

St Peter's Church of England Aided Junior School

Thornhill Road, Littleover, Derby, DE23 6FZ

Inspection dates 12–13 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher provides excellent direction and is well supported by staff and governors. Leaders' thorough checks on teaching and learning, together with imaginative initiatives, have successfully driven the school forward.
- Pupils achieve well. There has been a marked improvement in mathematics progress this year. Pupils now make equally good progress in English and mathematics.
- Teaching is consistently good and some is outstanding. Teachers make good use of skilful questioning to help pupils find things out for themselves.
- The teaching of reading has improved this year and is a strength. As a result, pupils are enthusiastic about reading and read widely and often.
- Pupils' reliably good behaviour helps them to learn. Subjects taught offer vibrant and interesting learning experiences so that pupils enjoy school and attendance is above average.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school.
- The 'Reach for the Stars' and the 'Maths Passport' individual target booklets for literacy and numeracy provide excellent incentives for pupils to understand, reach and surpass their learning targets.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development very successfully. Consequently, pupils are confident and articulate, and contribute effectively to the good of the whole school community.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet leading to outstanding achievement.
- Teachers sometimes spend too much time on whole-class teaching. This restricts the time for pupils to learn independently.
- Teachers do not give enough attention to making sure pupils use correct spelling in all their writing.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to write at length in a range of subjects.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 15 lessons and observed all teachers teaching. Over half of the lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors heard a number of pupils read, especially in Year 6, and looked at their reading records.
- Inspectors held meetings with a group of pupils, two governors, senior leaders and staff with responsibilities for subjects, and a representative of the local authority.
- There were too few responses to analyse, on the online questionnaire for parents (Parent View) but inspectors took account of the regular recent surveys of parents that have been conducted by the school, and of the questionnaires returned by staff.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including the self-evaluation and school improvement plan, minutes of governing body meetings, information about pupils' progress, safeguarding policies, attendance figures and records of incidents of inappropriate behaviour, bullying or harassment.

Inspection team

Ruth McFarlane, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Renee Robinson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is of average size for its type.
- About half the pupils are from White British backgrounds, a smaller proportion than in most schools. A range of minority ethnic groups are represented.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is smaller than average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or those in local authority care) is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, is also below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- There have been unusual staffing difficulties since the previous inspection. The school was without a deputy head, permanent Year 6 teacher, mathematics leader and assessment leader for over a year, due to circumstances beyond its control.
- Mathematics and literacy are currently led by teams of teachers, rather than individuals.
- A new deputy head, with responsibility for tracking pupils' progress, took up her post in January 2013, having been appointed from within the staff.
- The school has won several awards for its provision, including the International School Award, ArtsMark Gold and Eco School Award.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
 - always providing sufficient time for pupils to learn independently in lessons
 - ensuring that marking includes a greater emphasis on correct spelling
 - consistently developing pupils' writing skills in different subjects for different purposes.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils join the school with varied starting points that are broadly average overall. Robust and accurate school data, lesson observations and pupils' work show that pupils make sustained good progress, whatever their background or ability.
- Standards are higher in the current Year 6 than in previous years, in relation to pupils' age. The majority of pupils are on course to attain the higher National Curriculum levels in English and mathematics. Improved teaching has led to about a quarter of the year group tackling Level 6 work, the standard appropriate for a fourteen year old.
- The protracted staffing difficulties meant that Year 6 pupils in 2011-2012 were without a permanent teacher for most of the year. In addition, there were difficulties in keeping track of pupils' progress and in managing the teaching and leadership of mathematics. Results in the National Curriculum tests for 2012 reflected these weaknesses. Overall progress for this group of pupils measured from Year 3 to Year 6 in mathematics, based on the difference between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 attainment, dipped to be lower than in most schools.
- Pupils currently in all year groups have responded very positively to the array of highly effective initiatives to improve progress in mathematics. The 'Maths Passport', in which fluent calculation skills enable pupils to reach targets that move them from country to country, has proved a successful way to learn. Parents' workshops, and school website information, ensure understanding of the school's ways of working.
- Fluency in calculation has been boosted by the focus on daily mathematics activities. In a typical Year 3 class, pupils made rapid progress because the range of activities offered 'stretch' for all, calculating time differences using analogue and digital clocks.
- Pupils' progress has also accelerated in reading and writing, supported by effective use of a new system for checking progress and additional training for teachers. The 'Reach for the Stars' target booklets, in which pupils need to reach targets in order to move from constellation to constellation, maintains pupils' interest in making progress. Pupils read widely and often. They enjoy talking about their reading. Reading standards are higher than is usual for the pupils' age.
- Insightful individual education plans, with increasingly difficult targets, show progress for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good. Individual support for the few pupils who speak English as an additional language, and, where necessary, pupils from minority ethnic groups, ensure that their progress is similar.
- Attainment for pupils for whom the school receives pupil-premium funding was approximately a year behind their classmates in English in 2012, and just over six months behind in mathematics. The school's records show that these pupils are catching up rapidly because a range of additional assistance has been provided.
- Spelling develops well overall, but teachers do not point out spelling errors to pupils with enough rigour. Writing progress is good, but is not as strong as that in reading and mathematics because pupils have fewer opportunities to practise and develop their writing skills.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved since the previous inspection because a highly effective programme of coaching and mentoring operates. This has raised pupils' achievement to good.
- Teachers use questioning skilfully in lessons to ensure that pupils think hard. Typically, in a Year 5 mathematics session on probability, excellent questioning relating the topic to pupils' earlier learning about Greek mythology, drew enthusiastic responses and rapid gains in learning.
- Throughout the school, teachers use well-chosen activities and resources to stimulate pupils' learning. In a Year 4 art session, pupils were shown a spectacular video of the work of the sculptor, photographer and environmentalist, Andy Goldsworthy. The gasps and comments generated spiritual development aplenty and captivated the pupils. Consequently, they made significant progress in language and communication, as well as in art appreciation.
- The skills of literacy, numeracy and communication are taught well across the school, although, occasionally, teachers miss opportunities to encourage pupils to write at length in other subjects. The regular 'Guided' sessions cover literacy and numeracy skills very well. They address pupils' individual needs. These sessions often include a group led by the teacher focused on reading, in which interest and pleasure in reading is kindled.
- Teaching assistants provide good support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. They demonstrate examples of new learning, explaining technical words and breaking tasks down into smaller steps.
- Teachers usually vary activities so pupils learn as a whole class, in pairs and independently. Occasionally, too much time is spent on whole-class teaching, which restricts opportunities for pupils to learn independently. Teachers' marking of pupils' books is usually good, although they do not always point out pupils' spelling errors.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour when learning in class is good and this contributes to their good progress. Most focus on their activities throughout the lesson. They listen carefully, follow instructions and complete tasks to the best of their ability.
- Just occasionally when lessons do not motivate them, for instance when long periods are spent doing little other than listening to the teacher, pupils' attention wanders.
- Because behaviour is good, pupils feel safe in all areas of the school. They use the internet and handle equipment safely. They also show consideration towards others and move safely from one area of the school to another. Most parents who expressed their views in school surveys believe that pupils' behaviour is good and their children are safe in school.
- Pupils have good knowledge of different types of bullying and are aware of how to prevent it. They believe that staff deal with such incidents effectively. Staff ensure that any discrimination is tackled effectively and they promote good relationships throughout the school.
- Pupils' above-average attendance reflects their good attitudes to school and their enthusiastic engagement in school activities.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has led the school well through a difficult period. She has relentlessly driven improvement to ensure that all pupils are given the same opportunities to succeed and that there is no discrimination.
- Leaders closely check the school's work to arrive at accurate self-evaluation. They set well-chosen priorities for raising achievement by improving teaching and learning. Rigorous checks on the quality of teaching have led to the raising of standards. Teachers are set individual targets which are tightly aligned to pupils' progress and the school's priorities for development.
- Leaders know there is still some way to go before teaching and leadership are outstanding. Not all subject leaders are involved in checks in their subjects. However, staff present as a very cohesive focused group united in purpose: to improve pupils' achievement. The team leadership of literacy and numeracy has been highly effective in ensuring all staff 'buy in' to ensuring that these core subjects move forward.
- Pupils have rich and varied opportunities for reflection. Subjects offer breadth and variety. The school's work in art, cultural diversity and the environment has led to coveted awards. The cultivated garden area in the grounds provides a wealth of opportunities for pupils to learn and develop spirituality and to contribute to the whole school community, for instance by growing vegetables and taking responsibilities.
- The local authority has provided strong support while the school recovered from the impact of the staff turbulence. The school makes good links with other local schools. For instance, students from the local secondary school come in to help with sports activities.
- The school ensures that the pupil premium funding is used flexibly to good effect, for example in providing additional mathematics expertise. This has led to the good progress of eligible pupils.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors provide good support. They visit the school regularly to talk with staff and pupils. As a result, they have an accurate view of the quality of teaching and how it continues to improve.
 - Governors look at the progress of different groups of pupils and compare this with the progress that other pupils are making. Governors use this information to check that pupil premium funding is spent wisely to achieve value for money.
 - Governors have an increasing understanding of how the performance of teachers is managed and how the best teachers are rewarded financially. They use information about the progress pupils are making to compare the school's performance with other schools. They know how the school tackles any underperformance by staff.
 - Governors ensure that the school meets all legal requirements, particularly for safeguarding.

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	112921
Local authority	Derby
Inspection number	401322

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	236
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Steve Antrobus
Headteacher	Alison Woodhouse
Date of previous school inspection	9 June 2010
Telephone number	01332 767158
Fax number	01332 768825
Email address	head@stpeters.derby.sch.uk

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