

# St John's Church of England Primary School

Poplar Street, Heaton Mersey, Stockport, SK4 3DG

**Inspection dates** 25–26 June 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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 and deputy headteacher provide clear and purposeful leadership. They are well supported by senior leaders and an effective governing body. As a result, pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching have continued to develop well since the previous inspection.
- All groups of pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics and many other subjects. Standards are above average by the time they leave in Year 6.
- Children make a good start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage. As a result, early reading and writing skills are well developed and children are well prepared for Year 1.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress.
- The overall quality of teaching is good. It is sometimes outstanding. Teachers ask thought-provoking questions and make good use of teaching assistants and other adults to boost pupils' learning.
- Pupils are well behaved. They are considerate towards each other and take pride in their work. They feel safe and are cared for well and their parents agree.
- The school promotes pupils' health and personal development well. They participate in a wide range of sporting and musical activities with enthusiasm.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, work set does not provide the most appropriate challenge to help pupils make the best progress.
- Sometimes marking and feedback, which is good overall, does not provide precise guidance to which pupils can respond.
- Some subject leaders do not have sufficient knowledge of strengths and weaknesses in their areas of responsibility.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 11 teaching sessions, including joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. The inspectors also made a number of shorter visits to classrooms, looked at a wide range of pupils' work and listened to them read.
- Discussions were held with several groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and other members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and members of staff, including senior leaders and other leaders with particular responsibilities.
- Inspectors took account of the 54 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View), the results from the school's own consultations with parents, and spoke to several parents. The responses from staff to the inspection questionnaires were also considered.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including information on pupils' current progress, the school's plans for improvement, the management of teachers' performance, the use of pupil premium funding, and documentation and records relating to pupils' behaviour and safety.

## Inspection team

Andrew Clark, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Mary Liptrot

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of pupils who receive support through the pupil premium funding is below average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children that are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic heritage is broadly average.
- A small and increasing number of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- A much higher proportion of pupils than usual join the school in year groups other than Reception or leave before the end of Year 6.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Almost half the staff were appointed to the school after the previous inspection. This includes the headteacher in September 2012 and the deputy headteacher in September 2013.

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

- Build on the already good teaching to further increase pupils' achievement by:
  - making sure all work provides appropriate challenge to learners
  - ensuring the good marking and feedback that are evident in most classes are matched by all teachers so that pupils always receive precise guidance on how to improve their own work.
- Further strengthen leadership and management by:
  - ensuring all subject leaders make full use of available data to have maximum impact on improving outcomes and provision.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills which are generally those typical for their age. Children make good progress through Reception, especially in developing their reading, writing and mathematics. There has been a regular pattern of rising standards, and interesting themes, such as a visit to a farmyard, give children exciting reasons to use the skills they are learning. Consequently, they are well prepared for the next steps in their education.
- Pupils of all abilities achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics throughout school. Standards have risen well since the last inspection and the weaknesses in pupils' mathematical calculation and problem-solving skills identified at the previous inspection have been addressed well.
- This progress was not fully reflected in the outcomes of national tests for Year 6 in 2013, particularly in writing. Not all pupils made the best progress they could from their earlier learning in Year 2. This largely related to particular staff issues and a significant proportion of pupils who did not start at this school until after Year 2. These issues have since been addressed and current Year 6 are making good progress and working at levels above those typically expected in writing.
- Standards in Year 2 are rising strongly and are now well above average. This is reflected in test results.
- Pupils' reading skills are well developed and they make good progress. Effective teaching of phonics (letters and their sounds) ensures early readers have the skills to tackle new words successfully. This is reflected in scores which are above average and increasing in the national check on these skills at the end of Year 1. Older pupils make good use of a variety of skills in reading fiction and non-fiction and talk knowledgeably of the writing styles of a range of authors.
- Pupils' writing is well presented, reflective and often a good length. They are inspired by well-planned historical, geographical and other themes which provide good reasons to write. Pupils are becoming skilful in analysing and improving their own work particularly where marking and feedback provide sharply focused guidance.
- Those pupils eligible for free school meals and supported by pupil premium funding make good progress and achieve well. In 2013, the few eligible pupils attained results in the national tests that were approximately a term behind those of other pupils and indicated an improving trend. In Year 2 the results for eligible pupils were largely above those of other pupils. Throughout the school, eligible pupils work at standards which are close to those of other pupils and gaps are narrowing.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well. They make good progress in developing their reading and writing skills from their individual starting points and are using them well in other subjects. They have positive attitudes to learning and often show resilience and persistence in their work.
- Most able pupils make good progress and increasingly reach high standards. They enjoy solving mathematical problems and take pride in organising their own work or collaborating with others with minimal adult intervention.
- Pupils' physical skills are well developed. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good use of different writing activities to develop hand-eye coordination and pencil control. The school has used new funding for primary sport effectively to extend the range of sports available to pupils. Pupils are highly active in physical education and show good control in athletics and gymnastics, for example.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Across the school, pupils are ambitious and aim high. They respond well to staff's high expectations. All pupils are helped to develop good learning skills, such as persistence and

attentiveness. In the Early Years Foundation Stage children's curiosity and imagination are fired by imaginative use of the outdoor area, for example in developing mathematical skills through constructing pens for imaginary farmyard animals.

- Pupils' achievement is largely accurately and regularly checked. Teachers use this information well to set work for pupils of all abilities that builds progressively on their earlier learning in a range of subjects.
- All adults, such as teaching assistants, are well informed about pupils' progress and are effectively deployed to support and challenge all groups of learners so that pupils do their best. Pupils who start school at different stages of their education other than Reception are well-supported in this respect, and consequently settle quickly into the school and make good progress.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs learn well. Frequent assessments of their academic, physical, emotional and social development are used well to plan future work. Additional English and mathematics sessions are used very effectively to increase achievement for pupils who are falling behind or who find it difficult to learn new skills and concepts. These features also help the few pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress.
- Most able pupils often make good progress because they are given work which fully challenges them right from the start of sessions. They respond well to thoughtful questions which help them to think more deeply and recall information.
- Pupils' skills are often improved through regular homework, including the imaginative use of information and communication technology and after-school clubs.
- Occasionally, pupils do not make the best progress they could because work does not challenge them enough. For example, sometimes pupils undertake work which they already understand before starting more difficult work. Sometimes pupils make more progress than anticipated or find the work more challenging than expected and appropriate adjustments are not made by teachers in a timely enough fashion.
- Marking and feedback have improved well overall since the previous inspection. However, sometimes the comments made are still not precise and useful enough to help pupils move quickly on to the next steps in their learning.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Relationships between pupils and with adults are very positive. Pupils are polite and considerate towards each other and they respond well to the care all adults show them. Pupils are often extremely engaged in their learning except for the very few occasions when they are not fully challenged.
- Pupils make a good contribution to ensuring the school is a pleasant and orderly place. As school councillors, for example, they are involved in making and managing rules of good behaviour, supporting their peers with worries and concerns and helping keep the school and grounds safe and tidy. They take these responsibilities seriously.
- Pupils' pride in their school is evident in their smart appearance in school uniform, the good presentation of their work and their tidy and well-ordered books. They value the care staff take in ensuring they work in attractive and orderly classrooms. This is reflected in the school's motto of 'High standards through a caring community.'
- Pupils are keen to come to school and are punctual and well prepared for the day's learning. Attendance has improved well and is now above average. The school uses pupil premium funding well to improve attendance and reduce the proportion of pupils who are regularly absent.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel very safe and well looked after. Parents are confident that their children, especially those whose circumstances make them vulnerable, receive high levels of care. Pupils are taught how to stay safe, particularly when participating in sport or educational trips and visits.

- Pupils have a good understanding of how their behaviour affects others and know that they should be kind and considerate. They have a good knowledge of potential bullying situations including racial and homophobic concerns. They comment that little bullying takes place and any incidents are successfully managed by the staff. This is confirmed by the school's good record-keeping procedures and the large majority of parents agree. There have been few recent exclusions.

## **The leadership and management are good**

- The headteacher's and deputy headteacher's energy, imagination and persistence are central to the school's effectiveness and very good relationship with parents and the community.
- Senior leaders act as good role models for other staff through their own teaching and skills in improving the work of others. They continue to build their skills of leadership through good access to high levels of training.
- Some subject leaders, several of whom are new to their role, do not yet have sufficient consistent knowledge of strengths and weaknesses in their areas of responsibility in order to be fully accountable for pupils' achievement and to make a full contribution to school improvement. The school has established a good programme of professional development to address this.
- Teaching is closely monitored and support and training provided where they are needed. Only a few inconsistencies in teaching, such as ensuring consistent challenge to all pupils, need further work.
- Procedures to measure and review the progress made by all groups of pupils are key factors in the drive for school development. These provide a precise framework for the governing body to hold leaders to account and ensure that the school's view of its own success is accurate.
- The school has developed effective performance management procedures to ensure staff are held accountable for the progress their pupils make. Teachers have to meet stringent criteria in order to achieve the next salary level.
- The use of pupil premium funding is precisely matched to the specific needs of the pupils who are eligible for this support. For example, the school has introduced specific projects to develop reading and writing and activities to build pupils' sense of well-being and assurance. The effectiveness of these projects is rigorously monitored and analysed to ensure this funding is having maximum impact.
- The school ensures all pupils have the same opportunities to succeed and to participate fully in the life of the school. There is no evidence of discrimination in the school.
- Safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements and are rigorous because they are based on detailed and accurate record keeping and well-trained and vigilant staff.
- The school receives good support from the local authority. A range of training and support has been provided which has strengthened many aspects of leadership and teaching, particularly the accuracy of teachers' assessments and the development of leadership skills.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. It is a very welcoming and caring school and is successfully working well to engage parents in school life. There are well-planned themes built around visits or visitors which form an exciting background to much of pupils' learning.
- The school makes a good contribution to pupils' health and well-being. The leadership has made effective use of the primary school sports development funding to improve teachers' knowledge of how to teach physical education skills and to introduce new sporting experiences. This has already contributed to rising standards in many aspects of physical education. Pupils enjoy increasing success and participation in a range of team and inter-school activities.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body has continued to build on its strengths at the previous inspection. It is well led enabling all governors to regularly make a positive contribution to decision making. The governing body has successfully undertaken a review of its role and is acting speedily to address the few areas for further development. It is well informed through the headteacher's

detailed and analytical reports on pupil progress data, attendance and the quality of teaching, alongside the governor's own frequent and increasingly effective monitoring procedures. The governors take good advantage of training opportunities to further develop their skills.

- Consequently, the governing body holds the school to account well. In particular, regular discussions with school staff and the robust financial management, including the use of pupil premium and primary sports funding, places the school in a strong position to continue to move forward. Governors play a full role in making decisions as to whether teachers and staff should be rewarded with salary increases and reviewing targets for the headteacher.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	106105
<b>Local authority</b>	Stockport
<b>Inspection number</b>	444142

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	199
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Marcus Maxwell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Patrick Rayner
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 December 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 4427424
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