

St Wilfrid's Catholic Primary School

Arundel Road, Angmering, Littlehampton, West Sussex BN16 4JR

Inspection dates

21–22 June 2016

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	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Senior and middle leaders believe the school is good but do not have convincing evidence from the checks they carry out to support their view.
- Governors are too ready to accept the information they are given, which makes it difficult for them to ask pertinent questions about teaching and pupils' outcomes and provide the required degree of challenge.
- Pupils in the early years and key stage 1 are still making up ground from some weaker teaching in the past, which is now eradicated.
- Pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 have not made enough progress in learning about the sounds that letters make (phonics).
- Pupils do not make good progress in writing. While some teaching gets the best out of the pupils, this is not consistently the case, especially for the most able pupils.
- Leaders do not focus sharply enough on the learning of disadvantaged pupils, the most able and those who have special educational needs when they check teaching and learning.
- Middle leadership has shown some improvement since the previous inspection but is not yet at the stage where leaders have sufficient influence and impact on improving teaching and, as a result, pupils' outcomes.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher shows passion and determination to improve the school, and the school is moving in the right direction. She has built positive links with parents, staff and governors who are strongly supportive of the headteacher's achievements.
- Pupils are challenged to do well in some classes, particularly higher up the school where they work hard and make good progress.
- Pupils are well behaved and enjoy school life. Their personal and social development is good. They care about one another and help to make St Wilfrid's a safe and happy place in which to learn.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' progress so that it becomes good, particularly in phonics and writing, by:
 - ensuring that children in the early years and key stage 1 experience a well-planned programme of phonics teaching that takes careful account of children's different starting points
 - providing more frequent opportunities for children in the early years to write
 - making sure pupils, particularly those who are most able, in all classes have suitably frequent opportunities to practise writing and produce good work
 - tightening up the focus on how well pupils from different groups make progress in writing when leaders check the quality of learning in lessons and pupils' books.

- Improve leadership and management, by:
 - making sure all leaders focus more on pupils' learning and progress, when they evaluate the effectiveness of teaching, including the learning of different groups
 - developing and strengthening the effectiveness of middle leaders so they have a demonstrable influence and impact on teaching and pupils' outcomes
 - sharpening the school's plan for improvement so that the most essential priorities to improve the school to good are at the forefront, with clear timescales
 - strengthening the effectiveness of governance so that governors are more confident and able to provide the necessary degree of challenge and hold leaders to account for the school's work
 - providing prompt training for support staff so that they are all entirely clear about the school's procedures for safeguarding children.

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

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.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- The headteacher provides energy, determination and commitment in her desire to move the school to good. This is a school where many aspects of provision are improving and it is going in the right direction.
- There have been some aspects that have held back improvement since the previous inspection, particularly in relation to the quality of teaching and the ability of leaders other than the headteacher to drive improvement in their respective areas. Leaders have not yet brought about consistently good teaching. Much of the drive to steer improvement over the last two years has come from the headteacher.
- Middle leaders have had a range of training to develop their skills as leaders, largely from the local authority and the teaching school alliance. They have a growing awareness of their role in leading improvements, identifying aspects that need to improve and checking how well any newer initiatives are bedding down. However, particularly in English, they do not have a deep and detailed enough knowledge of what practice is like across the school so that they can articulate and evidence their impact on improving teaching and pupils' progress.
- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher has been quick to identify and tackle weaker aspects of teaching. Teachers have been supported and guided, and challenge provided when necessary if pupils' learning has been affected. Teachers who are relatively new to the profession are given good support to help them develop their expertise.
- The legacy of some weak teaching, particularly lower down the school, has not yet been fully overcome, especially concerning pupils' knowledge of phonics and their writing. Leaders and teachers acknowledge there is still some catching up to do. A lot is happening to improve provision and middle leadership, in particular, but leaders' actions and the training that has been provided have not yet had time to embed and improve pupils' progress to good.
- When different leaders check aspects of the school's work, through observing teaching or looking at pupils' books, they do not consider the effectiveness of pupils' learning in enough detail or depth. There is limited evidence to show how well the most able pupils, those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or disadvantaged pupils are learning over time. Consequently, leaders' monitoring records do not provide convincing evidence to back up their assertions that pupils' progress is good. There is clarity over how the extra funds for disadvantaged pupils have been spent but less evidence on their impact.
- The school's plan of action for improvement is very full, reflecting the amount and range of work that is under way to improve the school's effectiveness. The plan does not contain information about timescales, to show when the different priorities and activities come into particular focus and when leaders expect them to be accomplished. This makes it difficult for governors to know when they could expect to see change and improvement so that they can ask the right questions to assure themselves the planned actions are proving successful.
- The school's leaders and governors have received support from the local authority and a teaching school alliance over this academic year. While the focus of support has been appropriate, particularly that relating to governance and middle leadership, it has not yet had a full effect on improving the impact of leadership on teaching and pupils' outcomes.
- The headteacher has the backing of her staff and parents. All parents who spoke to the inspector during the inspection, and almost all who provided additional written comments, had nothing but praise for the difference the headteacher has made to the school. Parents find the headteacher and staff approachable if they have any queries or concerns. Many singled out the headteacher's commitment and energy and commented on how well their children were cared for, encouraged and supported.
- Teachers plan interesting topics across the range of subjects, to capture and interest pupils from the start. This provides a broad and balanced experience for pupils with visits, visitors and special events creating memorable moments as topics build to their conclusion. Pupils benefit from a wide range of clubs, considering the size of the school, including curling, debating and street dance, and have the chance to learn a range of musical instruments.
- The curriculum and ethos of the school supports pupils' personal, social and moral development well. Staff foster good relationships and this is reflected in pupils' demeanour, their respect for others and their good behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility as learners and to be proactive in their support for the school and wider community to help them develop as responsible and tolerant citizens of the future.

- The additional funding for physical education and sports is put to good use. As a result of additional resources, coaching and sporting clubs, the pupils' engagement in physical education and sports opportunities has increased. Pupils enjoy taking part in fun and competitive activities and delight in their achievements. This was clearly evident during the sports day, which took place during the inspection.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors have limited knowledge of the school's work. They are over-reliant on the information provided to them by the headteacher and do not have a well-established approach to find out about the school's work for themselves.
 - Governors assure themselves that arrangements for managing teachers' performance follow the relevant guidance. They question decisions concerning teachers' pay awards to check these are warranted but their views are not based on a secure enough awareness of the quality of teaching and its impact.
 - Governors have benefited from regular training from the local authority during this year. They have developed an action plan to strengthen governance and have set up improved arrangements for finding out about the school's work. However, their ability to ask pertinent questions and to provide the right degree of challenge is still at an early stage. Governors know that writing is a weaker area for pupils, for example, but they have provided little challenge for senior and middle leaders to check how successfully it is improving. Similarly, governors have limited knowledge of how disadvantaged pupils benefit from the additional government funding that has been provided for this group of pupils over recent years.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Pupils' safety and well-being has high priority. Pupils and families are known well to the school's leaders and staff. Pupils who are encountering situations which make them vulnerable are supported well. The senior leaders liaise closely with other agencies, as necessary. The required training takes place to make sure that staff are conversant with the school's procedures. New members of staff are briefed promptly on safeguarding after appointment. Most staff who were asked during the inspection knew exactly what to do if they had to put the school's policy and procedures into practice. However, some teaching assistants are not entirely sure who they should tell, what they should and should not ask pupils and what they should record if a safeguarding concern should arise.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment **requires improvement**

- Teaching lower down the school is not as strong as it is higher up. In key stage 1, some pupils are still having to make up lost ground following their slower progress last year.
- Writing is not yet taught consistently well. The teachers' expectations vary between classes. The most able pupils in key stage 1 do not have enough opportunity to work at a level that is suitable for their abilities, across different types of writing. In contrast, higher up the school, pupils develop their writing skills and prowess much more securely. Here, pupils learn the technical and stylistic skills they need to write different pieces of work. Pupils talk knowledgeably about different features of their writing and what makes different writing more successful. They have plenty of practice and are being given support and encouragement to become good writers.
- The teaching of phonics requires improvement. Leaders have identified this aspect of English as an area for improvement in the school's action plan, which shows training has been provided this year. This, however, has had limited impact. Results in the phonics check, for pupils in Year 1, are likely to remain below average. Planning for phonics is not based closely enough on the gaps in pupils' learning and does not take enough account of the range of ability in each class, particularly in the two mixed-age classes lower down the school. Pupils who struggle to spell and write words are sometimes given tasks that are too hard for them.
- Teachers foster a positive atmosphere for learning in their classrooms. Pupils are encouraged to concentrate, work hard and support one another as they learn. Any changes in activity are managed efficiently by teachers to make the best use of the time available. Pupils respond well to teachers' expectations, moving between activities without fuss.
- Teaching assistants, in most cases, provide strong support for small groups of pupils. They make a marked difference to pupils' learning, reflecting the teacher's main focus for the lesson through asking carefully worded questions. However, not all of them are sufficiently well trained to teach phonics effectively.

- The leaders' work to develop a more consistent approach to how pupils' work is assessed is paying off. In most cases, pupils are given helpful and often very specific advice on how to improve their work. Where this is particularly effective, pupils talk in a mature way about how they are honing their skills and getting better at, for example, mathematics or writing.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- This is a school where pupils' welfare has a high priority. Pupils are supported effectively. They are known well as individuals and feel safe.
- Teachers keep in touch with parents, and parents appreciate teachers' willingness to be available if any concerns arise. Parents know that any worries they have about their child's happiness, welfare or work can be brought to the teachers', or the senior leaders', attention and that they will listen. This aspect of the school's work was singled out by many parents as a real strength.
- Pupils take pride in their work and seek to do well. Older pupils who have been working on producing neat handwriting show a keenness and determination to progress to the stage when they are permitted to use pens, seeing this as a significant achievement on their part.
- Pupils have a clear awareness of ways they should keep themselves safe when outside school and, for example, when using the internet. They talk confidently about how they should use passwords and protect this sort of information from potential misuse.
- Pupils' attendance has fallen below average since the previous inspection, particularly for the pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. This year, leaders and teachers have taken steps to improve attendance rates, which are beginning to pick up. There is further to go before attendance overall, and for disadvantaged pupils, reaches at least average.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are respectful of one another and adults. They behave well in lessons, around the school and in the playground.
- Pupils who spoke to the inspector held the view that other pupils behaved well. They were positive about the friendly atmosphere in the school and this was echoed by the large majority of the parents who completed the online questionnaires and/or added comments.
- Pupils form good relationships with one another and with adults. They are helpful and support each other in lessons, when learning is under way. Instances of any misbehaviour are rare because teachers are quick to remind pupils of the school's policy if they start to slip up.
- Pupils report there is very little bullying in the school and are confident that any unkindness is dealt with quickly by staff. They feel they can go to anyone with any worries, not just their teachers, and that they will be listened to and helped.

Outcomes for pupils require improvement

- This is a school where pupils' outcomes are improving. Last year, results at Year 6 showed significant improvement and these pupils left the school with above-average attainment for the first time since the previous inspection.
- Weaker teaching has been tackled successfully and pupils are now making better progress, especially higher up the school. Pupils' progress is not yet consistent enough, however, to be judged good.
- The two main reasons why outcomes require improvement are, firstly, slower progress in phonics in key stage 1 and, secondly, inconsistent progress in writing in some classes, particularly for the most able pupils. In some classes, pupils who are capable of writing several sentences or paragraphs, depending upon their abilities, are not routinely expected to do so.
- Pupils' knowledge of phonics has been identified as a weaker aspect by senior and middle leaders but is not picking up quickly. Over the last two years, pupils' results in the Year 1 phonics check have been below average and the school's information for this year's pupils shows a similar picture.

- In mathematics, pupils' books show a range of work across different aspects of mathematics with good attention to developing their understanding of number. On occasions, pupils have limited opportunities to work in depth on mathematical concepts to develop a thorough, secure understanding before they move on to a different aspect of mathematics.
- At Year 6, last year, the gap between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally closed in reading and mathematics but not as much in writing. This remains a weaker aspect of pupils' outcomes.

Early years provision

requires improvement

- Children enter the school with varying skills and experiences that are broadly typical for their age. Some need particular help with their personal, social and emotional development and adults make sure these children are nurtured and supported. Children leave the Reception Year appropriately prepared for Year 1, with broadly average attainment.
- Children are confident to make choices and many persevere with the activities they have chosen. The outside area has been developed during the year to provide a suitable range of activities across different areas of learning. At times, when adults are involved in direct teaching with the Year 1 pupils in the class, children in Reception are left for prolonged periods with limited adult interaction. Opportunities are therefore missed to engage children in conversation to develop their communication and deepen their learning.
- The school's approach is to keep all recorded evidence of children's progress in their learning journals. These include evidence across the different areas of learning but contain insufficient evidence to support children's progress in writing and mathematics. This applies for both most-able pupils and those from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Leaders identified weaknesses in how phonics had been taught over the last year and first part of this year. Consequently, children are still catching up after their slow start. Phonics sessions happen on a daily basis and children's understanding is improving. However, some children struggle to work out the sounds they need when writing words and tend to give up easily, resorting to asking an adult to help them. When children are taught phonics together, as a group, the planned task is sometimes too hard for the children who are behind where they should be.
- Children learn and explore in a safe and happy environment. Adults are attentive to pupils' welfare and safety and provide sensitive support for individual children. They show children, through their own example, how to form good relationships and be understanding of one another. Children behave well and move around the classroom and outdoor area sensibly and safely. They form positive relationships with one another and show they are interested in learning. Many happily sustain their concentration on the activity they have chosen.
- Parents are happy with the provision in Reception. They feel well informed and comfortable about coming in to school and talking to the teacher if they have any queries or difficulties. As in the rest of the school, they are encouraged to approach teachers informally should they need to do so.

School details

Unique reference number	126035
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10012312

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	135
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Margaret Heaney
Headteacher	Sharon Reynolds
Telephone number	01903 782188
Website	www.stwilfridsangmering.co.uk
Email address	office@st-wilfrids-angmering.w-sussex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21–22 May 2014

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than average. It is one of a Deanery group of schools comprising one secondary and five primary schools.
- Pupils are taught in four mixed-age classes between Reception and Year 5 and in a separate class for pupils in Year 6.
- The school receives support from a teaching school alliance and works closely with schools in the locality.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed lessons, looked at pupils' books in all classes and at evidence of children's work in the early years. The headteacher and inspector carried out a joint observation of phonics.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, teachers who have leadership responsibilities, governors, a representative from the local authority and a representative from the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton.
- The inspector talked to pupils and staff informally and met a number of parents who visited the school during the inspection. Their views were taken into account along with the 37 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, over 30 written comments submitted by parents and staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Margaret Dickinson, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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