

The Spalding St John the Baptist Church of England Primary School

Hawthorn Bank, , Spalding, PE11 1JQ

Inspection dates 11–12 December 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- Pupils make good progress during their time at school and attain above average standards in English and mathematics.
- There are successful procedures for setting demanding targets for pupils, tracking their progress and providing additional support where it is needed.
- Most teaching is good with some examples of outstanding practice. Teachers plan a variety of activities which fully engage pupils so that they consistently make good progress.
- There is good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school organises a range of visitors and outside visits which greatly increase pupils' enjoyment and experience of school.
- The majority of pupils behave well. They feel very safe, are polite and attend school regularly.
- The headteacher, senior leadership team and governors are providing clear and effective leadership, which is supporting the good standards in the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Leaders do not give teachers enough opportunity to share the best practice.
- Lesson observations do not focus enough on the impact of teaching on the learning and progress of pupils.
- Some teachers do not check regularly that pupils are clear about what they need to do next to improve their work.
- Not all teachers use questioning effectively in lessons to engage and challenge pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 27 lessons, of which four were joint observations with senior leaders.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body, four additional governors, a local authority representative, senior leaders, staff and groups of pupils.
- Inspectors took account of the 26 responses to the Parent View online questionnaire, the 102 responses from the school parent questionnaire (May 2012) and the 19 responses from the staff questionnaire distributed for the inspection.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of evidence including the school evaluation form, the school improvement plan, the system to track pupils' progress, records relating to behaviour and attendance, records of lesson observations by senior staff, performance management information, safeguarding documentation, and a sample of pupils' work.

Inspection team

Stephen Walker, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Michael Bucktin

Additional Inspector

Lynn Lowery

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average sized primary school.
- It is situated in the western side of Spalding and takes pupils from across the town.
- The original Victorian school building has been recently extended and refurbished.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. There is a small number from minority ethnic backgrounds including some pupils who have recently arrived from Eastern Europe, most of whom are at the early stages of learning English.
- A smaller-than-average proportion of the pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, pupils from armed services families and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported through school action, school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs, is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The senior leadership team has been extended and restructured since the last inspection.
- The school provides child care facilities outside school hours through Kid's Club which were included in this inspection.
- The school has received the Activemark and Sportsmark awards and achieved National Healthy Schools status.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is outstanding and never less than consistently good across the school by:
 - creating more opportunities for coaching and sharing outstanding practice
 - making sure that lesson observations have a clear focus on the impact of teaching on the learning and progress of all pupils
 - ensuring teachers are checking regularly throughout lessons that all pupils are clear about their work
 - training teachers to use questioning more effectively to engage and challenge pupils in their learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils make good progress during their time at school, as parents and carers agree. Attainment at the end of Year 6 is typically above average, which demonstrates good progress from their average starting points. Most pupils make expected progress and an increasing number exceed expectations, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- Children make good progress in the Reception classes because of the well-planned provision and the good teaching by both the teachers and the teaching assistants. Structured activities and the good use of the inside and outside resources are having a significant impact on children's personal development, as well as encouraging number and language skills.
- Reading is a key focus in the school, and pupils read regularly in school and at home each day. Pupils make good progress in reading so that attainment is well above the national average by the end of Key Stage 2. The school is effectively using a structured approach to teaching phonics (the sounds represented by letters) across the school.
- The school is improving the quality of writing for both boys and girls by providing pupils with more structured plans for writing. The use of films and videos to generate ideas and discussions and the greater emphasis on speaking and listening in class is also supporting the improvement in writing skills.
- The systems to track pupils' progress are used quickly to spot any pupils who need extra help and make sure that extra support is provided for them. The school is using additional funding very effectively to narrow the gap between the achievement of pupils eligible for the pupil premium and the other pupils. Money is principally allocated for extra teaching assistants for intervention support in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school is ambitious to increase further the proportions of pupils making more than the expected progress from their starting points. Targets for pupils and staff have been raised so that more pupils are aiming to make better than average progress and achieve their full potential.
- Most of the pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs make good progress in line with their peers due to effective work from teaching assistants. Pupils who speak English as an additional language quickly gain confidence in their language development due to additional help during their first few months in the school. Subsequently, the pupils make good progress, particularly in the key skills of reading, writing and mathematics.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching in most classes is good, with examples of some outstanding teaching. As a result, most pupils make good progress and achieve well over their time at school. The vast majority of parents and carers feel that their children are taught well and pupils agree.
- Pupils behave well in classes and this provides a purposeful atmosphere for learning. They want to do well and teachers have high expectations for both work and behaviour. Lessons involve a range of interesting activities so that pupils normally display enthusiasm and sustain high levels of concentration.

- Pupils learn well because activities are well matched to their different abilities. Teachers are conscientious in their planning of lessons to make sure that the tasks are achievable but sufficiently challenging for each pupil. Teachers encourage pupils to work independently and in groups, which greatly support the development of their listening and speaking skills.
- Displays in classrooms provide a stimulating environment for learning and celebrate pupils' work. There are good examples of marking across the school which commends good work but also shows pupils how to remedy any weaknesses.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are benefiting from the extra support they receive. The use of additional adults in class and the regular withdrawal of pupils for extra help in reading, writing and numeracy are helping these pupils overcome their difficulties and make good progress.
- All pupils have daily periods of literacy and numeracy, and this greatly supports the teaching of basic skills. The teaching of phonics is effective so that pupils quickly gain confidence in the construction of words and reading particularly in the Reception and Key Stage 1.
- Some outstanding teaching is seen in a number of classes, when teachers regularly check pupils' understanding, ensure that tasks provide sufficient challenge and encourage pupils to rely less on adults and more on themselves when learning. For example, Year 5 pupils made rapid progress in their understanding of space because the tasks were clear, interesting and appropriately demanding across the range of ability in the class. Similarly, children made excellent progress in a Reception class as the teacher fully engaged and encouraged them to recognise and spell words for themselves.
- Some teachers use questioning very well to encourage pupils to think more deeply about their learning. However, the use of questioning to engage the pupils, check understanding and challenge them to develop further their understanding is not consistently effective. Teachers sometimes do the problem solving for the pupils and do not give the pupils enough time to answer questions.
- A very small minority of teachers do not consistently check that all groups and individuals are actually clear about the tasks in lessons and what they have to do to succeed. In a small number of classes some pupils were not making enough progress because they were waiting for the teacher to help them with their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The majority of pupils behave well in lessons and around the school, and this contributes to a calm and orderly environment. The vast majority of parents and carers are positive about behaviour in the school. There are clear expectations of behaviour and consistent systems to deal quickly with any misbehaviour. If there are disagreements, pupils are encouraged to resolve conflicts and make a fresh start.
 - Pupils respond well to the strong tradition in the school of caring for one another. The regular assemblies greatly support the positive atmosphere in the school because they engage the pupils and foster commitment. Pupils are considerate, polite and courteous to staff and each other and this contributes well to their learning.
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- Parents, carers and pupils confirm that bullying is very rare in the school. Pupils say that any unkind behaviour such as name-calling or pushing is dealt with quickly and effectively. They are aware of the different forms of possible bullying such as cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying related to sex, gender, race and disability.
- Pupils generally respond well to teachers' good use of praise and encouragement to promote high standards of behaviour. However, a few pupils lose concentration in some lessons when the work does not fully engage them.
- There is a good level of supervision at break and lunchtime which provides a clear framework for the pupils. Pupils are developing their skills in managing their own behaviour and senior pupils are encouraged to act as playground monitors and peer mediators.
- The school take good steps to ensure that all groups of pupils have an equal chance to thrive in an atmosphere of fairness and trust, and without fear. Pupils feel valued as individuals, even in a larger than average size school. The adult who works as a pupil mentor provides high quality support for pupils who need additional time to talk to an adult. Pupils say they feel safe in the school and display a good understanding of the issues relating to safety such as crossing the road and talking to strangers.
- Attendance is above average and reflects pupils' enjoyment of school. The school is active in following up absences and discouraging holidays during term time.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is providing supportive and effective leadership, which is ensuring the maintenance of good standards in the school. He is well supported by the senior leadership team, which is overseeing further developments in the school. Staff work well as a team and are committed to the further improvement and continued success of the school.
 - The school has an accurate understanding of its strengths and areas for improvement. The school improvement plan is a comprehensive working document with clear actions and targets that are focused on improving the quality of teaching and the rate of pupils' progress.
 - The system of setting targets for teachers is rigorous in ensuring that they are held to account for the progress of their pupils. Performance management and decisions made about teachers' salary progression are clearly based on the quality of teaching and the progress of their pupils.
 - There are regular lesson observations by senior staff but judgements on the quality of teaching are not always accurate. They are sometimes too focused on the characteristics of teaching rather than the impact of teaching on the pupils' learning and progress.
 - Professional development for teachers and support staff is effective in causing them to reflect on their practice. However, leaders do not take enough advantage of the outstanding practice in the school by creating sufficient opportunities for coaching and sharing.
 - The local authority adopts a supportive approach to the school and ensures that external consultants provide a range of effective training for the teachers and support staff.
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- There is an imaginative curriculum which is relevant to pupils' needs and provides a variety of activities including a number of 'themes days'. A range of visitors and outside visits provide effective extension of the work in lessons, as do the large number of additional activities, which greatly increase pupils' enjoyment and experience of school. The broad range of experiences contributes well to pupils' achievements and to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school is fully inclusive and pupils from different backgrounds are fully integrated into the school.

 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is well informed about the strengths of the school and areas for improvement. Its members are fully involved in monitoring progress and in holding leaders and staff to account. They have been active in supporting the building improvements and the restructuring of the senior leadership team. They are aware of the quality of teaching in the school and are able to make informed decisions on salary increases. They have rigorous procedures for staffing appointments and observe short-listed teachers in their own schools before making appointments. Robust procedures for safeguarding meet statutory requirements. There is a strong commitment to promoting equal opportunities and tackling discrimination. They are active in overseeing the use of the pupil premium funding and ensuring that it is effectively spent to support eligible students. Governors ensure they receive the professional training they need to develop their roles further.
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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	120613
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	403444

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	428
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Garland
Headteacher	Paul Reid
Date of previous school inspection	12 June 2008
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