

St John Fisher Primary - A Catholic Voluntary Academy

Springwater Avenue, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S12 4HJ

Inspection dates 6–7 May 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management	Good		2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Good		2
Quality of teaching	Good		2
Achievement of pupils	Good		2
Early years provision	Good		2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Parents hold the school in exceptionally high regard. Many parents recognise substantial improvements in the school and say that the headteacher provides excellent leadership.
- Leadership and management, including governance, are much improved and are now good. All leaders have a clear, accurate and shared view of where further improvements are needed. The school is well placed to continue to improve in the future.
- Children benefit from good quality early years provision, which prepares them well for Year 1 and later school life.
- Leaders have ensured that teaching throughout the school is at least good and, in Years 5 and 6, often outstanding. Consequently, pupils make good progress throughout the school and progress in Years 5 and 6 is even better.
- Effectively deployed, well-trained teaching assistants make a good contribution to the good progress pupils make, especially that of pupils who find learning more difficult.
- Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6 is above average. In 2014, more than half of pupils attained the higher Level 5 or above, reflecting good provision for the most able.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress.
- Pupils behave well and are kept safe. They concentrate, cooperate and work hard in lessons and show consideration for each other.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strongly promoted. Relationships are very good in this happy school.
- High priority is given to pupils' safety and welfare. Pupils say they feel extremely safe and secure at school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Attainment in writing, especially in Key Stage 1, is not as high as in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils do not always take sufficient pride in the presentation of their work.
- The school lacks a systematic approach to helping pupils develop their writing skills in subjects such as history, geography and science.
- In some classes, pupils are given insufficient opportunity to improve their work in the light of the written comments that teachers make.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors saw teaching and learning in all classes, including a joint observation of a full lesson with the headteacher. In addition, a number of shorter visits were made to the early years and to see particular aspects, such as the teaching of reading or pupils participating in support programmes. A range of other school activities including playtimes, lunchtimes and an assembly was observed.
- Past and current work of pupils of all abilities in all year groups was scrutinised and some pupils were heard reading.
- Inspectors held meetings with school staff and four members of the governing body.
- Documents, including plans for school improvement and reports showing the school's view of its own performance, safeguarding documents, and policies and records relating to behaviour, safety and attendance were inspected. Information on the performance of the school in comparison with other schools nationally was analysed. The school's records of pupils' progress were also evaluated.
- Reports reviewing the school's performance and improvement over the last two years, produced by the diocese and educational consultants, were analysed.
- Inspectors held short discussions with 52 parents of a total of 80 children at the beginning of the second day of the inspection. Inspectors took account of the 72 responses made in the most recent school survey of parents' views from January 2015. The views of 60 parents who responded to the online 'Parent View' questionnaire were also analysed.
- Inspectors received the views of staff through discussions and by analysing the 16 responses to the inspection survey of staff views. They also received the views of pupils through both informal and pre-arranged discussions.
- Inspectors held a meeting with a member of the diocese and an officer of the local authority.

Inspection team

Roger Sadler, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Elaine Watson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school became a sponsored academy school on December 1 2013, as a member of the Hallam Schools' Partnership Academy Trust. When its predecessor school, St John Fisher Catholic Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted in May 2013, it was judged to be inadequate and was subject to special measures.
- This school is an average-sized primary school. An average proportion of pupils speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is also average.
- There is a below average proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are supported by the pupil premium. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Six of the seven classes in the school are taught by teachers who were new to the school in September 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in writing, especially in Key Stage 1, by:
 - increasing the amount of extended writing in Key Stage 1
 - ensuring that teachers throughout the school expect all pupils in their classes to develop a clear understanding of the next step in their writing development
 - providing pupils with sufficient opportunity to respond to the comments teachers make about their work
 - introducing a systematic way of ensuring that pupils develop their writing skills in other subjects, such as history, geography and science
 - ensuring that teachers in all classes insist that pupils take more pride in the presentation of their work.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has been inspirational in establishing a positive climate where all leaders and staff work hard for the good of the pupils. All leaders, including governors, strongly promote good teaching, learning and behaviour.
- The headteacher, well supported by senior leaders, has developed effective ways of helping teachers and teaching assistants to improve their work continually. Although most teachers are new to the school, they already work consistently as a team in many key aspects of teaching and learning. Senior leaders have ensured that all staff are working to the same ends of helping pupils do their very best.
- Leaders continually check on the quality of teaching and learning. Frequent meetings are held between the headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator and each individual class teacher. At these meetings, the progress of each pupil in the class is reviewed and particular attention is paid to any pupil at risk of not achieving well. Any necessary additional support is arranged, targets are set and each pupil's progress is checked at the next meeting.
- Pupils' books are regularly monitored and teachers are observed teaching. Teachers receive clear feedback on their work and they say that they are helped to improve their work.
- Leaders know the school inside out. The school improvement plan provides a strong guide to school development and staff training. Clear and demanding targets for judging the effect of the plan help leaders, including governors, to check its successful implementation.
- Middle leaders are supported and guided, so that they do their jobs well. Leaders of subjects help to ensure that pupils make good progress and that teaching is effective within their areas of responsibility. The school is aware that leaders of some subjects lack experience of observing teaching in their subjects and work is under way to develop this aspect.
- Good relationships exist throughout the school and the school is a welcoming and happy place. All pupils are given the same chance to do their best and many parents said that the school met their children's needs very well indeed. The most able pupils also do well and the school is fully committed to successfully promoting equal opportunities for all.
- The pupil premium funding to support the learning of disadvantaged pupils is used well and the gap in the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils is closing throughout the school. Funding to improve physical education and sport in primary schools has been spent well on staff training, external coaches and new clubs. Pupils are keen to participate in the new sports now on offer. More sporting opportunities and more frequent specialist coaching contribute well towards pupils' enjoyment of sport and their healthy lifestyles.
- Leaders, including governors, ensure that the school is a safe place. Safeguarding arrangements fully meet current requirements. Staff are fully trained and the school carefully checks the suitability of all adults who work with pupils. Parents are very impressed with the support and care provided by the staff. The school has effective arrangements to ensure that pupils behave well, so that behaviour is consistently good throughout the school.
- The curriculum is of good quality. It is currently under review to ensure that the school fully implements new national requirements for the curriculum and assessment. The school appropriately places strong emphasis on developing pupils' basic skills and ensuring that all are able to progress well in literacy and numeracy. This is not at the expense of other subjects and many pupils commented on how much they enjoy their interesting lessons, for example, pupils enjoy their weekly French lessons. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills in subjects such as history, geography and science.
- The curriculum is modified effectively to meet the learning needs of all pupils. Pupils at the early stages of learning English, those at risk of falling behind or those with disabilities or special educational needs are given regular additional support by teachers and teaching assistants and this helps them achieve well. The most able are also given additional support and they achieve well.
- Strong attention is paid in the curriculum to ensuring that pupils learn and adopt British values and to prepare them for life in modern Britain. For example, during the inspection, Year 6 pupils were learning to debate and take account of the views of others and understand democratic decision-making when considering issues such as whether or not mobile phones should be used in schools to support pupils' learning.
- The school has worked in close partnership with the local authority to improve staff skills in monitoring and evaluation. The diocese and external consultants have also made a substantial contribution and external reviews and support have been used very well to help leaders improve the school so quickly.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governance is effective and improving. Governors are well trained and skilled in checking on the school's performance and using data to compare the school's performance with that of other schools. They have a detailed and comprehensive knowledge of which groups of pupils are doing best and where a changed approach may be needed. They verify carefully that funding is used effectively. For example, the governing body confirms that spending decisions on additional funding for disadvantaged pupils are having the desired effect on improving the achievement of these pupils.
- School leaders are continually supported and challenged by the governing body and senior leaders welcome the insight and involvement of governors in reviewing the performance of the school.
- Governors show a detailed knowledge of how good teaching is at the school, and understand and evaluate the arrangements for improving teaching. They know how effective teaching is being rewarded through decisions on teachers' pay and what steps are taken to provide support and challenge if any weaker teaching comes to light.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils behave in a mature fashion and are polite and helpful to one another and to adults. They thrive on being given responsibilities and helping others. Older pupils take their responsibilities for caring for other pupils very seriously. They listen carefully to the guidance they receive during collective worship and lessons. Consequently, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- Parents and pupils agree that behaviour is good. Pupils were proud to tell inspectors that behaviour is always as good at their school as it was during the inspection. Behaviour around school, in the dining room, on the playground and in assembly is always at least good and sometimes exemplary.
- Pupils behave well in lessons. In Year 5 and Year 6, concentration and behaviour in lessons is excellent. However, behaviour is not outstanding overall because in Years 1 and 2, a few pupils sometimes need too many reminders about their behaviour and concentration.
- Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have an excellent understanding of their own learning needs and know exactly where they need to concentrate their efforts to move their learning to the next stage. This is not the case in some other classes, where some pupils are unclear about what aspects of their work need improvement.
- Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in much improved rates of attendance, which since September 2014 have been above average. Leaders have high expectations of attendance and parents and pupils have responded well.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Parents and pupils are very positive about the care provided by staff and the way that pupils are kept safe.
- Parents recognise that bullying is not tolerated and even minor incidents of unkind behaviour are taken seriously by staff and nipped in the bud. Pupils understand what constitutes different types of bullying and say that there is no bullying in their school.
- Staff training and school procedures in health and safety matters are strong. Pupils are taught to use the Internet safely and know exactly what to do if they come across anything that worries them.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good throughout the school and often outstanding in Years 5 and 6.
- Good relationships and effective behaviour management help the vast majority of pupils concentrate in lessons and work hard. These contribute to the good progress pupils make.
- Work is carefully modified to meet the learning needs of all pupils. Those who struggle with learning are given additional support and the most able are challenged and kept interested.
- Reading is taught particularly well and many pupils make strong progress in their reading as they move through the school. Effective teaching of letters and sounds by teachers and teaching assistants in younger classes and a well-organised home reading programme help pupils read well.
- Mathematics is taught well and pupils develop basic number and counting skills, and use these well to

solve mathematical and real-life problems.

- Senior leaders are aware that writing, although mostly well taught, is not taught as well as reading and mathematics. Pupils, especially in younger classes, undertake too little extended writing. In some classes, pupils are unaware of which aspects of their writing require improvement.
- Well trained and effectively deployed teaching assistants provide good support for pupils, especially for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs or those who are struggling with particular aspects of their learning.
- Teachers mark pupils' work carefully and often provide useful pointers for improvement. However, teachers do not always insist that pupils make the necessary improvements. As a result, especially in writing in younger classes, pupils do not always learn from their mistakes and so progress is a little slower than it could be.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils' improving rates of progress and higher attainment are first and foremost the result of the strong leadership of the headteacher. He has ensured that all staff work as a team to help pupils do their best and ensure that standards continue to rise.
- Pupils in all year groups are making good progress from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. Even so, attainment in writing, especially in Key Stage 1, is not as high as in reading and mathematics.
- Good progress has led to above average attainment by the end of Year 6. In 2014 national assessments, Year 6 pupils' attainment was significantly above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' work and the school's accurate assessment records indicate that standards in Year 6 this year are also above average.
- The most able are well catered for and make good progress, especially in Key Stage 2. For example, last year most pupils attained above the nationally expected Level 4 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school's work to teach pupils to use their knowledge of letters and sounds to improve their reading and spelling is bearing fruit. Attainment in the Year 1 phonics screening check has improved well, as has attainment in other national reading assessments in Year 2 and Year 6.
- The school uses additional pupil premium funding for disadvantaged pupils to good effect. Disadvantaged pupils, although attaining slightly around a term behind other pupils at the schools, achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2014 national tests, these disadvantaged pupils exceeded national averages not only for disadvantaged pupils, but for all pupils nationally.
- Parents of pupils at early stages of learning English recognise that their children make good progress in their English at the school.
- Many parents of disabled pupils or those with special educational needs were keen to tell inspectors how sensitively and effectively the school provides for their children's needs. These pupils make good progress throughout the school due to the good teaching provided by teachers and teaching assistants.

The early years provision

is good

- When they enter school, most children's skills are typical for their age in numeracy and literacy and in their personal development. Due to good provision, both indoors and outdoors, children make good progress from their starting points and are prepared well for Year 1.
- As well as focusing on promoting children's literacy and numeracy skills, the school concentrates appropriately on promoting their personal, social and emotional development. Good arrangements to introduce children to school help them soon settle into school and grow in confidence and enjoy the wide range of exciting learning activities provided. Staff take excellent care of children and ensure their safety and well-being.
- Reading is taught well and daily lessons to help children learn letters and their sounds helps them grow in confidence as readers and enjoy books.
- Behaviour is good in the early years. Children sit and listen carefully and politely and behave well, both when working as a class and when they are engaged in independent work.
- Although a below average proportion of children attained a good level of development in last year's end of year assessments, provision has improved and attainment is rising. Considerably more children are attaining a good level of development in all areas of learning this year. Children have made good progress

from their starting points this year.

- Disabled children and those with special educational needs are given expert sensitive support and this helps them enjoy school, get on with other children and enjoy their learning.
- The most able children receive their share of attention and make good progress. All children are treated as individuals. Regular assessments of the progress of each child, in each area of learning, enable adults to tailor their work with each child to best meet his or her needs.
- Teaching in the early years is good. Activities are interesting and stimulating and children enjoy school.
- Parents are very pleased with all aspects of provision and the progress their children make in the early years. Good ways of involving parents have been developed.
- Leadership and management in the early years is good. Leaders know what needs to be worked on to improve continually what is offered to children and all adults work together as an effective team.

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	140025
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	450252

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy special sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	200
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs S Ludlam
Headteacher	Mr F Barratt
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy
Telephone number	0114 248 5009
Fax number	0114 251 0395
Email address	enquiries@stjohnfisherlearning.co.uk

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