

# St Peter's Church of England (VA) Junior School

School Close, Greenlands Estate, Tavistock, Devon PL19 9HW

## Inspection dates

6–7 June 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- In 2017, the school did not reach the government's minimum standard for pupils' attainment and/or progress that the government expects schools to meet.
- The progress of groups of pupils, including the disadvantaged and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, continues to vary too much because of inconsistency in the quality of teaching. Too many pupils do not reach the standards they should reach.
- Expectations of pupils are inconsistent. In some classes, pupils attain well and make strong progress. In others, expectations are low and progress stalls.
- Pupils do not achieve as well as they should in mathematics. As a result, pupils' progress has been in the lowest 20% of schools nationally for the last two years.
- The teaching of writing is not consistently strong. There are weaknesses in pupils' spelling and punctuation. This limits pupils' ability to write with the technical accuracy expected for their age.
- Teachers' use of assessment information is weak. Consequently, work is not consistently well matched to pupils' needs. This prevents them from building effectively on prior knowledge, especially in writing and mathematics.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher leads the school with skill and determination. His commitment to ensure the best for every pupil is a key factor in the school's ongoing improvement.
- Governors' and leaders' decisive actions are starting to have a discernible impact on improving the standards in reading, across the school.
- The school's curriculum is well balanced. Pupils have the opportunity to learn a breadth of knowledge and skills through a range of topics.
- The behaviour of pupils is good. They work and play very supportively together. Parents and carers confirm that pupils are polite, courteous and work hard.
- Safeguarding is effective.

## Full report

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

- Improve outcomes for pupils by leaders and managers ensuring that teachers are clear on how they can best support disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- Accelerate progress for all groups of pupils by the end of key stage 2, in all subjects, by:
  - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils of all abilities should be able to achieve
  - securing greater consistency in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment
  - making sure teachers make better use of assessment information to plan work that is neither too hard, nor too easy.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- In the year following the academy conversion in July 2015, the trust did not support the school quickly enough. This has led to a delay in securing sustained improvement in the school. However, more recently, the new chief executive officer has ensured that the school is fully supported. Consequently, standards are rising.
- The headteacher's calm and ambitious vision to do the best for all of the pupils is supported fully by parents, governors and staff. One parent expressed the views of many, stating, 'I feel the school has advanced in leaps and bounds under the leadership of the current headteacher. He has recognised its faults and has acted upon them.'
- Senior leaders have taken decisive and appropriate action to improve the quality of teaching across the whole school. However, despite providing challenge and support, they have not been able to remove some inconsistencies in teaching. Consequently, the quality of teaching in the school is not consistently strong enough to help pupils overcome barriers to their learning and make good progress.
- Middle leaders are developing in their roles and playing an increasingly strategic part in the leadership of their subjects. The leaders of English and mathematics have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development in their subjects. They have used this knowledge to inform staff training, which they have led effectively, to raise teachers' skills and confidence. Inspection evidence, as well as leaders' own monitoring, shows that this training is starting to improve teachers' practice.
- Leaders have not ensured that pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress. Pupils' needs are accurately identified and external agencies provide specialist support where necessary. However, leaders have not ensured that teachers are clear on the ways they can best support the learning of pupils who have additional needs.
- Leaders make effective use of pupil premium funding to support the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and use a broad range of additional support to help pupils catch up in their learning. Leaders have evaluated which intervention strategies are the most effective and have revised their provision to make it more effective. Until recently, disadvantaged pupils had lower rates of attendance than other pupils. As a result of leaders' work, pupils are now attending more regularly. However, as a result of weak assessment, disadvantaged pupils do not reach the standards in reading, writing and mathematics of which they are capable.
- Leaders have developed a wider curriculum that is exciting and engaging. This is developing pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in a range of subjects. Leaders promote a holistic approach to child development and this is evident in pupils' learning and in the way they conduct themselves in lessons and around the school. Pupils develop their skills in science, humanities, the arts, physical education (PE) and languages. For example, in science, pupils have learned skills in chromatography to separate mixtures. Pupils also learn about performance and drama through their study of the playwright William Shakespeare.

- Leaders promote pupils' moral and social development well. School strategies aimed at building pupils' moral understanding and empathy, through Christian values, mean that pupils are aware of how to look after each other. The curriculum supports pupils' understanding of the wider world. Consequently, pupils' understanding of other cultures and world faiths is well developed.
- Leaders engage well with parents. Parents are very conscious of the recent improvements being made. They believe that their children have been, and remain, safe and happy at school. They are now confident that teaching is improving. However, some parents expressed that there is a lack of communication from the school regarding pupils' progress.

### **Governance of the school**

- The trust has a recently established and effective structure in place to support the work of school leaders. The trust applies firm challenge to leadership through its regular meetings and visits to the school. Trustees are becoming increasingly focused on measuring the impact of the school's work.
- Recent changes to the structure of the local governance has revitalised governors' ambition to provide the best experiences for pupils. As a result, governors now have a clear understanding of their roles and of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Governors understand their statutory duties. All have undertaken training to help them fulfil their roles, including for safeguarding and safer recruitment.
- Governors ensure that government funding, including the pupil premium grant and sport premium, is spent effectively.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- While the appointment process of staff is thorough, leaders and governors have overlooked some administrative aspects of safeguarding. As a result, aspects of the single central register had to be corrected during the inspection. However, apart from this element of safeguarding compliance and procedure, other aspects of safeguarding meet requirements.
- The school works with various external agencies to ensure that, where specialist support is required, or where a safeguarding concern is raised, staff respond quickly and effectively to keep pupils safe.
- Parents and pupils are given helpful information to keep pupils safe. This is through information on the school's website and opportunities for parents or pupils to talk to members of staff if they wish to share a concern.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Requires improvement**

- Teachers' planning does not take into account pupils' starting points. Where pupils have previously found something difficult, there is little attempt to help move learning on. In the same classes, pupils who have previously found the learning too easy are

not challenged sufficiently enough to promote progress. This means that teachers do not regularly challenge the middle-ability pupils to extend their thinking so that they are able to demonstrate higher levels of understanding.

- Teachers' support for those pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is not developed sufficiently to remedy historical gaps in knowledge and skills. Teaching sequences fail to consistently consider what pupils can or cannot already do. Therefore, the rate of progress that pupils make in core areas is inconsistent.
- The teaching of mathematics has not been effective. Some pupils have not grasped basic mathematical skills and so have gaps in their knowledge. Although improvements are starting to take shape, there are still inconsistencies in the approach to teaching mathematics. Some gaps in knowledge persist and pupils' progress varies too much across the school.
- The teaching of reading is developing well across the school. Pupils benefit from a strong reading culture and talk of their enjoyment of the 'Bookworm Challenge'. Pupils talk about their favourite authors and read every day in school. Consequently, the number of pupils who meet the reading expectations for their age is increasing.
- Gaps in pupils' understanding of spelling and punctuation are not addressed. This means that pupils repeat their mistakes and poor spelling is having a negative impact on the standard of their overall writing. Teachers do not insist on the high standard of which the middle-ability pupils are capable.
- There are positive relationships between teachers and pupils. As a result, pupils are keen and show a willingness to learn and help each other. There is a positive climate for learning, where pupils show enjoyment and work well together.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Staff provide a variety of experiences for pupils to explore their local cultural heritage. Pupils participate in activities to work with partners on community projects and have a well-developed understanding of their social responsibilities. Teachers use these events to enable pupils to consider and understand the experiences of people on a wider global scale. They speak enthusiastically about the many projects they have been involved in, such as projects for the Tavistock carnival and the local church.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. Teachers put an emphasis on internet safety. Pupils are taught about how to keep themselves safe when online. Pupils know not to give out personal information and to report cyber bullying should it occur.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils were adamant that there is no bullying in the school, nor any homophobic or racist name-calling. The school's records show that poor behaviour does occur but is

rare. A small minority of parents had concerns about behaviour. Evidence seen during the inspection indicates that when pupils' behaviour does not meet the high standards the school expects of them, it is followed up and dealt with appropriately.

- Leaders take assertive action to address persistent absence, having a positive effect on the attendance of identified pupils. Effective work means that attendance continues to be above the national average.
- Leaders' recording of behaviour incidents is thorough. This means that leaders can analyse trends and patterns that may help them to identify how to strengthen behaviour still further.

### **Outcomes for pupils**

### **Requires improvement**

- Pupils' progress for the last two years has been weak in reading and mathematics, particularly for the middle-prior-attaining pupils.
- By the time they leave the school, too many pupils are unready for secondary school because they have not reached the required standard in mathematics.
- Assessment information provided by the school, and work in pupils' books, suggest that current pupils, including the most able, are making stronger progress. A higher proportion of current Year 6 pupils are on track to achieve the expected standards for their age in reading, writing and mathematics than was the case in 2017.
- New approaches to teaching are starting to take hold. Consequently, pupils' attainment by the end of key stage 2 has risen. In 2017, standards in reading and writing were in line with the national average, although there remained a considerable difference between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and others. The difference in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and others remains across the school, although there are some signs of improvement.
- Pupils are given regular opportunities to write at length across the curriculum. However, fluctuating expectations of pupils have resulted in weak presentation and poor handwriting. In short, the inconsistent expectations in writing have led to poor progress over time and pupils' books vary widely in quality.

## School details

Unique reference number	142045
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10048369

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	154
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Mr Steve Tripp and Mrs Louise Barrett
Headteacher	Mr Christian Connors
Telephone number	01822 614 640
Website	<a href="http://www.tavistockcsf.org.uk">www.tavistockcsf.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@tavistockcsf.org.uk">admin@tavistockcsf.org.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards.
- The school converted to become an academy in July 2015. It is part of the St Christopher's Multi Academy Trust.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have English as an additional language is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils in receipt of the pupil premium is similar to the national average.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited classes to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across both inspection days.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, representatives of the local governing body and the chief executive officer of the academy trust. Meetings were also held with the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) and pupil premium leader, the mathematics and English subject leaders, and the school's sports leader.
- Inspectors scrutinised a number of documents, including the schools' self-evaluation, assessment information, anonymised performance management records, behaviour records and the school development plan.
- Documentation, including the school's single central record and child protection training records, was scrutinised with school leaders and staff.
- Inspectors undertook learning walks and scrutinised pupils' books to evaluate the quality of work and check the accuracy of assessment information, including for disadvantaged pupils. They also spoke with pupils to check their understanding of what is seen in workbooks.
- Inspectors spoke with children during various activities and listened to a sample of pupils read. Pupils met inspectors to talk about the curriculum and their learning.
- Inspectors observed pupils during breaktimes and at breakfast club.
- Fifty-seven responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, were taken into account. The lead inspector considered other comments, including inspectors' discussions with parents. The inspection took account of the 16 survey responses by staff.

## Inspection team

Susan Costello, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Craig Hayes

Ofsted Inspector



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