

St John the Divine Church of England Primary School

Warham Street, Camberwell New Road, London, SE5 0SX

Inspection dates 9–10 December 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement.

- Teaching is not consistently good, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Tasks are not consistently varied for some pupils and do not always challenge the more able pupils, especially in mathematics. The progress of more able pupils in mathematics has not been consistently good over time.
- Teachers' use of questioning does not always help pupils to think more deeply about their learning or build on what they have learnt previously. Teachers' feedback does not consistently indicate to pupils how to improve.
- Teachers do not always use their knowledge of pupils from their assessments to determine how they direct their support in lessons.
- There are gaps between the development of boys and girls, and children eligible for free school means and others in the Early Years Foundation Stage. School leaders and governors have not focused sharply enough on closing these.
- In the past, middle leaders have not sufficiently challenged teachers to teach consistently effective lessons. However, they have begun to give clearer guidance about improvement, and teachers are responding positively to this.
- The school's planning is beginning to focus on measurable improvements so that governors can monitor it carefully and hold leaders to good account, but the impact is not yet sufficient.

The school has the following strengths:

- Governors and leaders share the headteacher's ambitions for the school, and give effective support.
- Pupils behave well. Older pupils take pride in their school and are good role models for younger ones. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe. They find the school a friendly and tolerant community in which they can develop well.
- Where there is good teaching and well-planned activities, pupils progress well and deepen their learning.
- Pupils attain well at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 achieve well above the average in reading, writing, grammar, punctuation and spelling. There is no gap in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and others by the end of Year 6.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are supported well and make good progress.
- Governors are very supportive of the school. This helps the school to maintain good relationships with, and a strong role in, the community.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of 13 lessons, five of them jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors looked at pupils’ books and work on display to gather evidence of pupils’ progress and the quality of teachers’ feedback.
- They heard some pupils in Years 1 and 2 read.
- Inspectors held discussions with pupils, members of staff, and representatives of the governing body. They also had a discussion with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors gathered the views of 25 parents and carers through the online questionnaire, Parent View. In addition, inspectors spoke with some parents and carers on the school premises.
- The inspectors considered 24 questionnaires completed by members of staff.
- The inspection team reviewed school documents, including policies, checks on how well the school is doing and improvement plans.
- Two of Her Majesty’s Inspectors visited the school on 5 March 2015 to gather additional evidence related to pupils’ achievement, early years provision and outcomes, and leadership, management and governance.

Inspection team

Anthony Byrne, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jeannie Gibbons

Additional Inspector

Ann Debono

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Mel Rose

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and the proportion who speak English as an additional language is very high.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for support through pupil premium funding is above average.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of a full-time Nursery class and a full-time Reception class.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school has recently experienced some changes in staffing.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - narrowing the gaps between the development of boys and girls, and children eligible for free school meals and others
 - ensuring that teaching in Nursery and Reception is of the same good quality
 - developing better links between children's activities and their skills in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Ensure that teaching is consistently good or better by:
 - making sure that all tasks set are suitably engaging and varied, matched to the needs of different groups, and challenge pupils to achieve more, particularly in mathematics
 - strengthening the use of questions in order to deepen pupils' understanding and build on their prior learning, and provide pupils with helpful feedback on how to improve work and with the opportunities to do so
 - using assessment information to identify more effectively which pupils require additional support from the teacher.
- Improve leadership, management and governance by:
 - ensuring the teachers put into practice consistently the clear advice about improvements required
 - making better use of targets to improve teachers' performance and pupils' outcomes, tracking more carefully the progress that groups of children are making, particularly in the early years and in mathematics
 - making sure that strategic planning focuses more clearly on measures to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement, so that governors can hold school leaders to better account
 - making sure that information is easily accessible for parents on the school website.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

require improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because the measures to ensure a consistently good quality of teaching across early years and the rest of the school have had limited success.
 - School leaders set targets for teachers. However, target-setting arrangements have had too little impact in securing consistently good teaching, in part because of the extent of staff changes that the school has experienced.
 - The headteacher, with the effective support of governors, is taking decisive action to improve the quality of teaching through support for staff and, when required, through dealing with underperformance.
 - Achievement in writing, particularly by older pupils, has improved as a result of effective action by the school's leadership, including the literacy subject leader. Unexpected staffing changes have delayed action to improve pupils' achievement in mathematics.
 - Leaders have been effective in improving pupils' achievement in writing and, with the exception of the Early Years Foundation Stage, have been effective in eliminating gaps in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and others. This reflects the school's commitment to securing equal opportunities and tackling discrimination.
 - The school is revising its development plan. While priorities for improvement are the right ones, there is insufficient precision in the draft plan about measurable outcomes and on the arrangements for monitoring its impact and how leaders and staff will be held to account by governors.
 - Evidence of children's achievements in the Early Years Foundation Stage is too limited and this means that leaders are not tracking children's progress well enough in their learning journals. Information about children's progress is not analysed sufficiently well.
 - Teachers and other members of staff are very supportive of the school's leadership and readily participate in professional development. As a result, teachers' understanding of what needs to improve is beginning to have a positive effect, for example in the quality of some teachers' planning and use of questions.
 - Spending of the additional government funding has been effective in helping disadvantaged pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 keep pace with others. For example, the extra support for those having difficulty with reading has helped them to catch up with others. Furthermore, action to improve the accuracy and variety of these pupils' writing has also had a good impact.
 - The range of subjects taught is suitably broad, although its breadth is not always evident from pupils' written work. Pupils say that they have opportunities to think deeply about important ideas in religious education and are helped to understand modern Britain, for example by studying history. Visits extend pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. For instance, some pupils recalled how they learned about different kinds of places through a residential stay in Dorset. Pupils show the ability to reflect and be respectful in assembly. They are also taught to understand and be tolerant of other faiths.
 - The school has used the primary school sport funding to good effect to extend pupils' skills and their participation in sports.
 - Safeguarding arrangements are secure and meet statutory requirements. The school maintains effective safeguarding records and policies. The training in child protection and safeguarding for school leaders and for members of staff is up to date. The school has adopted the local authority policy designed to protect pupils from radicalisation and extremism.
 - The school and governors keep parents and carers well informed about school matters and report regularly on children's progress. They take account of parents' and carers' views. Most parents and carers who took part in the survey said that they are well informed by the school and would recommend it to others. This also shows that the school successfully fosters good relations.
 - The local authority provides effective support and advice to the school and to governors. It has helped to sharpen the impact of observations of teaching. As a result, school leaders have gathered better evidence about improvements needed, although improvement planning is at an early stage of development.
- **The governance of the school:**
- Governance requires improvement because governors have not focused sufficiently sharply on some aspects of the school's work, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage. In addition, governors have not made all the required information available to parents that they should. For example, some information relating to pupils' achievement is not easy to locate on the school's website. Governors show the ability to challenge effectively and hold the school to account, for example in improving the quality of pupils' writing when there were concerns about writing in 2013, and more recently in beginning to take the right steps to improve pupils' achievement in mathematics. Governors carry out

their duties well in monitoring the school's finances. They are well informed about the spending of the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and the sport funding. They are also well informed about teachers' performance and whether teachers merit increases in pay as a result of meeting targets. Governors are very supportive of the school, and maintain good relationships with the community. They review policies effectively, including those related to safeguarding. The single central record of vetting checks is reviewed and signed off by the Chair of the Governing Body every term.

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

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Older pupils are good role models for younger pupils in behaviour around the school. They know very clearly what the school expects of them and take pride in rising to the school's high expectations for behaviour.
- Pupils get on well together in the playground; they share resources and play cooperatively.
- Older pupils show genuine enthusiasm for learning and talk about how the school has helped them to 'grow up' and recognise the importance of what they are learning for their future lives. One boy said that the school had given him confidence to make friends that would stand him in good stead when he moved on to secondary school.
- Children behave well in the Nursery and Reception class. However, occasionally, one or two younger pupils become distracted. When this occurs, however, teachers help them effectively to refocus.
- There is an atmosphere of tolerance in the school. For example, pupils are keen to explain that, while it is a Christian school, they have respect for other faiths and think people with different beliefs can learn from each other.
- Pupils are respectful in assembly and especially when praying. They move quietly and in an orderly fashion.
- The school keeps careful records of any behaviour incidents that occur and uses them as learning points for pupils. Almost all the parents who completed Parent View indicated that the school makes sure their children behave well.
- Attendance is above average. Punctuality has improved because pupils know that it is important. Classes are keen to compete for the punctuality award made in assembly. The school is aware of, and works closely with the families of, the few pupils who have problems in getting to school on time.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils have a good awareness of the different types of bullying, including the use of racist and other abusive terms and the misuse of social media. Their good understanding makes them confident they can deal with bullying, or get help from an adult, if necessary. However, pupils do not feel that bullying is a serious problem at the school. They know where to go if they are hurt or upset.
- The school employs an external consultant who visits regularly to talk to pupils about avoiding risks and keeping safe. Pupils know her well and respect her advice.
- Pupils are well aware of the need to keep safe when using the internet, and through their discussions about real-life scenarios have a good understanding of the risks that they should avoid outside of school.
- The school works well with other agencies when there are any safeguarding concerns about children.
- Parents who spoke with inspectors and who completed Parent View expressed confidence in the way the school cares for, and looks after, their children.

The quality of teaching **requires improvement**

- The quality of teaching is not consistently good. For instance, in mathematics, tasks are sometimes repetitive and not sufficiently engaging to sustain pupils' interest and the pace of learning is too slow. Some tasks are not pitched at the right level and this limits pupils' progress, especially that of the more able.
- Sometimes teachers revisit the same topics with whole classes, which limits the progress of pupils who already understand the work. Evidence from pupils' work shows that teaching does not stretch some pupils and some are not supported well enough when they are challenged. Occasionally, some of the pupils' work does not build on their previous learning.
- Teachers assess pupils' work regularly, but the clarity of guidance given in written feedback about how to

improve is not consistent. Some marking invites pupils to go back over their work or to attempt a harder task, and pupils' learning benefits from this. However, in other cases, teachers' comments are restricted to encouraging remarks.

- Sometimes, teachers use assessment information effectively to plan how they will support the learning of different groups of pupils. However, at other times, teachers do not plan well enough how they will support different groups, and this is less effective in moving pupils' learning on.
- Teachers sometimes ask questions that require only simple, factual answers and do not take full advantage of opportunities to deepen learning sufficiently well. However, an excellent example of exploratory questioning was seen in a mathematics lesson on perimeters. Here, the teacher involved pupils in discussion which probed their understanding and clarified their misconceptions, until their learning reached a deeper level.
- Some of the pupils' work, for example in science and French, shows that the teaching is helping them make rapid strides in their learning. However, there is a lack of productivity in some of their other work and expectations are not as high in some of their topic work as in other areas, such as literacy.
- The teaching of writing is effective. Writing tasks in different subjects cover a good range, particularly for older pupils, and this gains their interest. An older pupil spoke about how she has been taught to notice new words in her reading and transfer them to her writing.
- The teaching of reading is good. As a result, pupils, including younger pupils, make good progress in reading. Older pupils read a wide range of books.
- Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils who are learning English as an additional language and for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. This helps them to keep up with other pupils.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- By the end of Year 6, pupils' progress in mathematics is not as good as in reading and writing. In writing, pupils' progress by the end of Year 6 recovered strongly in 2014, after dipping the previous year. Scrutiny of pupils' work and the school's information about pupils' progress show that there is variability across the school and some pupils, including the more able, are not achieving as well as they can.
- Pupils' attainment in 2014 at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is a positive picture. Their average point score at the end of Year 2 is well above the national average. At the end of Key Stage 2, all pupils achieved the nationally expected Level 4. The proportion who achieved at the higher level in reading, writing, grammar, punctuation and spelling was well above average. However, this was not the case in mathematics.
- Pupils in Years 4 to 6 work confidently in calculation skills. However, their progress in other skills in mathematics is less evident.
- As a result of the school's action to improve writing, pupils now write well about a variety of topics. For example, Year 6 pupils wrote perceptively and with imaginative insight about two poems that expressed different attitudes to war, alongside well-organised factual analysis of the historical causes of the First World War.
- Pupils, including the high proportions who are disadvantaged or who speak English as an additional language, attain well above average standards in reading, writing and above average in mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- By the end of Year 6, disadvantaged pupils have closed the gaps in reading, writing and mathematics with other pupils in the school and in comparison with other pupils nationally. However, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils who make above average progress in mathematics is lower than that of other pupils nationally.
- Adults meet the needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs well so that they make good progress from their starting points.
- From the Early Years Foundation Stage onwards, children regularly work on phonics (letters and the sounds they make), so that by the end of Year 1 most can read text accurately. Results in the Year 1 phonic screening check are above average. Enthusiasm for reading among older pupils is a strong feature of the school.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- Children enter the early years with knowledge and skills typical for their ages, apart from in speaking, reading and writing where their knowledge and skills are lower. At end of Reception in 2014, a higher

proportion of children reached levels that enabled them to make a good start in Year 1. The proportion who reached a good level of development was in line with the national average. However, this was not the case for boys or for children eligible for free school meals. Boys are not developing as quickly as girls, and children eligible for free school meals are not making as much progress as others.

- Teaching is not typically, or consistently, good enough. There are not always secure links between some of the activities that children can choose and the skills they learn about reading, writing and mathematics. Information about what children know, understand and can do is not gathered often enough across all areas of learning. This hinders the planning of appropriate activities to meet their specific needs.
- When there is good teaching the children progress well in response to the wide range of well-planned activities. These activities build on their prior knowledge and highlight key questions to deepen their learning. For instance, adults planned a music lesson well, with a wide range of learning opportunities. Children knew the difference between loud and soft sounds and most could hold a beat. All the adults were energetic in their engagement with the children.
- The early years leader supports teachers with planning. However, he has not evaluated sufficiently the effectiveness of teaching to improve provision. Not enough attention has been paid to narrowing the gaps between boys and girls, and children eligible for free school meals and others. The leader responsible for early years provision is developing his skills in analysing assessment information so that the progress of different groups of children can be tracked more effectively.
- Children pay good attention to their teacher and behave well. Occasionally, some tasks are not designed well enough to hold their interest. The children are keen to help each other and celebrate success. Children know how to keep themselves safe and behave well in the outside area using the climbing frame and other apparatus sensibly.
- Parents and carers say that they get good information on how to support their children's learning.

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	100614
Local authority	Lambeth
Inspection number	449379

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	222
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Elizabeth Mann
Headteacher	Catherine Warland
Date of previous school inspection	19 June 2008
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