

St John's Church of England School Stanmore

Green Lane, Stanmore, HA7 3AD

Inspection dates 4–5 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because:

- While pupils generally make the expected progress from their starting points, too few make strong progress, and this reflects the quality of teaching.
- Teaching is not consistently good enough to make sure pupils always achieve well. Teachers do not always set work that matches the abilities of the pupils in their class.
- The part additional adults play in lessons is not always planned in sufficient detail to make sure they make a full contribution to pupils' learning.
- Marking and feedback in pupils' books do not always make clear to them how they might improve their work further.
- In the past, leaders, including governors, have not always measured the school's performance rigorously enough. As a result, they have not maintained the school's outstanding level of effectiveness since the previous inspection.
- Current leaders and managers do not always check often enough that key initiatives are leading to improved teaching and better achievement for pupils.

The school has the following strengths:

- As a result of accurate self-evaluation, the new headteacher has identified key areas for improvement. Working closely with senior leaders and governors, she has made sure development planning tackles the most appropriate priorities for action.
- Together with senior leaders, the new headteacher has rapidly focused on raising the quality of teaching. She has established a programme of support, training and development to secure improvements.
- Pupils are friendly, confident and polite young people. They have good attitudes to learning, behave well and feel safe.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes and undertook some joint observations. They visited 28 lessons.
- Inspectors held discussions with groups of pupils, staff and members of the governing body. Separate discussions were also held with a representative of the local authority and a representative of the London Diocese Board.
- Inspectors listened to groups of pupils read. They looked at work in pupils' books and the school's information showing pupils' progress.
- The school website, development plans and records relating to safeguarding were also scrutinised.
- There were 42 responses to the Ofsted online Parent View survey. Inspectors spoke to several parents and carers during the inspection. The inspection also took account of 28 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Madeleine Gerard, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Nicholas Cornell	Additional Inspector
Kewal Goel	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St John's Church of England School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two Reception classes.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average, Caribbean and African being the largest groups. More pupils than the national average speak English as an additional language. None is at the early stages of speaking English.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is similar to the national average. An average proportion is supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional government funding for looked after children, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and the children of service families) is below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There has been a high turnover of teaching staff in recent years. The headteacher joined the school in September 2012.
- Breakfast and after-school clubs are not managed by the school and are not included in this inspection. They are the subject of a separate inspection report.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better in order to accelerate pupils' progress, by:
 - making sure teachers match work closely to the learning needs of individuals
 - ensuring that marking and feedback make clear to pupils how to improve, and encouraging pupils to respond to teachers' comments
 - making sure teachers' planning makes clear what additional adults are expected to do during lessons so that they play a full part in supporting the learning of individuals and small groups
- Improve the effectiveness of leaders and managers, by:
 - increasing the rigour with which pupils' progress is checked to make sure that all pupils fulfil their potential and reach the highest standards
 - making sure new initiatives are monitored frequently to check that they secure rapid and lasting improvements to teaching and pupils' achievement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- The achievement of all groups of pupils, including those from minority ethnic groups, requires improvement because, over time, pupils do not make rapid enough progress through the school. This reflects unevenness in the quality of teaching between classes and year groups. The high turnover of teaching staff that pupils have experienced in some classes has also affected the consistency in standards of teaching and rates of progress. Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 fluctuates from one year to the next and is broadly average overall.
- Recently introduced opportunities for pupils to read regularly in class are helping to encourage and promote reading across the school. Older pupils talk confidently about the books and authors they enjoy. Younger pupils practise reading aloud regularly with volunteers and at home with parents and carers. Additional training in teaching phonics (letters and the sounds they make) for staff in Reception and Key Stage 1 is leading to improvements, but some inconsistencies remain, particularly in pupils' confidence in reading unfamiliar words.
- The progress made by disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs requires improvement. Good quality additional sessions for selected pupils to boost literacy and numeracy skills have not had time to show a sustained impact on increasing rates of progress for these pupils.
- The achievement of pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding also shows variability. The pupil premium has funded a variety of activities including extra individualised and small-group literacy and numeracy sessions. In last summer's national assessments, the gap in attainment between Year 6 pupils who benefited from the pupil premium and other Year 6 pupils narrowed in reading and writing so that they were only one term behind the others, which is a narrower gap than that found nationally. They were a year behind the others in mathematics, which is a greater gap than that found nationally.
- Children in the Reception classes join the school with skills and capabilities that are generally those expected for their age. They make expected progress overall in the Early Years Foundation Stage to reach average attainment by the time they move up to Year 1. They make better progress in some aspects including their personal, social and emotional development.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching over time has been too variable between classes and requires improvement. The school's increased focus on the quality of teaching and its impact on learning is becoming established. Some good teaching was observed throughout the school although this has yet to ensure pupils' good progress across the school.
- Improvements to the frequency and quality of the checks made on pupils' learning are helping leaders to track the progress pupils make in English and mathematics. The information gathered from assessments is used to identify pupils who need additional help, but teachers are not using it systematically to set work that is the right level of difficulty for the full range of abilities in each class.
- Teachers' planning does not always make clear what additional adults need to do in order to support pupils' learning and progress. When additional adults sit listening to the teacher instead of helping those who may need additional guidance, or when they focus more on pupils' behaviour than on their learning, their impact on achievement is diminished.
- Activities in the inside and outdoor areas in the Early Years Foundation Stage are generally inviting and staff plan suitable opportunities for children to choose activities for themselves. Personal and social skills are fostered well because children share resources and readily join in activities together. Working with an adult, children enjoyed the challenge of counting together the number of times they could jump over a skipping rope.
- In Reception classes, detailed observations of children's progress are made but this information

is not always used to plan suitably challenging tasks that build swiftly on what children know and can do already, and extend learning.

- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, but written feedback does not always give consistent guidance to pupils on how to improve. Opportunities for pupils to respond to teachers' comments are not always provided.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are good. Pupils' social skills were observed to be fostered well when teachers planned opportunities for pupils to discuss ideas and new learning in pairs and small groups. They are keen to learn, enthusiastic to share their suggestions and thoughts in class, and take part in activities.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are proud of their school and have positive attitudes to their learning. They are polite, friendly and hard-working. Pupils from different backgrounds get on well together. Their behaviour in lessons is good although occasionally, when work in lessons is not hard enough, their attention wanders but rarely disrupts learning.
- Pupils told inspectors they feel safe in school and that bullying is rare, as the school's records show. They are confident that when occasional name-calling occurs, the school deals with it promptly. They understand the different forms bullying can take and know how to keep safe, for example when using computers and crossing the road.
- Attendance has improved, although it remains broadly average. The school is striving to reduce the amount of frequent absence by stressing to parents and carers the importance of attending school very regularly.
- Pupils are keen to take on responsibilities. For instance, break time buddies take their roles seriously: they help to organise games and listen to pupils who are upset for any reason. Pupils sensibly share the equipment that is available for them to use in the playground.

The leadership and management require improvement

- Together with the appointment of the new headteacher, there have been several role changes within the school's leadership team resulting in improved systems for tracking pupils' progress, assessing the quality of teaching and organising additional support. These are securing improvement, although some of these initiatives have not been in place long enough to show an impact on raising standards over a sustained period.
- Staffing issues in the school, including changes in teaching staff and classes that are taught by several teachers during the week, have led to uneven pupil progress. These challenges are being addressed strongly by the headteacher, supported by the school's governors.
- Leaders demonstrate capacity to secure further improvement. The school's current self-evaluation is accurate and leads to a well-written and detailed improvement plan that is focused on raising pupils' achievement. For example, following disappointing reading results in 2012, improving standards in this area has been made a top priority.
- The outdoor learning environment in the Early Years Foundation Stage has been enhanced since the previous inspection and the school has built effective partnerships with other local schools to support the development of teaching quality and the curriculum.
- Leaders monitor the quality of teaching accurately and provide additional coaching and mentoring to tackle underperformance. Additional training for staff is well selected, although leaders are not always checking rigorously enough that all staff consistently put these new skills into practice.
- Activities supporting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are carefully organised to make sure these aspects of pupils' learning are well promoted. Opportunities to develop music skills, including instrumental lessons, choir singing and orchestral groups, are a

particular highlight. Regular opportunities to perform in school and the local community foster pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem.

- Celebrating festivals, visits to the local parish church together with other places of worship to learn about a wide variety of faiths, collective prayers and charity fund raising help pupils develop thoughtful, caring and respectful attitudes, as well as promoting equality and positive relationships. Extra-curricular clubs, including, chess, Latin and tag rugby, are popular. Outings to local places of interest and a residential visit for pupils in Year 6 bring the curriculum to life.
- The local authority and London Diocese Board provide appropriate guidance to improve the quality of teaching and learning, and support the new headteacher and governors in addressing priorities for development.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body works closely with the new headteacher with a shared determination to drive improvements. Governors are confident in understanding the school's performance data and know how the school's achievement compares with that of other schools nationally. They know what the school does well and where it must do better, including the quality of teaching. They take their role in managing performance seriously. They are increasing the rigour with which they make sure that teachers only receive pay rises and promotion if their teaching is leading to good progress through the year.
 - Governors maintain a firm control on the school's budget. They understand the uses to which the pupil premium is put, including extra sessions and extra-curricular opportunities, although they do not always rigorously check whether pupils eligible for the funding are catching up quickly enough with other pupils. Governors attend appropriate training. They are careful to make sure that the procedures to keep pupils safe meet requirements.
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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	134929
Local authority	Harrow
Inspection number	413197

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	417
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Judith Kennedy
Headteacher	Jo Hester
Date of previous school inspection	23–24 March 2010
Telephone number	020 89543978
Fax number	020 84207375
Email address	office@stjohns.harrow.sch.uk

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