

Emmanuel School

36 Wolverhampton Road, Walsall, West Midlands WS2 8PR

Inspection dates

11–13 July 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	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Senior leaders and governors are not improving the quality of education quickly enough.
- The headteacher and governors have not secured the improvements necessary since the last inspection to ensure that teaching, learning and leadership are consistently good.
- Pupils are not making the best possible progress because teachers' expectations and the level of challenge are not consistently high. Pupils' progress slows when activities are not properly matched to pupils' capabilities.
- The monitoring and evaluation of the school's work and the tracking of pupils' progress are insufficiently rigorous. School improvement planning is not sharp enough.
- Teachers have not had sufficient training to improve their teaching and leadership skills or to establish a common understanding of what a good school looks like.
- Pupils do not take enough pride in the presentation of their work. Low-level disruption is not eradicated rapidly. A number of pupils do not come to school on time.
- Leadership and teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes are not ensuring good learning outcomes. Outdoor activities are undemanding and often lack focus, and this hinders children's progress.

The school has the following strengths

- Christian values and principles permeate all aspects of school life. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- Pupils enjoy school. They are very well cared for. Relationships between adults and pupils and between the pupils themselves are excellent.
- The headteacher and governors have ensured that all independent school standards are met.
- Safeguarding arrangements are rigorous and effective. The school ensures that pupils are kept safe and secure.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the leadership and management of the school by:
 - ensuring that the headteacher’s teaching workload is reduced so he can monitor and evaluate the school’s work effectively
 - developing effective monitoring procedures to properly evaluate the school’s work in order that the headteacher, governors and others have an accurate view of the school’s main strengths and weaknesses
 - ensuring that pupils’ progress is tracked effectively so that pupils’ attainment and progress are known
 - ensuring that performance information is used to raise standards and to accelerate pupils’ achievement
 - developing procedures to moderate attainment and achievement effectively
 - ensuring that the governing body has the required expertise and training to fulfil its duties and responsibilities effectively
 - considering setting performance targets for all staff to improve their teaching and/or leadership skills
 - ensuring that the school improvement plan identifies the targets to be achieved to improve teaching and pupils’ attainment and progress
 - ensuring that monitoring arrangements are clearly specified in the plan
 - providing high-quality training for teachers to further develop their teaching and leadership skills
 - ensuring that pupils arrive in school on time.

- Improve teaching and learning by ensuring that:
 - teachers have high expectations and provide the necessary level of challenge to ensure that pupils achieve well in lessons and over time
 - activities are properly matched to differing pupils’ capabilities
 - teachers use the most effective methods to improve pupils’ progress, particularly in English and mathematics
 - pupils’ spelling, punctuation, handwriting and presentation skills, particularly in Years 1 to 6, are improved
 - low-level disruption in lessons is eradicated rapidly.

- Improve leadership, teaching and learning in the early years foundation stage by:
 - raising expectations of what children can achieve in Nursery and Reception
 - ensuring that outdoor activities and resources are of good quality and promote effective learning
 - enabling the early years leader to monitor and evaluate provision and its impact to identify what is working well and what must be improved
 - producing an action plan to address weaknesses, particularly in teaching, learning and leadership.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management **requires improvement**

- All independent school standards, and early years statutory requirements, are met but the school is not yet demonstrating the characteristics of a good school.
- In May 2016, governors commissioned an external review of the school's work to determine the quality of education provided and its impact on school outcomes. Prior to the review the headteacher and governors did not know the strengths and weaknesses of the school well enough. This is because they have not quality assured the school's work effectively, especially the impact of teaching, to check if pupils' progress is good enough.
- The headteacher has a heavy teaching load. He teaches around 80% of the time, leaving him little opportunity to monitor and evaluate the school's work. Governors are aware that the headteacher is teaching too much and have plans in place to reduce his teaching time next academic year, so that he can lead the school more effectively. Governors also know that they have not provided the necessary challenge and support to improve the school quickly.
- Subject and year group leaders are ensuring that schemes of work and suitable resources are used to promote learning. They are also tracking pupils' attainment appropriately and know whether individuals are working at age-related expectations or not. However, they are not evaluating the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' progress effectively and therefore cannot contribute to further school improvement.
- Staff have undergone safeguarding training to fulfil their child protection and 'Prevent' duties effectively. Some teachers have visited other schools to see good practice, but this has not always had an impact on improving provision back in school. A lack of well-targeted professional development has meant there is no common understanding of what good teaching, learning and leadership looks like.
- Parents are very supportive of the school's work and most would recommend the school to others. However, there are a minority of parents who believe that teaching, behaviour and their child's progress could be better.
- The curriculum is suitably broad and balanced and covers all of the required areas of learning. However, it does not ensure that pupils make consistently good progress academically. The 20/20 initiative is an innovative approach that successfully develops older pupils' talents, skills and creativity in music, sport, art and drama. Pupils really enjoy pursuing their interests and improving their academic and personal skills by working with specialists in subjects in which they excel. Plenty of enrichment opportunities are provided in school and beyond that broaden pupils' experiences. For example, there has been a visit to Parliament to meet a local MP; a trip to Bulgaria to work with orphans; and culture days where pupils gain an understanding of lifestyles different to their own. Careers guidance is impartial and up to date.
- The headteacher has taken action to address the recommendations identified in the last inspection report. For example, schemes of work are of better quality and they now specify the content to be taught. Lesson planning has improved but its quality is inconsistent.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The memorisation of passages from the Bible, daily prayer and a Christian ethos that permeates all aspects of school life, equip pupils with a set of values and principles which inform their perspective on life and behaviour. From a young age pupils are encouraged to know right from wrong; and to show initiative and respect for the rule of law. As a result, pupils have a positive outlook on life and are self-confident. The curriculum promotes a good understanding of British values and positively prepares pupils for life in modern Britain.
- Staff morale is high and people enjoy working in the school. Staff judge that they are treated fairly and equally and leadership is considerate of their well-being.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors have not held school leaders and staff rigorously to account for school outcomes.
 - Governors ensure the school lives within its means. Balancing the budget is a struggle. All teachers are paid a standard rate for a day's work and no bonuses are paid for effective work.
 - No targets are set for the headteacher or staff to bring about further improvement in their performance.
 - Governors have undergone safeguarding training but have not kept themselves abreast of developments in education and inspection. They recognise that they have not had sufficient training and do not yet have the expertise to improve the quality of education provided rapidly.
 - Governors are delivering a Christian education that impacts very well on pupils' spiritual and personal development.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

requires improvement

- There is a lack of consistency in the quality of teaching which means that pupils, including those with special needs and the most able, do not make consistently good progress as they move through the school.
- A variety of methods are used to assess what pupils know, understand and can do. For example, the school uses standardised tests, end of unit assessments, mock examinations and external examinations. However, teachers do not make best use of the information gained from assessment to ensure that work is matched to pupils' differing capabilities. There is no overall moderation of standards and progress to secure the judgements made about attainment and achievement.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is sound and they teach concepts securely. While planning has improved, and lesson objectives are much more explicit, teachers do not always use the most effective teaching methods to move learning on quickly.
- Teachers do not have consistently high expectations and do not routinely provide the necessary level of challenge so that pupils make good gains in their learning in lessons and over time. Behaviour management could be better. Low-level disruption is not eradicated quickly on the limited number of occasions that it occurs.
- Teaching in the early years requires improvement. Learning indoors is better than outside, because it is more focused and activities are more demanding and purposeful. Outdoor learning lacks challenge and interest and does not promote progress in all areas of learning. Resources outside are not good enough.
- Pupils' reading skills are developing well in Years 2 and 6. The most able pupils read with fluency and expression and their attainment is above average. Teachers in Years 2 and 6 are not ensuring that less able readers are heard to read regularly in school and at home. Year 2 pupils' knowledge of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) is developing well. Younger pupils are able to use phonics to suitably decode unfamiliar words.
- Pupils' writing skills are developing well in Year 10, where pupils are given plenty of opportunities to write at length. The most able are encouraged to think more deeply, thereby improving the complexity of the vocabulary used. The most able in Year 2 are writing to a good standard and they use a good variety of sentence structures and vocabulary when writing. Year 2 pupils can form their letters correctly and are starting to use joined handwriting. The less able in this year are not punctuating their sentences effectively. Pupils' writing skills in Years 5 and 6 are not developing quickly enough. Not enough attention is paid to rectifying weaknesses in spelling and punctuation and poor handwriting. Year 6 pupils are not writing at length to build up their writing stamina and to further improve their writing skills.
- Presentation and layout of work are not good enough across the school.
- Pupils' mathematical skills are developing at a good rate in Year 10 because mathematics and statistics are taught effectively. Work is demanding and pupils, particularly the most able, are being stretched. Year 6 pupils engage in problem-solving work but work scrutiny reveals that there are too few opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding in other contexts. In Year 2 there is too much unfinished or incomplete mathematics work. The overuse of worksheets restricts opportunities for pupils to record and lay out work independently.
- Feedback given to pupils is in line with the school's guidance.
- There are strengths in teaching. Good relationships exist between teachers and pupils and between the pupils themselves. These good relationships promote a positive learning environment.
- While finances are very tight, pupils have sufficient teaching equipment and resources to support their learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are happy and enjoy school life. They are safe and secure. They particularly like being part of a Christian community where they can be themselves, and can express their faith without being subject to harassment and discrimination.
- Most pupils are confident learners and are keen to succeed. They have generally positive attitudes to learning. Their spiritual, social and emotional well-being is particularly well provided for.

- Racial harmony is an important strength. Relationships between adults and pupils from various ethnic backgrounds are excellent. Pupils get on well with their teachers, who care for them very well.
- Excellent work has been done with older pupils to tackle discrimination and promote tolerance. For example, staff tackle sensitive subjects such as sexual orientation, gender and race issues via biblical and personal perspectives.
- Recruitment and staff vetting arrangements are robust. The school is alert to the dangers of radicalisation and leaders have appropriate systems in place to respond to concerns, should they arise.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils take pride in their appearance but too many do not take pride in their work. Work is not well presented in some classes and some files and reading records are scruffy.
- Bullying is rare. Records show that when it does occur it is dealt with effectively in line with the school's anti-bullying policy. Pupils have a good understanding of the different forms that bullying can take, including, for example, online and prejudice-based bullying.
- Low-level disruption is not regular but it does slow pupils' progress when it occurs. It tends to happen when work lacks challenge or activities are not well organised. Disruption is not 'nipped in the bud' quickly enough.
- This academic year there have been six fixed-term exclusions and two permanent exclusions for incidents of serious misbehaviour. The number of exclusions is high for a school of this size.
- A minority of parents and pupils do not think behaviour is good.
- Pupils come to school regularly but a significant minority do not do so on time.
- The school is calm and orderly and pupils show respect for adults and each other.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Pupils enter school with knowledge, skills and understanding typical for their age. As they move through the school, pupils' progress is inconsistent. They make good progress in some subjects and years, but not others.
- Overall, pupils' personal development and well-being are effectively provided for. However, their academic development should be better. Most pupils do not achieve as well as they could.
- Pupils' progress this academic year, particularly in English and mathematics, is too variable. For example, Year 2 pupils are making good progress in reading but in mathematics most are not making the progress of which they are capable. There is also inconsistency in pupils' progress within a subject. For example, half of Year 6 pupils have made good progress in mathematics this year but half have not. In writing, not enough Year 6 pupils have made good progress. In mathematics in Years 7, 8 and 9, pupils' progress has been average rather than good.
- Children in the early years do not make good progress in all areas of learning. They enter Nursery with basic skills that are typical for their age and leave at age-related expectation overall.
- Data shows that pupils' progress over time is inconsistent. For instance, most pupils currently in Year 11 have made good progress in science, mathematics and statistics but average progress in English, history and music.
- There are year groups and subjects where pupils have made good progress this academic year. For example, Year 2 pupils are making good progress in reading and good progress in mathematics in Year 4. Pupils are making good progress in mathematics and statistics in Years 10 and 11.
- The school has very few pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and none that are classified as disadvantaged. There are too few pupils with special needs and or/ disabilities to reliably judge outcomes.
- The number of pupils in each year group is small. Therefore, there are significant fluctuations in the standards reached, particularly at the end of Reception, and in Years 2, 6 and 11. For example, in 2015, 78% of pupils attained five GCSE A* to C grades, including English and mathematics, which was above the national average. In 2016, the percentage reaching this threshold is predicted to be 50%, which is slightly below average, compared to the 2015 result. Data shows that the longer secondary pupils are in school, the more their attainment improves.

Early years provision

requires improvement

- The school meets the independent school standards, and statutory welfare requirements for the early years, effectively.
- Children enter Nursery with basic skills that are typical for their age. They make the progress that is expected and enter Year 1 with the knowledge, skills and understanding appropriate for their age.
- Indoors, children in the Nursery and Reception classes engage well with the activities provided. An appropriate balance is struck between activities led by adults and tasks that children choose for themselves. However, adult expectations and the challenge of work are not consistently high and children do not make the progress of which they are capable. When the pace of learning slows and time is not used productively, children do not focus on their work and become restless.
- The outdoor learning environment is too basic and lacks stimulating equipment and resources. Learning done indoors is not consolidated and extended sufficiently well outdoors. Adults do not intervene effectively to move learning on.
- Children's conduct is good. They have generally positive attitudes to learning. Children listen to adults, follow instructions and cooperate well with each other, for example by taking turns and helping tidy up after activities.
- The leader of the early years does not have a good enough understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. Self-evaluation is not embedded as part of the team's work and does not lead to planning for improvement in a coherent and systematic way. There is no strategic plan to improve provision and its impact.
- The early years leader has received some suitable support from a local school improvement officer to successfully improve the tracking of children's performance. Children are set appropriate targets to improve their basic skills.
- Staff ensure that children are kept safe and secure. For example, children are well supervised at all times and the learning environment is free of hazards.

School details

Unique reference number	130323
Inspection number	10012980
DfE registration number	335/6009

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Christian
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	150
Number of part-time pupils	15
Proprietor	Company Directors Trustees
Chair	Colin McKane
Headteacher	Jonathan Swain
Annual fees (day pupils)	£3,204
Telephone number	01922 635 810
Email address	office@emmanuel.walsall.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	3–6 June 2013

Information about this school

- The school is a small independent Christian day school that is affiliated to the Christian Schools' Trust, whose aims it supports. Nearly all of the current pupils are from Christian families. However, the school will admit pupils of a different faith, or no faith, providing parents agree with the school's Christian ethos and biblical teaching.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school has increased the ethnic and cultural diversity of its pupil population in recent years. Half the pupils are Black, either of African or Caribbean heritage; around a third are White British; and the rest are from a variety of backgrounds, including some of Asian and Chinese origin. A few pupils are of mixed heritage.
- The governing body has increased in size this academic year.
- The school opened in 1996 and moved to its current premises in September 2011. The school rents accommodation from an Afro-Caribbean Centre, which shares the same site.
- The school is organised into three sections: the early years (Nursery and Reception); the primary department (Years 1 to 6); and the senior school (Years 7 to 11).
- The last school inspection was in June 2013. The inspection was conducted by the Bridge Schools Inspectorate.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons and evaluated learning in a range of subjects in all years, except Year 11. Year 11 pupils had left the school following their examinations. The inspection was conducted in the last week of the summer term when a number of school events were happening that led to the normal school timetable not being followed.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, school manager, leader in charge of the early years and the chair of the governing body and two governors. Inspectors evaluated 16 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils formally and informally, to seek their views about school life. They listened to pupils read in Years 2 and 6, attended assemblies and house groups and evaluated a range of work in books. The lead inspector attended a celebration of the school's work on the evening of the first day of the inspection.
- A wide range of documentation was scrutinised to check compliance with the independent school standards. Inspectors looked at the school improvement plan, the school's evaluation of its own effectiveness, behaviour and attendance information and data relating to pupils' attainment and progress. Inspectors also checked the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding arrangements.
- Inspectors took into account the 30 responses to Ofsted's online parent questionnaire, Parent View. They also considered the 52 pupil responses to Ofsted's point-in-time survey.

Inspection team

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Ofsted Inspector

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Ofsted Inspector

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