

St John the Evangelist CofE Primary School

Macclesfield

Ivy Road, Macclesfield, Cheshire SK11 8QN

Inspection dates

24–25 April 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
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 good school

- The headteacher provides effective leadership. A drive and vision shared with staff and governors ensure that outcomes for pupils are improving rapidly.
- Pupils make good progress in key stage 1. Current information shows that pupils in key stage 2 are now making more rapid progress than in recent published results, particularly in mathematics and reading. Writing is improving more slowly.
- Outcomes for pupils require improvement. Until recently, pupils' progress has been too slow.
- Leaders have taken determined action to ensure that progress at key stage 2 improves.
- Funding is spent wisely to support different groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. Such pupils make good progress because of the effective support they receive.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. However, on occasion, teachers are not flexible enough in lessons to adjust activities to challenge the most able pupils and enable them to make even faster progress.
- Teaching assistants make valuable contributions to pupils' achievement. Their probing questions deepen pupils' learning.
- Pupils lack enough opportunities to produce extended pieces of writing.
- Some subject leaders do not use assessment information effectively to measure the progress pupils make in different subjects.
- The extensive curriculum provides a wealth of opportunities for pupils to gain broad knowledge and skills. It promotes fundamental British values and supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- Pupils are articulate, polite and friendly. They enjoy coming to school, where opportunities to learn abound. Behaviour is good. Pupils feel safe. There is a strong culture of safeguarding.
- Children get off to a rapid start in early years and make good progress by the end of the Reception Year.
- Parents and carers are delighted with the education their children receive. They are proud of the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To continue to improve the quality of teaching to ensure that pupils make the best possible progress by:
 - making sure that teachers set the right level of challenge in lessons to enable pupils, particularly the most able in key stage 2, to make even faster progress
 - improving pupils' progress in writing by providing more opportunities for pupils to write at length.

- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - developing the ability of some subject leaders to use assessment information to measure with greater precision pupils' progress in their subject areas
 - ensuring that leaders rigorously monitor the progress being made by groups of pupils in key stage 2, so they can enjoy continued rapid progress.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders have worked hard to improve the quality of teaching and halt the school's recent underachievement. Information about current pupils shows real improvements in pupils' progress that now need to be embedded.
- Clear, focused and determined leadership by the headteacher, ably assisted by her leadership team, has led to recent improvements in pupils' progress, particularly at key stage 2. Staff morale is high. Leaders provide essential support and challenge, and this is having a positive impact on teaching and learning.
- The headteacher and subject leaders work in close collaboration with one another. As a result, the progress pupils make is carefully tracked in some subjects, particularly science, religious education, history, computing and mathematics. Other subject leaders, who are less experienced, do not use assessment information effectively to measure the progress pupils make in their subject areas.
- Leaders implement effective accountability systems, including the management of staff performance and training. These processes are now an established part of the school's approach to improving teaching and learning. Leaders are starting to extend this approach to teaching assistants, to increase their accountability.
- School leaders are using well-considered strategies to improve the progress of all pupils, for example in the embedding of grammar, spelling and punctuation across all subjects. The implementation of a new approach to writing is improving outcomes in both reading and writing. A conscious decision to develop pupils' problem-solving skills in mathematics has also led to more rapid progress, bringing this in line with that seen nationally.
- Pupils follow a broad and balanced curriculum planned around interesting topics such as 'Happy Healthy Living' and 'Rise of the Robots'. The topics provide pupils with the opportunities to develop their skills in subjects such as design technology, art and science. Pupils enjoy a wide range of extra-curricular activities. These activities nurture pupils' interests and develop their skills well.
- The pupil-premium funding for disadvantaged pupils is used effectively. Recently improved assessment means that disadvantaged pupils are identified earlier and funds used to provide additional support. These pupils are starting to make more rapid progress as a result of the more frequent checks on the impact of interventions.
- The progress of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is carefully checked by leaders. The special educational needs coordinator uses the extra funding for such pupils to ensure that individual pupils' learning needs are met, for example by adapting resources to meet their needs. Consequently, they achieve well.
- The primary physical education and sport funding has been used successfully to widen the range of sports on offer. It has also been used to provide an additional sports

coach. Such developments have allowed pupils to develop their gross motor and hand–eye coordination skills. Pupils’ improved confidence encourages them to participate more readily in competitive sports.

- Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is interwoven throughout the curriculum and included in daily assemblies and other subject areas. Pupils have a good knowledge and respect for different cultures and religions.
- Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school and feel that communication about their children’s progress is very good. One parent spoke highly of the school for ‘turning out such rounded individuals’.
- The local authority has provided useful support since the previous inspection. Leaders continue to use these links to access additional training and support.

Governance of the school

- Governors bring to their roles a wide range of expertise and a good knowledge of the local community. They work effectively with the headteacher and other leaders to increase accountability for pupils’ progress. For example, leaders are required to submit reports to governors, who ask probing questions.
- Governors are knowledgeable about the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They visit the school to check on key aspects of the school’s performance, such as safeguarding and English.
- Governors have a clear view about the quality of teaching and the performance of the school. They understand that the progress made by pupils in key stage 2 faltered in recent years and are committed to ensuring that pupils’ progress continues to improve.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The family liaison worker is knowledgeable and works closely with other staff to ensure that pupils are kept safe.
- Staff are appropriately trained at the correct level. Leaders ensure that all staff are regularly updated regarding safeguarding and child protection issues. Staff are aware of the signs of abuse and stringently undertake their responsibilities.
- The extensive school grounds and premises are suitably secure. Systems are in place to ensure that the identity of visitors to the school is checked and verified.
- The very strong emphasis on pupils’ personal development promotes their positive attitudes and respectful behaviour. Pupils say they feel safe. All staff who completed the online questionnaire agreed that pupils are safe. A very large majority of parents also agreed that their child is safe and happy in the school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers plan pupils' learning activities effectively. Interesting and stimulating units of work, such as 'Earth Matters' that links science, history and geography, enthuse pupils. Making 'bath bombs' in science provided pupils with some happy memories.
- Teaching and support staff provide effective support for pupils of differing abilities, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. As a result pupils are making improved progress.
- Teachers ensure that pupils have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve their work. Pupils learn to improve their skills by checking their work, using support materials provided to guide their knowledge and understanding. In Years 5 and 6, pupils critiqued reports written by pupils from the previous year, following a school trip. They were unforgiving in their analysis of the work, but realised their own work had to be of a superior quality.
- Teachers and teaching assistants use questioning effectively to challenge the way pupils think. This keeps pupils interested and on task.
- Improved assessment ensures that teachers match the work they provide to pupils' needs. Overall, this is working effectively, especially for those pupils who need additional help. There is still room for the most able pupils to be challenged further and so gain a greater depth of understanding and reach higher standards. Occasionally, these pupils are supported too much in lessons.
- The teaching of mathematics is good. Teachers use their strong subject knowledge to enthuse and engage pupils and to develop their mathematical skills effectively. Problem-solving and reasoning activities enable pupils to use their mathematical skills to consider the right solution to a problem. Pupils are able to explain the reason for the method they have used and the results they have found. Many pupils say that they enjoy learning mathematics. As a result of this enjoyment, pupils try hard in mathematics.
- Teaching of basic skills of grammar, punctuation and spelling is now embedded across the wider curriculum. This reflects the success of the English leader's drive to improve this aspect of writing. An essential next step is to improve pupils' progress in writing by providing more opportunities to write at length.
- Phonics teaching supports the majority of pupils to develop effective skills to blend and segment words so that they can tackle new and unfamiliar texts. Teachers ensure that pupils develop a love of reading and provide them with a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books. Pupils extend their skills by using an online reading resource at lunchtimes and at home.
- Displays in classrooms and around the school are of a high quality. Pupils' learning is celebrated in corridors and in classrooms. Teachers refer to prompts on display as reminders to pupils to check their work and become more independent in their learning.

- Teachers encourage pupils to take responsibility for their learning. The school ethos also plays a part in this. Pupils' well-developed social skills and confidence in their learning abilities support their preparation for the next stage of their learning.
- Teachers are strengthening their practice by discussing it with each other and with colleagues in a cluster of schools.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are confident learners and well equipped for their lessons, and settle quickly to their work. They rise well to challenge and persevere even when they are finding activities a bit tricky.
- Pupils' personal development is enhanced by the roles and responsibilities the school offers them, such as being 'reading buddies' and school council members. Pupils feel appreciated as members of the school community. They play a valuable role in raising funds for charities, such as Children in Need and Save the Children, as well as the school enterprise project for Year 6 called 'Time to Change'.
- Pupils speak very positively about the clubs the school provides. These include gymnastics, reading, art, music and homework clubs, among others.
- The school has a strong ethos of respect, and pupils clearly like their teachers and other adults in the school. One boy told an inspector: 'They are the sort of teachers you can talk to if you have a problem.'
- Pupils are very reflective and understand the importance of respecting others. Pupils are secure in their understanding of British values relating to democracy and the different faiths and cultures. One comment included 'People should live their lives as they see fit. We respect that.'
- Attendance is in line with the national average. Pupils enjoy coming to school. A typical comment by a parent referred to a pupil's reluctance to miss school when they had to stay off due to ill health.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are courteous, articulate and respectful. Their conduct in classrooms, in corridors and on the playground is excellent. They have a good understanding of school systems to support their behaviour, but they are the first ones to admit they rarely need to be used.
- Leaders and staff have high expectations of behaviour and presentation. This is reflected in pupils' appearance and in their school work.
- Pupils understand about the different types of bullying and say bullying is extremely rare in school. They know how to keep safe online and leaders are quick to support parents in their drive to keep their children safe.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Leaders have driven forward changes to improve outcomes after recent underachievement. The success of this is seen in the faster progress of current pupils. However, progress in writing in key stage 2 is lagging behind that in reading and mathematics.
- The progress of middle-ability and most-able pupils at key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics was significantly below the national average in 2015 and 2016. In response to leaders' actions, there was marked improvement to pupil progress in mathematics in 2017, bringing it in line with the national average. The impact on reading and writing was much smaller.
- The refinements to the assessment system have been central to the recent improvement. The delay in bringing this about hampered accuracy in the monitoring of pupils' progress. This led to some underperformance, but changes are now having an impact on raising pupils' progress. Assessment information is now accurate. This allows leaders to track the progress of all groups of learners accurately.
- Leaders are not complacent and have put in place clear strategies to rectify aspects of the pupils' work. The achievement of middle- and higher-ability pupils in key stage 2 has improved because of leaders' and teachers' consistent drive to embed grammar, spelling and punctuation, phonics, and mathematical problem-solving.
- Data in 2017 showed that the attainment of pupils in Year 6 was in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils achieving the high standard in 2017 was also in line with the national average in reading and mathematics, but slightly lower in writing. The school's own information shows that there are increasing numbers of pupils on track to achieve the higher standard in reading and mathematics.
- Data for key stage 1 in 2017 showed that attainment was in line with the national averages both at the expected and higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics. Current information about pupils' progress shows that these standards are on track to be maintained this year.
- Current assessment information also shows that the progress of pupils in the current Year 6 is already reaching targets set by leaders in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the attainment and progress of most-able pupils in writing is not quite as rapid.
- In the current Year 6 cohort, disadvantaged pupils are making the same progress in mathematics, reading and writing as their peers.
- In most year groups, the progress gap is narrowing between disadvantaged pupils, those with SEN and/or disabilities and their peers across the range of subjects. This is linked to the levels of support they receive. Overall progress of these pupils is good.
- Leaders have ensured that pupils learn across a range of subjects. Their learning and personal development are supported by a wide range of subjects and extra-curricular activities. Pupils do particularly well across the school in science.

- The teaching of phonics is strong, with increasing numbers achieving the phonics standard year on year. In 2017, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in the phonics screening check at the end of year was above the national average.

Early years provision

Good

- Leadership and management of the early years are good. Members of the early years team plan learning opportunities based on their clear knowledge of children's needs and interests.
- Most children enter the school with levels of development similar to those typically seen. The majority of them achieve at least a good level of development by the end of Reception. In 2017, significant numbers of children exceeded the standards expected of them in reading, writing and number. This prepared them well for the transition into Year 1.
- Teachers monitor children's progress rigorously and record this accurately. Teachers have an accurate picture of children's abilities and learning needs and adapt teaching and learning opportunities skilfully to further their development.
- The well-resourced classrooms and outdoor learning area provide a wealth of opportunities for children to acquire new skills and knowledge across all areas of learning. One such opportunity observed by an inspector was when children, focusing hard on their writing task, dropped everything to dash off and look at a tadpole which had grown a leg.
- Children's behaviour is excellent. They take turns and share, playing well together with interest and enthusiasm. Songs, rhymes and poems are used well to include children in a range of learning activities. Outside is a haven for learning, with pulleys and tracks to roll objects and foam in the water play area. Boys enjoyed making a fruit salad and willingly offered it to inspectors.
- Parents are provided with opportunities to share information about their children's experiences away from school. Records celebrate the progress children make, both in school and at home.
- Safeguarding in the early years is effective. The children know how to keep themselves safe in their environment and make safe choices to manage their own well-being and health. The topic on 'Ourselves' also teaches children to be safe in school and online.

School details

Unique reference number	111331
Local authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	10042471

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	302
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Steven Raw
Headteacher	Caroline Waites
Telephone number	01625428222
Website	http://www.sjsmacc.cheshire.sch.uk
Email address	head@sjsmacc.cheshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	March 2014

Information about this school

- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and the proportion who speak English as an additional language are well below national averages.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils and the proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are below the national averages.
- In 2017, the school met the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school is a coasting school according to the Department for Education's definition based on key stage 2 academic performance results in 2015, 2016 and 2017.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all year groups. In all, 23 sections of lessons were observed, some jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors looked at pupils' work with leaders, observed the teaching of early reading skills, listened to pupils read and spoke with them to evaluate the quality of their learning. They scrutinised a variety of documents relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, pupils' attainment and progress, and staff performance. Inspectors evaluated a range of plans for improvement. They also reviewed the school's self-evaluation and documents relating to the work of the governing body.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, senior, middle and subject leaders and the coordinator for provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. They also met with designated leaders for safeguarding and members of the governing body. Discussions explored a wide range of subjects, including safeguarding arrangements.
- Inspectors spoke with parents informally at the start of the school day. They took account of the 18 responses to the staff questionnaire and the 73 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire Parent View.

Inspection team

Maggie Parker, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Joan Grant	Ofsted Inspector
Saeeda Ishaq	Ofsted Inspector

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