

St Luke's CofE First School

Plymouth Road North, Southcrest, Redditch, Worcestershire B97 4NU

Inspection dates

20–21 March 2018

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	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Since the last inspection and following a period of weak and inadequate teaching, standards in the school declined.
- Standards are now improving, although they still require further improvement, especially for disadvantaged pupils.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the required standard in the Year 1 phonics check has been below the national average for the past three years.
- Not all leaders make effective use of assessment information to form a strategic view of progress and attainment.
- Middle leaders do not yet have enough opportunities to share effective practice.
- Teachers do not give pupils enough challenge in reasoning and problem-solving activities to deepen their understanding of mathematics.
- Pupils do not apply the knowledge, skills and understanding they already have well enough in mathematics, especially in key stage 2.
- Teachers do not have high enough expectations for pupils' spelling, handwriting and presentation.
- Although governors know the context of the school well, currently, they do not have a shared overview of all aspects of the school.
- Attendance, although improving, remains below the national average.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has an accurate view of the school. She has eradicated inadequate teaching and as a result standards are now improving.
- Leaders and governors are aspirational for the future of the school and are well placed to drive further improvements.
- Most parents and carers are very supportive of the school. They appreciate the community feel of the school and say their views are heard.
- The culture of safeguarding is a strength. Effective policies and procedures ensure that pupils are safe and well looked after.
- Pupils are well behaved. They work hard in lessons and enjoy their learning.
- The provision in early years meets the needs of pupils well. As a result, children are now making good progress.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further accelerate pupils' progress so that attainment rises quickly by the end of key stage 1 for all pupils, but especially for disadvantaged pupils.
- Continue to address the low standards in phonics.
- Further improve leadership and management, ensuring that:
 - all leaders make more effective use of assessment information so that they have a strategic view of progress and attainment for all groups of pupils
 - governors gather and share their knowledge about the school more effectively with each other
 - middle leaders share best practice so that teaching continues to improve
 - leaders continue to tackle attendance so that it further improves towards the national average.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that teaching is consistently good or better by ensuring that:
 - teachers provide pupils with greater challenge in reasoning and problem-solving activities to deepen their understanding in mathematics
 - pupils become more fluent in mathematics by applying the skills, knowledge and understanding they already have
 - teachers have consistently high expectations for pupils' handwriting, presentation and spelling.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Since her appointment in 2015, the headteacher has worked hard to address inadequacies in teaching and to strengthen the leadership of the school. She has developed the skills of existing leaders so that they are now more strategic, but there is still work to do. Some leaders do not use assessment information well enough to provide them with a strategic view of the impact of their work. Other leaders are very new to school and it is too early to evaluate the impact of their actions.
- The new leadership team has only recently re-established themselves and as yet, middle leaders do not have enough opportunities to influence the practice of others. Senior leaders have plans in place to develop this further in the summer term.
- During the inspection, the school's arrangements for the part-time education of some pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities raised concerns, because they are not in school for part of the week. However, this has now been addressed.
- Although the use of pupil premium funding is carefully planned, the evaluation of its impact was previously not sharp enough. This year, there are clearer targets and specific measurable outcomes in place so that leaders can check the difference it is making. Leaders now monitor the progress of disadvantaged pupils more closely to ensure that they make better progress.
- The headteacher has an accurate and realistic view of the school. She has established clear school improvement priorities with specific actions to improve outcomes. There is a newly established leadership team. Together, they are clear about the work that needs to be done to further improve the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' progress and attainment. There are growing changes in the school and, as a result, standards are beginning to improve.
- Leaders monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning through formal lesson observations, work trawls and 'drop-ins' to lessons. Teachers and pupils receive action points and leaders follow them up in a timely manner. The headteacher shares her high expectations with leaders and teachers and holds them to account. She has eradicated inadequate teaching and challenges any underperformance so that the quality of teaching is now much better and is continuing to improve.
- During the inspection, a small number of parents commented on the high turnover of staff but say that their children are now making better progress.
- Leaders have designed a thoughtful curriculum that meets pupils' needs well. Reading and writing are developed effectively in other subjects across the curriculum. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well supported through themes linked to the Christian values in the school such as 'choice' or 'challenge'. Pupils enjoy educational visits to enhance the curriculum such as trips to the safari park, the theatre and residential visits.
- The teaching of British values is underpinned by the school's strong Christian values. Pupils learn about trust and respect and value each other's culture. They said, 'Our school is open to everyone,' and 'If everyone was the same it would be boring.' They

understand about democracy and the rule of law. They have recently learned about the suffragettes and Emmeline Pankhurst.

- The physical education (PE) and sport premium is used effectively to increase pupils' physical activity and improve the quality of teaching in PE. The school has trained its own sports coach, who supports the development of PE and school sport very well. Leaders have evaluated which pupils do not attend sports clubs and have taken positive action to involve them. A breakfast fitness club was introduced, parents' views were sought and pupils' interests were catered for. As a result, the participation of pupils who speak English as an additional language has trebled since this time last year.
- The funding for (SEN) and/or disabilities is used well. The special educational needs coordinator tracks the progress of pupils effectively and ensures that pupils receive appropriate interventions. Teachers carry out assessments of pupils' speech and language early to ensure that pupils' needs are addressed quickly.
- The local authority has provided support for self-evaluation, targeted professional development, holding staff to account and challenge around data. The school improvement adviser acknowledges the improvements the headteacher has made and the positive trajectory of the school.

Governance of the school

- Prior to January 2018, the governing body was without a chair for six months. It has been without a clerk since autumn 2016. Over the past year, governors have not been as effective in carrying out monitoring and evaluation activities as they have in the past.
- Established governors know the school well and can identify the school's strengths and weaknesses. They can discuss the actions that leaders have taken and the impact they have made. They are supportive and aspirational for the school. However, not all governors have a clear view of all aspects of the school, in particular how the PE and sport premium has been spent or its impact.
- The local authority and the diocese have recently appointed an experienced chair of governors who visits school regularly. There is now greater capacity for governors to improve and sharpen their practice.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have ensured that there is a strong culture of safeguarding in school. Procedures for the recruitment of staff and the reporting of concerns are thorough and well managed. The headteacher regularly updates staff and checks their understanding of safeguarding policy and practice. Consequently, staff have a clear understanding of what to do and where to go if they have concerns about pupils or staff.
- Leaders take prompt action when concerns are raised, including those around 'Prevent' duty and children missing in education. They escalate concerns if necessary. Leaders keep detailed safeguarding records and store them securely. Leaders involve external agencies when needed and draw on the support of the school's family support worker

to help the most vulnerable pupils and families.

- Governors are appropriately trained in safeguarding procedures. They make checks of the school's single central record and ensure that safeguarding remains a high priority.
- Pupils are clear about how they are kept safe in school. For example, they know that the gate is locked and they are not to go past a certain point on the playground. Pupils know that visitors in school should wear a badge and they know what to do in an emergency. Pupils say that they feel safe in school but if they did not, they would go to a teacher.
- Pupils learn about e-safety through the curriculum, assemblies and the e-safety group. They demonstrate a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe online and said, 'Before you tap and click, you need to think.'

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is not yet consistently good across school and therefore requires improvement.
- Pupils are not challenged enough to apply their knowledge and understanding in mathematics, especially in key stage 2. Sometimes, a challenge activity requires pupils to do more of the same, but does not check their understanding of a concept or deepen their learning. Pupils do not use the skills, knowledge and understanding they already have effectively, because teachers do not help pupils to see the links in learning clearly enough.
- Pupils' spelling, handwriting and presentation are variable and often weak because teachers do not have consistent expectations. Teachers do not model an expected standard of handwriting when teaching and when writing in pupils' books. They do not routinely address incorrect letter formation and, as a result, errors become embedded over time. Gaps in phonic knowledge results in weak spelling for some pupils. Some pupils do not spell everyday words accurately. When teachers have higher expectations, pupils demonstrate a much better standard of spelling, handwriting and presentation. Leaders know that this is an area of weakness and have already drawn up an action plan to address it.
- The teaching of phonics is well planned and teachers now track pupils' progress more carefully. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are well supported and, as a result, make good progress. On occasion, the least able pupils are not given as much help as they need or the most able are not stretched enough.
- In writing, pupils independently use their 'toolkits for writing' to help them. For example, they access resources such as word charts. Pupils know they need to remember finger spaces, capital letters and full stops. They are beginning to develop these aspects well, although some pupils are not yet secure in constructing sentences accurately.
- In key stage 1, teachers structure learning well so that pupils develop skills over time. Pupils in Year 1 understand the structure of a story and are developing their vocabulary well. For example, pupils could explain that 'the resolution in the story' was when the problem was sorted out. Pupils understood the word 'beached' in the story they were reading.

- The most able pupils in key stage 2 can write well-constructed, extended pieces of writing. Pupils use a greater range of punctuation and teachers encourage pupils to self-edit their work. Pupils are learning how to use speech marks and paragraphs correctly.
- Pupils read confidently and use their phonics well to read unfamiliar words. Weekly library sessions are used to promote reading in school and develop a greater understanding of different types of text. Pupils are encouraged to take out library books to read at home as well as their 'home readers'. Teachers read whole-class texts so that all pupils can access a wider vocabulary.
- Pupils respond well to their learning. They listen carefully and work hard in lessons. In PE, they follow instructions well, because routines are well established and teachers have high expectations for behaviour. Lessons are well organised. Pupils enjoy playing competitive games with each other and are clear about the rules.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- In lessons, pupils are focused on their learning. They know how to help themselves by making use of their learning environment and resources that the teacher provides.
- Pupils understand what bullying is and how to deal with it. They said that it was rare but they would tell an adult if it happened. Pupils say, 'St Luke's is a kind, caring place to be.' They feel safe and well looked after.
- The nurture group ensures that the youngest children and the most vulnerable pupils get the pastoral support they need. Pupils are given time, in a very small group, to develop social skills such as listening to each other and taking turns. They enjoy breakfast together and share their news. Teachers use lots of positive praise and encourage pupils to contribute. As a result, pupils are developing skills that will help them to access their learning.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well around school. They are friendly, polite and courteous. They demonstrate good manners and hold doors open.
- Despite the difficult slope of the playground, at breaktimes and lunchtimes pupils play together sensibly. They take turns playing basketball and play organised games in a zoned area with other pupils, 'the red jumpers', who are play leaders. Pupils thoroughly enjoy 'Disco Friday', when they can listen and dance to music on the playground.
- Pupils are clear about the behaviour policy and its rewards and sanctions. Incidents of behaviour are closely monitored and addressed. As a result, they have reduced at lunchtime, in particular.
- Attendance has been below the national average but has improved. Leaders take positive steps to tackle absence. They work closely with parents and external agencies

but recognise there is still work to do with specific families.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- In 2017, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 1 improved from 2016 but was still below the national average.
- Although the percentage of pupils who passed the phonics screening check has improved since 2015, it is also below the national average.
- Leaders explain these low outcomes as a result of some weak and inadequate teaching. Leaders have taken effective action and this has now been addressed. Consequently, pupils' progress and attainment has improved and pupils are now getting closer to age-related expectations.
- Books and assessment information show that current pupils are beginning to make good progress. However, to catch up with other pupils nationally, some pupils now need to make accelerated progress. This is especially true for lower-ability pupils and disadvantaged pupils.
- Leaders are continuing to improve outcomes in writing. Teachers plan a clear sequence of learning. Pupils make effective use of 'toolkits' for writing, containing resources such as word banks and finger spaces. Teachers moderate pupils' work with each other and with other schools so that they now have a better understanding of age-related expectations and their assessments are secure, especially in key stage 2.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have received additional support and training in the teaching of phonics. As a result, the teaching of phonics is now well structured and pitched appropriately. A simpler tracking system has ensured that teachers check pupils' progress more closely. Consequently, current Year 1 pupils are making better progress.
- Most pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make steady progress from their starting points and some make good progress, especially in key stage 1. The SEN coordinator ensures that pupils' needs are met and their progress is carefully tracked.
- Just under half of the pupils who speak English as an additional language are at the early acquisition or new to English stage. They are well supported. Teachers and teaching assistants pre-teach vocabulary to help them in their reading. They use language programmes to develop early language acquisition. As a result, pupils who speak English as an additional language are making good progress.

Early years provision

Good

- Children often join the Reception Year with knowledge, skills and understanding below those typical for their age. However, the current year group is more typical for their age. Children can join the school from up to 14 different Nursery settings and come with a range of different experiences.
- The early years leader has developed effective provision and well-established routines to meet the needs of children. Consequently, children are purposefully engaged in a well-organised and well-resourced environment and make good progress.

- The partnership with parents is strong. Parents come to weekly 'stay and learn' sessions. They share 'star moments' of their children's learning at home.
- Adults develop early reading, writing and mathematics skills well. They address incorrect number formation promptly in mathematics. Children make good use of their phonics skills in writing and when recording in mathematics. For example, children wrote a list of classroom objects on a chart and their measurements.
- Although the outdoor area is not easily accessed, it is managed effectively so that children have equal opportunities to take their learning outdoors. Children work well independently and play together well. In forest school, children helped each other to 'build a house'. They were clear about the rules and said, 'We don't poke sticks at people, we drag them.' They made 'log dogs' by tying ropes around logs and dragging them.
- Adults use effective questioning to move children's learning forward and promote language development. They model activities effectively so that children have a clear structure to their learning. For example, the teaching assistant lay down outside so that children could draw around her and measure the length of her body. The children recorded her measurement in 'hands', then did the same to each other.
- This year, leaders have introduced a new programme to further strengthen the teaching of phonics. This is helping children to improve outcomes in phonics by the end of Reception. A good level of development in early years is improving much closer to the national average. Moderation with the local authority and other schools confirms that teachers' assessments of children's work are secure.
- The early years leader knows children well and tracks their progress carefully. However, she does not analyse assessment information in enough depth to give her a strategic overview of strengths and areas for development.

School details

Unique reference number	116844
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10037893

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

Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	5 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	142
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Parsons
Headteacher	Mrs Elaine Pemberton
Telephone number	01527 541219
Website	www.stlukesfirst.worcs.sch.uk/
Email address	head@stlukesfirst.worcs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 January 2013

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through pupil premium funding is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is just above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is just above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in all classes, accompanied by school leaders, and looked at pupils' work.
- The inspector observed pupils on the playground and in the dining room, talked to members of the school council and groups of pupils informally, and listened to pupils read.
- Discussions were held with: the headteacher; the leaders for English, mathematics and early years; the SEN coordinator (the assistant headteacher) and the school administrator.
- The inspector met with governors and spoke to the local authority school improvement adviser by telephone.
- The inspector spoke to parents at the beginning of the school day and took into account the 17 responses to Parent View, including nine written comments. There were no responses to the staff questionnaire or the pupil survey.
- A wide range of documentation was scrutinised, including: the school's own evaluation of its performance; the school improvement plan; information on pupils' progress and attainment; records of behaviour and attendance; monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning, including records of continuing professional development; local authority monitoring reports; minutes of governing body meetings, governor monitoring reports and safeguarding information.

Inspection team

Sue Cameron, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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