and the school's procedures to safeguard pupils' welfare meet current requirements. As the the school is failing to deliver an acceptable standard of education for its pupils, it provides inadequate value for money.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>4</b>

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

This aspect of the school's work is almost untouched by the weaknesses found elsewhere in the main school. In this well-led and organised facility, children make good progress in all aspects of their learning. They begin with starting points which are largely lower than expected for their age. Children make good progress to attain levels which are average and sometimes above by the time they start Year 1. There are good systems to support children and their parents and carers when children first start and to help them settle in quickly. Good links with other providers contribute to children's



smooth beginning and later transition to Year 1. Good welfare arrangements and very positive relationships ensure that children feel safe and secure. There are imaginative programmes to help children make good progress in early reading and writing. There is an effective balance between adult-led activities and those that children choose for themselves which contributes well to children's personal development. The children are proud of their work and eager to show what they can do. Children enjoy exploring the range of stimulating learning activities. The school has identified the need to enhance the opportunities for physical development in the Reception class in the outdoor area and this is central to its action plan. The use of assessment to improve children's learning is good and parents and carers feel well informed about their children's progress. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader and her team have clear roles and are constantly seeking ways to improve the provision further. They identify strengths and weaknesses well and act effectively upon them. As a result, the Early Years Foundation Stage is well placed to continue to improve.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## **Views of parents and carers**

About one tenth of parents and carers returned the questionnaires. Their views are mixed. They are supportive about arrangements to keep their children safe and to promote healthy lifestyles. They feel their children enjoy school. However, a minority of parents and carers express concerns about their children's learning and progress, the school's response to them and the management and leadership of the school. The findings of this inspection concur with these views.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Pontefract St Giles Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior and Infant School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 31 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 250 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	23	74	8	26	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	21	68	10	32	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	13	42	16	52	2	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	16	52	12	39	2	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	16	52	13	42	1	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	16	52	12	39	2	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	48	13	42	1	3	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	13	42	14	45	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	15	48	13	42	3	10	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	42	14	45	3	10	1	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	39	13	42	2	6	2	6
The school is led and managed effectively	15	48	12	39	4	13	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	17	55	12	39	2	6	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



21 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Pontefract St Giles Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior and Infant School, Pontefract, WF8 1HG

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave the inspectors when they visited your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you and visiting your lessons and assembly. All the adults in school look after you well and have your best interests at heart. Many of you make a valuable contribution to the school, such as through the school council and as classroom monitors. You know what to do to stay safe and healthy. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress in all aspects of their learning.

However, there are some very important things that must be done to make the school better. Because of this, your school requires special measures. It needs extra help to provide a good education for all of you. This means that your school will have more support to help it improve and that other inspectors will visit regularly to check on the progress being made. The school should:

- make certain there is a headteacher to lead the staff and help the school improve
- boost your progress so that you achieve higher standards in English, mathematics and science
- encourage everyone to attend school.

You can all do your bit by continuing to work hard. Those of you who do not attend school as much as you should can help by trying to come to school as often as possible.

It was a pleasure to meet you all and I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr Andrew Clark

Lead inspector

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