

# St Monica Primary School

Bay Road, Sholing, Southampton, Hampshire SO19 8EZ

## Inspection dates

28–29 March 2017

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
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders do not provide pupils with a good education.
- The quality of leadership across the school is inconsistent. Not all leaders have a positive impact on teaching and learning.
- Leaders do not always provide governors with information that is clear, helpful or accurate.
- Teaching is inconsistent. Expectations of pupils vary across different year groups. Some learning is too easy or too difficult.
- Learning is not well planned across the curriculum, particularly in key stage 1. Too many learning experiences in subjects such as geography, science and art do not enable pupils to make good progress.
- Governors are not effective. They do not use information well enough to challenge leaders. Governors are not always clear about what their role is and is not.
- Pupils do not make consistently good progress. In some year groups, pupils, including the most able, those who are disadvantaged and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress. In others, they do not.
- Not enough pupils come to school regularly, including those who are disadvantaged.
- Children in the early years do not get the best start to school that they could. Teaching is inconsistent. Adults do not provide enough stimulating learning opportunities.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils' behaviour is good. Classrooms are calm and purposeful places to learn. Pupils are polite, courteous and respectful.
- Leaders know their school. They have a thorough understanding of what is not good enough. Plans for improvement are clear but they have not had time to have an impact.
- Safeguarding is effective. Leaders have a wide range of effective processes and procedures to ensure that pupils are safe. Leaders have thought very carefully about the two sites that the school occupies. As a result, systems to ensure that staff, pupils and visitors sign in and out as they move between the sites are highly effective.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - governors use what they know and understand about the school to effectively hold leaders to account
  - all leaders have a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning.
- Improve the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes by ensuring that:
  - all teachers have high expectations of pupils
  - pupils are given interesting and stimulating learning experiences across the curriculum, particularly in key stage 1
  - planned learning takes account of pupils' starting points, so that work is not too easy or too difficult
  - pupils in all year groups make good progress from their starting points.
- Improve the early years by:
  - providing children with exciting and stimulating learning experiences
  - ensuring that planned learning builds on what children know and can do, particularly in mathematics.
- Ensure that more pupils come to school regularly and that fewer pupils are persistently absent.

An external review of governance should be taken 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

- Leaders do not provide a good education for pupils. Inconsistent teaching across year groups means that too many pupils are not making good progress.
- Senior leaders know where the most effective and least effective teaching is in the school. Over time, leaders have taken clear and decisive action when staff have not performed well enough. Current plans to further improve teaching are clear but have not yet had sufficient impact.
- Some leaders are having a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning. They know what is working well in their phase of the school and are clear about the improvements required. These leaders provide detailed individual support to improve the work of teachers in their teams. However, some leaders are less effective.
- Leaders have not acted quickly enough to improve pupils' attendance. As a result, pupils' attendance levels have not improved. Information provided to governors is not always clear enough about the attendance of groups of pupils compared to other pupils nationally.
- Pupil premium funding is not used as effectively as it could be. The progress of disadvantaged pupils, compared to other pupils nationally, has improved over time. However, for current disadvantaged pupils, progress is inconsistent because the quality of teaching is too variable. Leaders do not always provide governors with clear and accurate information. Too many disadvantaged pupils do not come to school often enough.
- Leaders do not use funding to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities as effectively as they could. Interventions to support pupils' progress are not always well tracked. Inconsistent teaching means that some pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress and others do not.
- Pupils, parents, staff and the local authority all value the work of the headteacher.
- The local authority has provided invaluable support and challenge to school leaders. Local authority officers have been rigorous in testing out what leaders tell them about the school. As a result, leaders have been well supported to form an accurate view about what the school does well and what it does not.
- Leaders conduct themselves with integrity and transparency. They work with a wide range of other schools and welcome additional support. Leaders regularly take staff and pupils' work to other schools. They report back with candour to governors about what other schools are doing better.
- The additional physical education and sports funding is used well. Pupils participate in a wide range of competitive sports. Leaders use the school's website effectively to celebrate the participation and achievements of individuals and teams.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. However, subjects other than English and mathematics are not always well taught. Extra-curricular activities are a strength of the school. Pupils get a weekly opportunity to attend the 'University of St Monica'. Staff provide pupils with a wide variety of learning opportunities that enrich their personal

development and welfare. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about the cookery, first aid and birdwatching activities they undertake.

- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is effective. Pupils know and understand the school's values. They show care towards each other and their school environment.
- Leaders and staff teach pupils about respect and tolerance and model these virtues themselves. Pupils play a significant role in the leadership of the school. Consequently, pupils get many opportunities to see democracy in action through the various elections that are held. Older pupils join leadership and governing body meetings and get appropriate first-hand experience of how adults make decisions. As a result, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governance is not effective. Governors over time have not understood their roles well enough. They have not always been clear about the purpose behind their visits to the school. As a result, they have not used what they have seen first-hand to question leaders effectively.
- Governors do not know their school well enough because they are unclear about what published information is telling them about pupils' progress. Too often, governors think about the progress of disadvantaged pupils compared to other pupils in the school, rather than compared to pupils nationally with the same starting points. Consequently, when leaders provide governors with information, governors cannot and do not challenge them.
- The membership of the governing body is changing. New governors receive valuable external training to help them understand their roles and responsibilities. Governors are ambitious for their school and know which aspects require improvement.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders prioritise the safety and well-being of pupils. Older pupils habitually sign in and out of the school's buildings as they move between 'Endeavour' and 'Inspire'. Procedures for the signing in and out of staff and visitors are equally robust. Pupils are sensible and responsible when they travel, with supervision, between sites.
- Leaders keep detailed records of any concerns about pupils' safety and well-being. They diligently capture the decisions they make regarding the information they receive. Leaders work well with other agencies, including the local authority. Leaders are not afraid to be clear and forthright with others about what they believe to be the right course of action.
- Staff and parents feel that pupils are safe, and pupils say that they feel safe in school.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- Teachers have inconsistent expectations of pupils. Where expectations are high, pupils take great pride in their work and their learning. However, in some year groups, teachers do not use the school's clear non-negotiable rules well enough to raise standards in presentation.
- Teachers do not always use what they know about pupils' prior learning well enough. In some effective classrooms, teachers ensure that the work is not too easy or too difficult. Pupils who are not working within age-related expectations are supported well. Teachers break learning into small steps and help pupils sequence their thinking or go back to concepts that they should have learned in previous year groups. However, in some year groups, the planned learning is too challenging or not challenging enough.
- Other adults in classrooms are not always as effective as they could be. Some adults are clear about their role and support pupils' learning well. Some do not support well enough because they do not have the subject-specific knowledge they require.
- Teachers with good subject knowledge are very clear with pupils about what they are learning and why. However, not all teachers have good enough subject knowledge.
- The teaching of mathematics is not as effective as it should be. A recent whole-school focus on developing pupils' reasoning skills is beginning to have a positive impact. Teachers are clear about the skills that they want to develop, and plan learning based on what they know pupils understand. However, this is not consistent. In some year groups, teachers do not use what they know about pupils' mathematical knowledge well enough. As a result, some work is too easy or too difficult.
- The teaching of reading is inconsistent. Some pupils read often and are working with texts that are at the appropriate level of challenge. However, some pupils are given books that are too difficult to read and this has a negative impact on their confidence and progress.
- The teaching of knowledge and skills in subjects such as art, geography and science is not always effective, particularly in key stage 1. Too often, pupils undertake uninspiring tasks that do not build on what they know and can do. Pupils are not always clear about what they are doing and why. Work in subjects other than English and mathematics is often poorly presented.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Requires improvement

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged, do not come to school often enough. Too many are persistently absent. Leaders and governors are making a concerted effort to improve pupils' attendance but they are not currently having a positive impact.
- Pupils do not always take pride in their work, particularly in subjects other than English

and mathematics, and in year groups where adults' expectations are not as high as they should be.

- Pupils take a wide range of leadership responsibilities across the school. They talk about these with great energy and pride. Pupils have been given genuine opportunities to identify improvements they wish to see in their school and then take action to put these in place.
- Relationships between leaders and parents and staff and pupils are a strength at St Monica. The most vulnerable pupils are extremely well cared for and supported when they arrive at school. Staff know pupils and families very well. As a result, adults are well equipped to ease pupils into school and ensure that they are ready to learn.
- Pupils are taught how to stay safe, including online. They are effectively supported to move between the school sites, as road safety is taught well. Pupils understand what bullying is and is not. They are clear that most pupils are kind to each other. However, pupils also say that adults are quick to sort out any problems that pupils may have.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Classrooms are purposeful places to learn. Pupils are calm and often focused on their work. Relationships between adults and pupils are warm and respectful. Occasionally, when work is too easy or too difficult, pupils can lose focus.
- Pupils move around the school and between the sites in a calm and orderly manner. Pupils are polite and courteous to visitors and each other. They understand the school's behaviour policy and feel that adults are fair.
- Parents value the approachability of staff and senior leaders. They feel that staff listen well and respond to any issues raised.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- Current pupils make inconsistent progress from their starting points. Pupils in Years 2, 5 and 6 make at least good progress, including the most able. Pupils in Years 1 and 3 have not made good progress from their starting points.
- Over time, the progress of disadvantaged pupils has improved. In 2015, disadvantaged pupils made significantly less progress from the end of key stage 1 to the end of key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2016, in reading and writing, Year 6 pupils made similar progress to other pupils nationally with the same starting points. Current disadvantaged pupils are making inconsistent progress. In some year groups, differences are diminishing quickly. In others, they are not.
- In some year groups, such as Year 5, pupils have had inconsistent teaching for many years. Leaders know this and have taken effective action to address this. As a result, pupils in Year 5 are making rapid progress to catch up.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do make consistently good progress. When expectations are high and planned learning takes account of what pupils know and can do, they make the same progress as other pupils with the

same starting points. However, in some year groups, expectations are not high enough. The impact that additional interventions are having is not always tracked well enough. As a result, some pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities who are receiving extra support do not make enough progress.

- Pupils make inconsistent progress in a range of subjects other than English and mathematics. Pupils in key stage 1 do not develop their knowledge and skills in art, science or geography well enough. Planned learning is often not stimulating and does not take account of what pupils know and can do. Consequently, pupils do not make the progress they are capable of.
- Phonics outcomes have improved over time. The proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check was similar to that found nationally in 2014, and above the national average in 2015 and 2016.

### Early years provision

### Requires improvement

- Leadership requires improvement. Over time, leaders have not looked closely enough at the quality of teaching and learning in the early years. As a result, leaders do not have an accurate view of what is working well in the Reception Year and what is not.
- Teaching and learning are inconsistent. Planned learning does not always take account of what children know and can do. Children who come to school with good levels of mathematical knowledge and understanding are given too many tasks that are too easy or repetitive or lack appeal. Assessment judgements about children's starting points are accurate. However, this information is not used well enough.
- Over time, the proportion of children who reach a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year is higher than found nationally. However, the most able children and those children who need to catch up do not make as much progress as they could in mathematics. As a result, not all children are as ready to start Year 1 as they could be.
- Children behave well, even when they finish tasks quickly or when they are asked to do things that do not interest them. Children listen to adults and each other and are eager to talk about what they are doing.
- Leaders work well with other local early years providers. Staff visit nurseries before the children start school to share assessment information. This helps ease the transition into school as staff already know the children well.
- Partnerships with parents are good. Parents are given regular opportunities to contribute to their children's assessment and learning journeys. As in the rest of the school, parents are also given opportunities to come into classrooms and look at the work that children are doing.

## School details

Unique reference number	116106
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	10024481

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	631
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Natasha Coutts and Stephen Groom
Headteacher	Kathryn Bevan-Mackie
Telephone number	023 8039 9870
Website	<a href="http://www.stmonicaprimary.co.uk/">www.stmonicaprimary.co.uk/</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:info@stmonicaprimary.co.uk">info@stmonicaprimary.co.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school met the 2016 floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- St Monica Primary opened in 2014 as a result of the closure of St Monica Junior and an expansion of St Monica Infant. The school remains on a split site. 'Inspire' is where the early years children and key stage 1 pupils are based. Key stage 2 classrooms are on the 'Endeavour' site.
- The school is more than double the size of an average-sized primary school. Each year group has three classes, apart from Reception, which has four.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is below the national average.



- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than that found nationally.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning throughout the school, often with senior leaders.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work during lessons and spoke to pupils about their learning.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders and middle leaders, members of the governing body and the local authority. Documents relating to governance were reviewed.
- Parents' views were considered through the 152 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, emails to Ofsted and in conversations with parents at the beginning of the school day. The views of staff were considered through the 55 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and through meetings.
- Pupils' views were heard through 96 responses to the pupil survey, three formal meetings with different groups of pupils and by talking to pupils around the school.
- Inspectors considered a wide range of documents, including leaders' evaluations of the school's effectiveness, improvement plans and leaders' analyses of the quality of teaching. Inspectors also evaluated information relating to pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding records and the central record of recruitment checks on staff.

## Inspection team

Mark Cole, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Kevin Parfoot	Ofsted Inspector
Kate Redman	Ofsted Inspector
Christopher Crouch	Ofsted Inspector

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