

Romsley St Kenelm's CofE Primary School

Bromsgrove Road, Romsley, B62 0LF

Inspection dates

10–11 November 2015

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Require improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The school's effectiveness has declined since its last inspection. Pupils have not all achieved as well as they should.
- Leaders' evaluation of the quality of teaching and achievement is too generous and does not take sufficient account of the impact that teaching is having on pupils' progress.
- Subject leaders do not use assessment information about pupils' learning to measure the success of initiatives introduced.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment varies too much and is not yet consistently good across the school.
- Teachers do not always pick up and address common mistakes which pupils make. As a result, errors are carried forward as pupils move through year groups.
- Teachers do not always provide work that is pitched at the right level for pupils. The work provided is often too easy and lacks challenge for most groups, especially the most able. Pupils do not therefore make the progress they should.
- Not all adults ask pupils questions which make them think hard enough.
- Progress in reading and writing is not as strong as in mathematics. Not all pupils read widely and often enough. Spelling and handwriting skills are not sufficiently secure for some pupils.
- Information provided by the feeder nursery and other providers is not used well enough in the early years to establish accurately children's starting points when they join the school.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has set a clear direction for the school and raised expectations. Changes made have already had a positive impact in mathematics.
- The teaching of phonics (letters and sounds they represent) is effective. Most pupils reach the standards required in Year 1.
- Pupils' behaviour and personal development and well-being are good. Pupils are polite and show good levels of respect to adults and each other.
- Safeguarding procedures are robust. Pupils feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe.
- Governance has improved and is now effective.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good by making sure teachers:
 - plan work which challenges all pupils, especially the most able
 - pick up and address common errors and misconceptions made by pupils during lessons
 - ask pupils probing questions in order to check their understanding and develop their thinking.

- Raise achievement in reading and writing across the school by:
 - ensuring that pupils read a wide range of different books regularly
 - ensuring pupils choose books which are at the right level for their ability
 - focusing more on improving pupils' spelling and handwriting skills
 - providing opportunities for pupils to practise their writing more frequently and making sure pupils persevere and try harder when writing at length independently.

- Improve leadership and management by:
 - using assessments from the feeder nursery and pre-schools more effectively to help inform judgements about children's starting points on entry to the early years
 - focusing on pupils' learning and the progress of different groups when checking the quality of teaching
 - ensuring that subject leaders use assessment information to check the impact of any initiatives they have introduced.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management **requires improvement**

- Leadership and management require improvement because, since the previous inspection, leaders have not been effective in maintaining the good quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Senior leaders' evaluation of the school's performance is too generous and does not accurately reflect the school's current effectiveness and pupils' achievement.
- All leaders, including subject leaders, carry out checks on the quality of teaching. However, the focus of visits to classrooms is not centred sufficiently on the strategies teachers use to improve learning and the progress that all groups of pupils are making.
- Subject leaders are increasingly held to account. They have introduced new systems and initiatives but do not use assessment information effectively to determine how successful these are. For example, additional support is provided for individual pupils and small groups but the impact of this support has not been measured.
- The headteacher is a strong and effective leader. Since joining the school, the headteacher and the deputy headteacher have created a culture and ethos of improvement. They have accurately identified where improvements are needed. They have increased the levels of accountability of staff and raised the targets set for teachers' performance. There is now a sharper focus on pupils making more rapid progress than previously.
- Actions taken have already shown a marked improvement in the teaching of mathematics. Regular pupil progress meetings are carried out and pupils who are not making enough progress are identified and given additional support. Progress is now tracked more robustly. Teachers' marking and their feedback to pupils provide effective guidance to pupils.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant to all pupils. Pupils benefit from and enjoy the wide range of extra-curricular clubs, visits and visitors. Sport, art and music are all strongly promoted with all pupils learning a musical instrument in Year 4. French is also taught by a specialist teacher and pupils enjoy the opportunity to visit the 'French café' created in school and order typically French food. Writing is taught through topic work which also extends pupils' knowledge in history, science and geography. 'Forest school' opportunities also ensure pupils learn outdoor skills and reinforce their understanding of health and safety.
- Leaders strongly promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Poignant whole-school assemblies, such as that led by the vicar during the inspection about Remembrance Day, provide pupils with opportunities to reflect and think about others. Pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong and have good levels of understanding about the beliefs and practices of those from other faiths and cultures. This is reinforced through links with schools in other countries, such as Tanzania and China.
- Pupils show good levels of respect and tolerance for each other. British values are strongly reinforced. Pupils are astutely aware of the importance of democracy and equality of opportunity as this has been taught well. Pupils vote for the school council and Eco-committee members in a mock 'polling booth'. As one pupil put it, 'Everyone has a voice in this school which makes it fair.' Every pupil in the school has a responsibility. This demonstrates leaders' strong commitment to equality of opportunity.
- Leaders make good use of the pupil premium to provide additional support for pupils who are eligible. Pupils' personal development and well-being are also addressed with funding provided being used to ensure eligible pupils have the same access to clubs, trips and swimming lessons as other pupils.
- The primary school sport funding is used effectively. Specialist teachers provide dance lessons and other physical education activities to develop pupils' physical well-being. Pupils told inspectors they enjoy the greater range of clubs and opportunities provided; for example, archery, fencing and trampolining.
- Most parents have very positive views of the school. Many acknowledge the improvements made since the arrival of the new headteacher. Typical comments made on the online questionnaire include 'This is a great school' and 'My child is very happy at St Kenelm's and is progressing well.'
- The local authority acknowledges that the school has declined since the previous inspection. As a result, it set up 'project board meetings' to keep a check on the school's progress. These meetings ended when the local authority was satisfied that the areas identified for improvement had been addressed and that there was evidence that the school was improving. Recent support has enabled senior and subject leaders to have a better understanding of their roles, and further support is planned.

■ The governance of the school:

- is effective and is contributing to school improvement. Governors acknowledge and accept that there has been a 'drift' in achievement since the previous inspection. They have, however, taken decisive action to improve their own effectiveness. They have restructured the governing body, placed achievement on the agenda of every meeting, engaged fully with external support and advice to drive up the quality of teaching and rationalised the number of governor responsibilities. Their focus now lies firmly on improving pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.
 - uses assessment information and published data to find out how well the school is doing. Governors have a good understanding of what the information shows as they have undertaken training to improve their skills. They also have a more informed overview of the quality of teaching as they meet regularly with subject leaders and carry out visits to classrooms.
 - sets clear targets for the headteacher that are challenging and linked to the school's performance. Governors are provided with information about the quality of teaching but have not checked this sufficiently well in the past as pay rises for staff have been approved without secure evidence that pupils are making good progress.
 - takes full account of the additional primary sports and pupil premium funding to keep a careful check on finances. They also know what impact these sums of money are having as this is reported to them by the headteacher and also published on the school's website.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Safer recruitment procedures are followed rigorously to make sure adults are safe and eligible to work with children. The school's record-keeping systems are robust and detailed records are kept of any referrals made to external agencies. All staff have received recent safeguarding training so are aware of who to inform if they have any concerns about any pupils. Site security and safety are taken seriously, with visitors being given safety information on their arrival.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement because it has not yet led to consistently good achievement for all pupils. Observations of learning in lessons, the work in pupils' books and the school's own assessments of pupils' progress show that there is not enough good teaching in each key stage.
- The headteacher and senior leaders are improving the quality of teaching. However, not enough teaching provides sufficient challenge for pupils. Work set is often too easy for most groups, especially the most able. Pupils themselves also recognise this. When asked what they would improve at the school, one answered 'the level of work we do as we sometimes finish it in ten minutes'.
- Some teachers do not pick up or address consistent errors made by pupils early enough. For example, the large majority of pupils in Year 1 are still unable to form numbers accurately. Similarly, pupils in Key Stage 2 still misspell common words and are not shown how to write these properly.
- While some teachers question pupils effectively, some adults do not probe pupils' understanding or develop their thinking well enough by asking more searching or open-ended questions. As a result, pupils give shorter answers and have not developed their ability to reason or fully explain their answers.
- The teaching of phonics is effective in the early years and in Year 1 as most children reach the level required in the Year 1 screening check. However, reading skills are not built on sufficiently from Year 2 onwards. Pupils in Year 2 do not always have their books changed regularly enough and older pupils do not read widely or often. This is limiting their experience of reading and slowing their progress.
- Pupils practise their writing through topic work but on occasion, the task set limits their ability to write at length, especially pupils in Key Stage 2. For example, work in Year 4 showed that pupils could write almost a side of prose early in the term, but several weeks later were only expected to write one-word answers in a box on a worksheet. Some pupils make unnecessary spelling errors and their handwriting is untidy, and some teachers accept this too readily.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved and pupils are making good progress in this subject. Additional resources have been purchased and pupils now use more practical equipment to aid their understanding. Leaders have taken steps to address the needs of the most able. Additional teaching is in place and work set is more demanding.
- Teachers' marking and the feedback given to pupils has improved. The school policy has been revised and pupils recognise that 'pink' comments mean they need to revisit their work, while 'green' comments mean they have understood the objective. This has resulted in pupils being able to redraft and improve their work and correct errors made. Consequently the end result is of a higher standard.

- Teachers have secure subject knowledge and build good relationships with pupils. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' development and provide good support for groups and individuals, especially those who are disabled or who have special educational needs.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are confident, articulate and ambitious. They are proud of their school and enjoy their learning. They have a good understanding of the recently introduced 'learning essentials' which encourage them to always try their best and present their work neatly.
- Pupils readily take on additional responsibilities in school. Roles include members of the school council, Eco-committee members, buddies to younger children or classroom ambassadors. They carry out these roles sensibly and effectively.
- Pupils know about different forms of bullying including physical, cyber and racist. They say that there has been some bullying in the past but that this has been addressed. Similarly, pupils say that any behaviour incidents are dealt with quickly and effectively by staff.
- Pupils feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe. They have a good understanding of the dangers associated with the internet. Regular visitors talk to pupils about safety and posters around school ensure that pupils are aware of people they can talk to if needed, for example Childline.
- Pupils have a good awareness of healthy lifestyles and know the importance of regular exercise and healthy eating. They enjoy the range of sporting opportunities provided including swimming lessons.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite and show respect to each other and to adults. They move around the school sensibly and play together happily at breaktimes. Pupils know and follow the school rules well.
- A large majority of parents who expressed their views agree that behaviour is good. They feel that teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and that incidents are followed up. Staff and pupils also agree that behaviour is good.
- Pupils take pride in their appearance and help keep the school environment clean and tidy.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are largely good, even when learning is not as challenging for some pupils as it might be. On these occasions pupils become restless and less attentive but this does not happen routinely.
- Behaviour and racist incidents are recorded systematically. Records checked show that leaders follow up any incidents reported and take effective action.
- Pupils enjoy school and this is shown in their above-average attendance. School systems are effective and the importance of regular attendance is strongly promoted in school newsletters.

Outcomes for pupils require improvement

- Outcomes require improvement because not all pupils make good progress throughout the school, particularly in reading and writing.
- In 2015, attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 was average. This was lower than at the time of the previous inspection, especially in reading and mathematics. Attainment in Key Stage 2 in reading and writing was also average and too few pupils who left Year 6 made good progress in these subjects. However, attainment in mathematics was significantly above the national average due to the improvements made by leaders last year.
- The school's own records show that progress for current pupils is accelerating. Leaders track pupils' progress each term and have introduced a new assessment system, including an electronic system in the early years. Teachers and leaders are now able to identify which pupils are falling behind and provide additional support.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the required level in the phonics check in Year 1 was above average. Pupils enjoy reading but do not always choose books which are at the right level. Additionally, books are

not always changed regularly in Key Stage 1 or pupils encouraged to read a wider range of books in Key Stage 2.

- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs usually make at least the progress expected and in some classes they make good progress. The additional support provided both in school and by external specialists, such as speech and language therapists, ensures that their needs are mainly met.
- There are very few disadvantaged pupils in the school. However, the pupil premium is used effectively to ensure that they keep up with their classmates. Their progress over time is improving. It is not possible to comment on whether the gaps in their attainment compared with others in the school and nationally are closing due to the very small number in each year group.
- The most-able pupils make expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics but too few make good progress due to the levels of challenge not being strong enough in most lessons. However, leaders are now providing additional teaching for the most able, for example in Year 3 in mathematics, in order to accelerate progress and ensure these pupils reach the levels they should.

Early years provision

requires improvement

- Leadership of early years requires improvement because children's ability levels on entry to the school are not always assessed accurately. This is because the information provided by the nursery and pre-school providers is not used well enough. As a result, it is difficult for leaders to assess accurately the progress made by children in their first year. The new assessment check introduced in September 2015 does, however, provide the school with some valuable information about children's language, literacy and mathematical skills on entry.
- Children's rates of progress from their different starting points are variable and not all reach the levels expected at the end of their Reception year. For example, the proportion reaching a good level of development was below average in 2014. Reading and writing standards were also below average for both boys and girls. This improved in 2015 and the proportion reaching a good level of development was above average. As a result, this cohort of children were well prepared for Key Stage 1.
- Teaching requires improvement because it does not always challenge children well enough. For example, children working with an additional adult were counting and recognising numbers to five when work in their books showed they could already count beyond that. The outdoor area lacks stimulation for inquisitive learners as little equipment is available for children and too few activities are planned which encourage children to explore and investigate for themselves. Resources in the classroom are also not always accessible to the children or at an appropriate height.
- Children behave well and are well cared for. They settle quickly and adapt to routines without difficulty. The breadth of learning opportunities supports children's personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. For example, some children were making mosaic pictures of poppies in recognition of Remembrance Day. Even the very youngest showed a good understanding of why poppies are worn and the importance of remembering those who died.

School details

Unique reference number	116846
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10001418

This inspection 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	200
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Charles Ralston
Headteacher	Suzanne Shackleton
Telephone number	01562 710214
Website	www.stkenelms.co.uk
Email address	office@stkenelms.worcs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	2–3 November 2011

Information about this school

- Romsley St Kenelm's is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The early years consists of one class of children in the Reception Year and they all attend full time.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and almost all speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is well below the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those in the care of the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is slightly above the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- There has been a change of senior leadership since the previous inspection. The current headteacher was appointed in September 2014 and a new deputy headteacher was appointed in April 2015.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching in all classes. They saw 14 parts of lessons, nine of which were jointly observed with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the headteacher, other staff with leadership responsibilities and members of the governing body. Inspectors also spoke to a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 46 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the comments made. Inspectors also spoke to parents as they brought their children to school. Pupils' views were also considered through the four responses to the online questionnaire and by talking to pupils both formally and informally during the school day.
- The inspection team received responses from 29 staff to the inspection questionnaire and their views were taken into account.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read, talked to them about their learning and reviewed the work in their books.
- Inspectors reviewed a number of documents, including the school's checks on how well it is doing, the school improvement plan, data on pupils' current progress, leaders' reports following lesson observations, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

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