

St John the Divine Church of England Primary School

Warham Street, Camberwell New Road, London SE5 0SX

Inspection dates

14–15 September 2016

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
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The leadership of the headteacher and the deputy headteacher have driven improvement since the last inspection. Their vision, ambition and tenacity have put the pupils at the centre of the school's work.
- Governors have improved the way they hold the school to account and support its improvement. They know the school well and share senior leaders' ambition for the pupils.
- Early years provision has improved considerably since the last inspection. Children get a strong start to school and develop their communication and mathematical skills effectively.
- Good teaching and accurate assessment ensure that nearly all pupils make brisk progress with their learning. Across all subjects, pupils gain the skills they need for the next stage of their education.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress from their starting points. Whether they start with skills that are above or below expectations, they all make good progress.
- Pupils' behaviour around the school is good and their attitudes to learning are positive. However, a few pupils find it difficult to stick at their work without direction from teachers and other adults.
- Good and well-judged action has been taken to improve teaching, especially in mathematics, where staffing has been difficult. In a few classes, mathematical investigations are not a strong feature of learning.
- All staff expect the most for their pupils, themselves and the school. They use their expertise to provide pupils with challenging work. However, the challenge is not quite sharp enough to ensure that the very brightest pupils make strong progress.
- Although most teachers give pupils helpful advice about how to improve their work, this is not consistent across all classes.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all teaching is at least good by:
 - making sure that feedback is used consistently, in line with school policy, to give pupils a clear steer about what they need to do next to improve their work
 - developing pupils' ability to stay focused on their work without guidance from teachers and adults.
- Raise standards further so that all pupils make rapid and sustained progress by:
 - ensuring that the very brightest pupils are given work that stretches their thinking and challenges them to go that bit further with their learning
 - providing more opportunities for investigative work in mathematics across the school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- St John the Divine has made significant progress since the last inspection. This is the result of the ambitious vision of the headteacher and deputy head. They work together very effectively and have set a strong culture of learning right across the school. They understand the challenges facing the school but do not compromise their high expectations by making excuses. This has driven improvement and given the school the capacity to improve further.
- The senior leaders' ambitious vision and culture is shared by both staff and governors. As a result there has been a concerted effort to improve the quality of teaching and raise standards, especially pupils' progress. The leadership team has been restructured with new leaders for early years and key stage 1, key stage 2 and mathematics. It is too early to judge the impact of this, but already leaders' plans for improvement show determination and high expectations.
- The way the school assesses and tracks pupils' progress has improved considerably since the last inspection. The system is linked closely to the new curriculum and allows teachers to identify quickly those who need extra help or greater challenge. In addition, partnerships with other schools are used effectively to check the accuracy of teachers' judgements. Consequently, the school has reliable assessment information for each pupil, which it uses well to ensure that all are challenged.
- The school's plans for improvement have focused sharply on the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. As a result, teaching has improved across the school, including in the early years, and pupils are given work that is varied and challenging. Leaders now focus strategically on improving teaching quality and raising pupils' achievements. They have a secure grasp of the school's strengths and where improvement is needed. It means that leaders' actions to improve pupils' education have a strong impact.
- Procedures for managing teachers' performance are robust. Senior leaders rightly balance the school's priorities for improvement with those of the individual: they provide support for teachers and hold them to account. The headteacher has not been afraid to take difficult decisions to ensure that pupils get quality teaching.
- The great majority of parents are very positive about the school and recognise that the school has improved in recent years. A few are concerned that teacher turnover has had an adverse impact on their children's education, and the school has certainly had some difficulty recruiting and retaining teachers. However, the headteacher has been careful to ensure that new staff have the right expertise and commitment. As a result, middle leaders are now well placed to move the school further forward.
- The curriculum is broad and provides a good range of topics and subjects, including music, French and physical education (PE), in a way that engages pupils' enthusiasm and imagination. It is enhanced by several clubs and after-school activities that provide opportunities for pupils to broaden their horizons such as choir, dance and Spanish.
- The additional funding for pupils eligible for free school meals is used effectively. The money is used for a variety of initiatives, including individual support for pupils with significant barriers to their learning, and small-group work for those underperforming

and for those who need challenging to reach their full potential. The impact of this work is clear, with disadvantaged pupils achieving at least as well as others nationally and often better.

- For the most part the sports and PE funding is used appropriately to run sport competitions with other schools and become involved in the local sports association. This has resulted in a range of sporting awards for pupils. Although the funding is used to teach the minimum requirements for swimming, the school's programme extends these appropriately.
- The school provides a wide range of experiences that promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school's Christian ethos plays an important part in this work and is supported by numerous activities and events. For example, teachers promote a different value each month, including self-control, patience and kindness. As a result, pupils work and play together very well. This illustrates the leaders' commitment to ensuring that equality of opportunity is central to their work.
- Similarly, the school's approach to promoting fundamental British values is well planned. Pupils study topics that teach them about modern Britain. For example in literacy they explored the British monarchy and wrote a new national anthem. In key stage 2 pupils visit the Houses of Parliament to research how democracy works.
- Links with parents are strong. Teachers run a series of workshops throughout the year on topics such as key stage tests and early reading and mathematics skills. Weekly newsletters ensure that parents are kept informed about the school's work and how to support their children.
- The headteacher has worked effectively with the local authority to improve the early years provision. Much has been done to improve the quality of the outdoor space, and although the school recognises that there is more to do, children's experiences are good. The local authority has an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and, as a result, has successfully supported the school's improvement.

Governance of the school

- Governors have worked successfully to improve the way they hold the school to account and support it to do even better. For example, they have carried out an audit of their skills and have used this to identify gaps in their knowledge and expertise. This has led to training in targeted areas as well as appointing new governors with specific skills. As a result, the governing body has a good range of expertise that enables it to carry out its responsibilities effectively.
- Governors have a good understanding of the information about pupils' achievements. This is because they have worked with school leaders to present the information in a way that is easily accessed and interrogated. Financial accountability is secure and governors have a clear view of the impact of the pupil premium funding and the PE and sports funding.
- Procedures for the management of teachers' performance are well established and governors understand how this links to pay.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Senior leaders have a robust approach to ensuring that safeguarding remains at the top of their agenda. All staff

have been trained to recognise the signs of extremism and radicalisation. They are kept up to date throughout the year with any new requirements and are provided with copies of the school's policies and procedures for safeguarding. As a result, staff understand the school's processes well. Leaders have used the local authority to review their arrangements for safeguarding and where necessary have taken action to improve their practice. Detailed records enable the school to identify any issues and take appropriate action. There are good links with outside agencies, which are used effectively to ensure that child protection issues are followed up rigorously.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection. This is the result of the high expectations set by senior leaders and the close focus on classrooms and pupils' achievements.
- While most teachers set challenging work, there are occasions where the most able pupils are not stretched sufficiently. This is partly due to changes in staffing. However, in some cases, the work provided for the most able is too easy and pupils become disengaged as a result.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge, which for the most part they use well to provide activities that engage and interest pupils. For example, Year 6 pupils enjoyed working together to develop interesting descriptive words for writing based on a Roald Dahl story. The sharing and discussing of ideas helped pupils to develop their writing well. When they got stuck or needed to be stretched, the teacher and the teaching assistants intervened effectively to refocus pupils. As a result, pupils made brisk progress and the most able pupils were suitably stretched.
- Teachers and support staff work together very effectively to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils are encouraged most successfully to overcome any barriers to learning and, as a result, make good progress. This illustrates the school's commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity for all.
- Teachers provide detailed feedback and guidance to pupils about how to improve their work. In many books seen by inspectors, teachers set pupils additional questions to answer or problems to solve. This had a clear impact on the quality of their next piece of work. Feedback is not as consistent as it could be and occasionally pupils do not get the same high-quality advice and guidance. However, practice in this area is improving.
- The way teachers assess pupils' achievements has improved since the last inspection. As a result, the school has an accurate picture of each pupil's achievements, especially in English and mathematics, and teachers are quick to intervene if there are gaps in learning. This is one of the reasons why disadvantaged pupils make good progress from their different starting points. The school is currently extending these assessment procedures to all subjects.
- The teaching of basic skills in reading is good. This is because phonics is taught effectively and pupils are encouraged to read books at home as well as in school. During the inspection, the school celebrated the work of Roald Dahl and used his work to inspire pupils to write imaginatively.
- The teaching of mathematics has not been as strong as that of reading and writing. As

a result, investigation work has not been taught well enough and this has hindered pupils' progress. However, senior leaders are tackling this successfully and have appointed new staff to boost the quality of mathematics teaching. Evidence from pupils' books show that this is having a positive impact. Pupils currently in the school are being given opportunities to develop their investigation skills.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. A distinctive feature of the school is the way pupils treat others. The school's motto, 'Together Everyone Achieves More', is evident in the way pupils work together, sharing equipment and ideas readily. It also shows in pupils' positive relationships with their peers and teachers.
- The school's supportive culture ensures that pupils are positive about school and their learning. As one pupil said, 'I love, love school.' They especially enjoy learning about new ideas and talk confidently about their experiences at school.
- Pupils confirm that bullying is rare and are adamant that they feel safe at school. They have a good understanding about how to keep themselves safe, including keeping safe online. Pupils know who to go to if they have a concern. As pupils noted, 'This is a tight school.'
- The curriculum includes themes and topics that help pupils develop a clear sense of what is right and wrong. They also have a strong understanding of the importance of treating everyone equally, regardless of differences. This is illustrated by the way they treat pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities with respect.
- Pupils enjoy taking on roles around the school, such as being members of the school council. They develop a good sense of responsibility towards the school community as a result and understand what is and is not appropriate behaviour.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They conduct themselves very well around the school and show good manners to each other and their teachers. This was demonstrated very well during the inspection when pupils responded extremely positively to the fire alarm and moved quietly and speedily into the playground.
- Inspectors found only isolated incidences of disruption in lessons. For the most part, pupils behave well and respond quickly to instructions from staff. Occasionally, a few pupils find it hard to remain engaged in their work without direction from teachers and other adults. Where this happens, the pace of learning slows.
- Pupils' attendance is a little above average. The attendance of pupils who have special education needs and/or disabilities has improved and is now similar to others.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Typically, pupils make good progress from their different starting points to reach above-average standards by the time they leave school. As a result, pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Early indications suggest that Year 6 pupils did less well in the 2016 mathematics tests than in those for reading and writing. Leaders are aware of this and have taken decisive action to improve teaching.
- While it is too early to say whether this action has halted the slide in mathematics achievement, the school's assessment information suggests that pupils currently in the school are now making improved progress. This is supported by the work in pupils' books, where improved teaching is having a positive impact on achievement in mathematics.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics, as well as in other subjects. They achieve at least as well as other pupils nationally and often better. The same is true for the most able disadvantaged pupils and for those who are less able. This is the result of well-focused teaching, effective assessment and the efficient use of the pupil premium funding.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities also make good progress. This is the result of teaching that is targeted effectively to the particular needs of individual pupils. For example, inspectors saw how calm and encouraging support by teaching assistants enabled pupils to overcome some significant barriers to their learning.
- The most able pupils achieve well. The proportion of pupils reaching high levels at the end of key stage 1 is above average, especially in writing and mathematics. At the end of key stage 2, achievement is just as strong and the proportion of the most able pupils who make more than expected progress is much higher than pupils nationally. Nevertheless, the very brightest pupils do not make quite as much progress as they could because they are not given work that challenges them enough.

Early years provision

Good

- Leaders have made significant improvements to the early years provision since the last inspection. The early years setting is now a vibrant place for learning with a buzzing atmosphere. The outdoor facilities have also improved significantly, although leaders know there is more to be done.
- The proportion of pupils reaching a good level of development has risen steadily since the last inspection and is now above average. As a result, children are ready to start Year 1.
- Children make strong progress in the Nursery and Reception classes because they are provided with a good range of stimulating and exciting activities. This helps them to stick at what they are doing and develop their skills well. For example, children were engrossed in activities related to a 'dangerous crocodile' and developed imaginative games and created different objects. One group of girls built a trap for the crocodile and described how it worked in detail.

- Children are enabled to develop confident attitudes to learning because they are encouraged by staff to get involved in a range of structured tasks. They behave well and form positive relationships with each other and with adults. Children are given lots of opportunities to explore their environment and understand how to keep themselves safe.
- Children's learning and progress are checked carefully. This ensures that staff have a good understanding of each child's needs, including children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Disadvantaged children make good progress and the proportion reaching a good level of development is increasing year on year. This is because the additional funding for pupils eligible for free school meals has been used wisely. In particular, the funding has been used to improve the outdoor environment and children have good opportunities to experience a wide range of activities.

School details

Unique reference number	100614
Local authority	Lambeth
Inspection number	10012435

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Timothy Jones
Headteacher	Mrs Catherine Warland
Telephone number	02077354898
Website	www.stjohn.lambeth.sch.uk
Email address	admin@stjohn.lambeth.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	9–10 December 2014

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is a little smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is very high.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is very high.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- There have been changes to the senior leadership team since the last inspection.
- The school meets the current government floor standards.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in each year group, including in the Nursery and Reception classes. Many of these were jointly observed with school leaders.
- Pupils' work in a range of subjects was looked at.
- Inspectors listened to pupils from Years 1, 2 and 6 reading.
- Inspectors looked at behaviour at break and lunchtime.
- Discussions were held with senior leaders, including governors, subject leaders, pupils and parents.
- A range of documentation and policies were scrutinised, which included the school's self-evaluation, records of pupils' behaviour and attendance, and assessment.
- Inspectors scrutinised records relating to the quality of teaching and the school's website, including information about extra-curricular activities, trips and visits.
- Records, policies and procedures relating to safeguarding were reviewed.
- Inspectors took account of the seven responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and of six responses to the survey of staff.

Inspection team

Brian Oppenheim, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Roger Easthope

Ofsted Inspector

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