

St John the Baptist Church of England Controlled Primary School

Solomons Lane, Waltham Chase, Southampton SO32 2LY

Inspection dates 25–26 March 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Senior leaders' view of the school's performance is over-generous. The high standards achieved at the last inspection have not been sustained.
- Senior leaders do not check information on pupils' progress and the quality of teaching thoroughly enough. As a result, they are not sufficiently aware of what needs to be done to improve the school quickly.
- Members of the governing body accept senior leaders' view of the school's effectiveness too readily and do not insist on more rapid improvement.
- Middle leaders do not check that policies are being implemented consistently in the classroom. They are unable to offer accurate guidance to improve the quality of teaching.
- Pupils' writing is weaker than their attainment in other subjects and it is too early to judge the impact of planned improvements.
- Marking is not used consistently well to help all pupils understand how to improve their writing.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are not good enough. They avoid telling teachers when they do not understand what they are learning about, and they leave work unfinished.
- The school does not ensure that all pupils understand how to keep themselves safe in different situations.
- The most able pupils are not set work that is challenging enough to enable them to make good or better progress.
- Teachers do not check pupils' understanding often enough. They are not able to adapt activities when pupils find tasks either too difficult or too easy.

The school has the following strengths:

- Pupils achieve better in some areas of English. Standards in reading are improving quickly and pupils in Year 6 achieve well in national assessments for English grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- Children get off to a good start in the early years. As a result, they are well prepared for Year 1.
- The wide range of activities makes a positive contribution to pupils' personal and social development. They have opportunities to attend a variety of clubs and to take on leadership roles. Pupils are considerate and they look after one another. Parents and carers report that their children are well cared for at the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors made 19 visits to classrooms to observe learning. Four of these observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- Discussions were held with members of the governing body, teachers and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils, listened to some of them read and looked at samples of their work.
- Inspectors took account of the 100 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and the views of the parents and carers they met at the school. They also considered 21 questionnaires returned by members of staff.
- Inspectors looked at various documents, including the records of pupils' progress, the school's evaluation of its work, development plans, behaviour and attendance records and safeguarding procedures.

Inspection team

Juliet Jaggs, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Jacqueline Good	Additional Inspector
Penelope Orme	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is slightly larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is below average. This additional government funding is intended to support children who are looked after and those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with 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 in English and mathematics.
- The school is being supported by the National Leader of Education (NLE) from Halterworth Primary School.
- Children attend the early years provision full time.
- The governing body makes arrangements for a breakfast club at the school. This is run independently of the school.
- The school is one of seven primary and secondary schools in a local pyramid cluster.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and the rates of pupils' progress by ensuring all teachers:
 - provide all groups of pupils, especially the most able, with learning activities that are set at the right level
 - check to see how well pupils are learning so that timely adjustments can be made to extend pupils' skills when they are ready and to give more time to those who find learning difficult
 - give pupils opportunities to act on guidance to improve the quality of their writing.
- Strengthen the quality of leadership and management by ensuring all leaders:
 - collect and analyse information about the impact of teaching on pupils' learning for a more accurate view of the precise areas for development
 - hold their colleagues to account more robustly for pupils' progress.
- Improve pupils' attitudes to learning by raising expectations about their responsibility for talking about their level of understanding and for completing tasks to a high standard.
- Improve the school's work to keep pupils safe and secure by ensuring that pupils are aware of potential hazards and know how to reduce risks in a variety of situations, including on school trips.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

require improvement

- Senior leaders do not have a sufficiently objective view of the school's performance. Development plans identify the most appropriate areas for improvement but self-evaluation is over-generous and there is a lack of urgency in implementing change. Leadership and management are not good because teaching has not been good enough over time to enable all pupils to achieve as well as they should.
- Senior leaders routinely gather information about pupils' achievement and attendance but there is too little focus on interpreting this information to determine the precise cause of any weakness.
- Senior leaders regularly check the quality of teaching but priority is given to the management of behaviour rather than the impact of teaching on pupils' learning. The information gathered during these activities is not helping leaders identify how to improve teaching quickly enough.
- Middle leaders and subject coordinators have been proficient in developing effective strategies for the teaching of writing as well as in meeting the requirements of the new National Curriculum. However, they are not able to determine the impact of these actions in raising pupils' achievement because they are not involved in checking their effectiveness in the classroom.
- Leaders have focused on improving pupils' behaviour through the initiative, 'Steps to being a successful learner'. However, this guidance is not consistently well implemented by staff. Often, there is too great an emphasis on pupils' work rate rather than their understanding. Pupils are learning to be busy in lessons instead of taking responsibility for their own good achievement.
- Additional government funding is used to enable eligible pupils to form strong relationships in school so they attend well and commit to the variety of other activities available. However, it has been less successful in raising their attainment. These pupils make steady progress but it is not good enough to help them catch up with their peers.
- The wide range of subjects is well coordinated and learning activities are linked to various themes. For example, pupils throughout the school enjoy 'outdoor learning days' when they make the most of the area of natural interest next to the school to apply mathematical concepts and to practise writing. Pupils discuss key issues such as the relevance of Jesus' teaching today and they write thoughtfully about the moral dilemma in the forgiveness of sin. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have produced some excellent artwork in relation to their current project on Russia.
- The sports funding is being used to increase the range of clubs and activities available to pupils but leaders do not check that this is encouraging different pupils to join in. Staff training has raised teachers' expectations about how well pupils apply new knowledge in sport. Pupils respond well to the emphasis on good sportsmanship and the school teams to do well in tournaments against other schools in the pyramid.
- Senior leaders create a cohesive school community. Relationships between adults and pupils are strong and staff morale is high. Adults are fully committed to providing a safe and stimulating learning environment.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet current statutory requirements. The school has established good links with external agencies in support of individual pupils. The school takes particularly good care of pupils' needs.
- Senior leaders are determined that all pupils have an equal opportunity to learn and they reject discrimination of all kinds. Frequent changes to the arrangements for grouping pupils mean that those in danger of falling behind catch up. Parents and carers reported that they are very satisfied with the information they receive about their children's achievement and with the progress they are making.
- The many events organised by the school enrich the curriculum and make a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, memorable visits to places of local and national interest, such as Bournemouth and Hampton Court Palace, give pupils a good awareness of their English heritage and what it means to live in modern Britain.
- Pupils have a good understanding of fundamental British values because the school encourages them to respect others. Pupils defend the right of all people to make their own choices and there are several opportunities for them to practise democracy, such as through the school council.
- With support from the local authority and through the NLE, the school is beginning to evaluate its effectiveness more accurately. The early years provision has been an area of focus. The quality of the learning environment has improved and this is having a positive impact on children's overall development.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Members of the governing body are developing their expertise so they have a better understanding of the information available about the school's performance. However, they rely too heavily on senior leaders to explain the full implications of this information and as a result, their view of the school's

performance is also over-generous. They are not all fully aware of the scale of work still to be done to improve the school so that it is good. They know about the inconsistencies in pupils' achievement, particularly in writing, and they hold school leaders to account for securing the progress of pupils eligible for the pupil premium. However, their expectations in this regard are not high enough.

- Governors know about the quality of teaching and they work with school leaders to ensure that current performance management procedures are robust. In the past, these were rather lax and the governors are determined that teachers who have previously been rewarded for good teaching continue to provide value for money.
- The governing body has efficient systems for meeting its statutory duties and it renews policies on a regular basis. Finances are carefully managed to ensure a small annual surplus.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. The school's emphasis on conscientious learning behaviour is misleading and pupils sit quietly in lessons rather than admit they do not understand what they are learning about. Other pupils keep themselves busy by setting up new activities or copying questions instead of asking for help to overcome difficulties and complete tasks which build on their skills. Work in some pupils' books reflects this disjointed approach; exercises are left unfinished and the presentation is untidy. This is why behaviour is not good.
- Pupils respond well to the reward systems and they are keen to collect house points for good work. School records show that there is little low-level disruption during lessons.
- Pupils' are proud of their school and they are keen to enhance it as a community. For example, they are fully committed to whole-school dance events as well as to fund raising activities. Pupils are courteous; they respect the facilities and conduct themselves in an orderly manner.
- The school fosters good relationships and pupils in positions of responsibility fulfil their roles maturely and sensitively. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 enjoy the buddy system which gives them routine opportunities to support the learning and development of children in the early years.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement. The school misses chances to help all pupils understand about hazards, such as those to be considered on school trips, and pupils are not learning how to reduce risks for themselves.
- The school does not analyse attendance data closely enough so misses those pupils who are routinely absent for very short periods. The school works more effectively with individual pupils who have more obvious difficulties attending school. These pupils are well supported and their levels of absence have fallen. Overall attendance is above average.
- Pupils understand about the various forms of bullying but they say incidents are extremely rare. They are confident that adults at the school would deal with these issues effectively. Parents and carers agree that their children are safe and that bullying does not trouble them.
- Pupils learn about e-safety and they know how to keep themselves safe when using the internet and various mobile phone applications.
- The school has suitable procedures for ensuring the safety of the school site. Appropriate risk assessments are in place for pupils whose particular needs could put them at greater risk during routine activities.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Learning time is wasted when expectations about pupils' attitudes to learning are repeatedly reinforced during lessons. Most pupils are encouraged to be conscientious without any accompanying checks that they understand what they are learning about or to identify misconceptions. This slows pupils' progress because they do not have a secure grasp of how they are building on their knowledge and skills. This is why teaching is not good.
- Marking is not consistently effective. Occasionally, teachers praise effort alone and do not mention how pupils could improve their work. Although feedback is more thorough in literacy, there are few consistent expectations about how pupils apply the guidance they receive. Often pupils do not respond at all, but when they do, most of them are merely asked to make brief notes in the margin. As a result, most pupils are not learning to write fluently as well as accurately. The most able pupils are encouraged to develop their prose in full and this is having a more positive impact in improving their writing.

- The most able pupils have to wait too long during lessons for work that is sufficiently challenging to make them think deeply. Teachers often recap knowledge before moving on to tasks which help them build on their skills and understanding. When these most able pupils are encouraged to think at the right level, they become fully engaged, resolving problems and investigating new ideas.
- Pupils enjoy the reading materials prepared for lessons. They respond to humour and they draw on their knowledge of different literary techniques to develop their comprehension skills. Nevertheless, it is not always clear to pupils how to use these features in their own writing, and this hampers their progress. This is because teaching guides pupils to structure their ideas initially but does not help them understand how to link these ideas together, in order to write accurately at length.
- Pupils are beginning to learn more effectively in mathematics because teaching helps them build on calculation strategies and use them accurately to solve number problems.
- Learning support assistants use dialogue effectively to support disabled pupils and those with special educational needs as they learn. These pupils make good progress because they share their thoughts and check their understanding before they commit their ideas to paper.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' attainment in writing is weaker than that in other subjects throughout the school. The standards achieved by the end of Key Stage 1 have been below average for the last two years although there has been some improvement this year. The proportion of Key Stage 2 pupils achieving the higher standards is below the national average.
- Disadvantaged pupils eligible for pupil premium make progress from their different starting points that is similar to that of their peers. This is variable in different year groups but overall, the gaps in attainment within the school are beginning to close. In the 2014 national assessments, the gap in disadvantaged pupils' attainment compared with other pupils' nationally was the equivalent of a term's progress in reading and a year's progress in writing and mathematics. When compared with other pupils at the school last year, the gaps represented a year's progress in all three areas.
- Over the last two years, the school was not able to build effectively on children's good development in the early years and pupils made slow progress through Key Stage 1. The school's records show that these pupils are now attaining at a higher level. Pupils' attainment in the Year 1 phonics screening check has improved steadily over the last two years and pupils are beginning to build on these skills more effectively.
- At the time of the last inspection, the school was asked to improve the achievements of pupils in Years 3 and 4. As a result of stronger teaching, a greater proportion of these pupils are now making good progress. However, some still have more catching up to do because their attainment was low at the end of Key Stage 1.
- The school had previously identified gaps between the attainment of boys and girls. They now achieve similar standards in reading and writing but girls throughout Key Stage 2 are still behind boys in mathematics.
- The proportion of pupils making good or better progress is gradually speeding up. This is having a positive impact on pupils' achievement in national assessments at the end of Key Stage 2 and more pupils are reaching higher standards, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- The proportions of the most able pupils at Key Stage 2 who achieve the highest standards at Level 6 are above average in mathematics and English grammar, punctuation and spelling. These pupils learn well when they are set mathematical investigations which they solve together. They take every opportunity to attempt the puzzles on the school's mathematics board. Marking in their literacy books, which encourages them to think carefully about improving their writing, is also having a positive impact for these pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because the support they receive when they learn in small groups meets their needs well.
- Pupils learn about English grammar, punctuation and spelling very effectively and their results in national assessments are consistently good. Pupils do not apply these principles well enough to their writing in order to link ideas effectively.

The early years provision**is good**

- Children join the early years with the range of experiences that are typical for children of their age with the exception of their skills in reading and writing which are not as strong. Children make good progress and the proportion achieving a good level of development by the end of Reception is above the national average, including for those children supported by the pupil premium. Overall figures have continued to improve over the last three years and children are well prepared for entry into Year 1.
- The setting has made writing a particular focus, which includes plenty of activities that motivate children to write. For the first time this year, children are learning to read using a scheme to help them remember their letters and the sounds they make. This is having a positive impact and children are making good progress using their sounds to write accurately.
- The quality of teaching is good. Frequent checks on children's learning mean that planning is used effectively to meet their needs. Occasionally however, time is not well spent because there is too great an emphasis instilling the school's ethos for successful learning and children become restless.
- The outside area is well established, covering all areas of learning. Children make the most of this environment to explore learning and they sustain their concentration well. For example, children were prompted to use their knowledge of different measurements to build a large house for a hedgehog because of the range of resources available.
- Children's behaviour is good because adults encourage them to be considerate and to share toys and equipment. Children respond quickly when they are reminded to behave well. They enjoy learning and they feel safe because they know to talk to adults if they are worried. Children understand that they should dress up warmly to keep themselves healthy outside.
- The early years is well led and managed. The leader makes good use of training courses to develop the expertise in the setting, especially for assessing children's development accurately and for improving teaching. Children's development has continued to improve as a result.
- The early years works effectively with parents and carers, getting to know families well before children join the school so that children make a confident start. Parents and carers are encouraged to be with their children as they settle in at the beginning of each day and they have a good awareness of their children's development.

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	116314
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	453378

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	308
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Linda Collie
Headteacher	Anne Tester
Date of previous school inspection	22 January 2008
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