

St Peter's CofE (A) Primary School

School Lane, Caverswall, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST11 9EN

Inspection dates

28–29 June 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
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	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The headteacher and her senior team have taken effective action to tackle the weaknesses identified at the last inspection. The school is providing a better education than it was at the time of the last inspection. It still requires improvement as teaching is not yet consistent enough and pupils' outcomes remain uneven.
- Although most teaching is effective, it does not yet give all pupils enough opportunities to practise basic skills, fill gaps in their mathematical knowledge and understanding, and acquire deeper understanding of the subjects they are taught.
- Pupils' behaviour is usually good and sometimes exemplary. In very few instances, pupils talk when they should be quiet or are easily distracted.
- Pupils' progress has improved in the last two years. Reading results at the end of Year 6 rose markedly in 2017. However, across key stage 1 and key stage 2, some pupils are not yet doing as well as they should in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In key stage 2, some pupils lack confidence when calculating and solving problems in mathematics. In most instances, this is a legacy of earlier and weaker teaching.
- Pupils study a wide range of subjects in school. The curriculum is well organised and encourages links between topic work and reading, writing and mathematics. However, pupils do not practise their basic skills when doing topic work.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has made several changes to the school, including recruiting new staff, which have led to steady improvement. Senior leaders know the school's strengths and weaknesses well.
- Pupils' social and personal development is good. Most pupils have very good attitudes to learning. Pupils are cared for very well by committed and hard-working staff.
- The quality of teaching and learning in the early years is good. These children make good progress from their starting points.
- Governors are able and experienced. They are now providing effective support and challenge to school leaders.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, and disadvantaged pupils, make good progress.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Tackle unevenness in the quality of teaching so that pupils make better progress by:
 - giving pupils more opportunities to practise their basic skills, including when doing topic work
 - helping key stage 2 pupils fill any gaps in their mathematical knowledge and understanding
 - using all relevant opportunities to encourage pupils to develop greater depth in their learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher has set a clear direction for the school. She was appointed to her post shortly before the last full inspection and since then has worked steadily to improve the school. She is ambitious for the school and passionate about making sure that its pupils do well. The issues identified as needing improvement at the last inspection have been tackled with growing success, particularly in the last year.
- Changes to teaching staff, and an extensive programme of training, have been instrumental in improving teaching, learning and assessment. Some staffing difficulties remain, including those caused by absence, and this has caused delay in removing remaining inconsistencies in the quality of teaching.
- The headteacher is well supported by senior leaders. Together, they have a firm understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the school, which is shared openly with governors.
- A robust system of target-setting, for individuals as well as for aspects of the school, is linked to pupil progress data. School improvement planning is detailed. Subject leadership has improved and, although still a work in progress, it is now effective.
- The school is a positive and forward-looking community. It is founded on the values of loving Christ, loving learning and loving each other. These values abound in the day-to-day life of the school and are reflected in the excellent relationships that exist between staff and pupils.
- Parents and carers are very supportive of the school and its ambition for pupils. Communication between parents and school is frequent and valued. Reviews of how well pupils are doing occur regularly and these are shared by teachers with parents.
- Pupils study a wide curriculum. It is well organised. It gives them ample opportunities to learn about reading, writing and mathematics, including in familiar contexts. For example, they are usually taught writing in the context of the topics taught in the afternoon. This helps to deepen pupils' understanding of the topics taught although pupils do not practise basic skills enough when doing topic work. A wide range of interesting extra-curricular activities enrich pupils' experience. These include archery, golf, cheerleading, team sports and visits to educational and cultural destinations.
- Pupils with SEN and/or disabilities are provided for well and make good progress. Disadvantaged pupils are helped carefully; they do as well as other pupils. Both of these areas of the school's provision are led very well.
- Leadership of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effective. It prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- Sport premium funding is used to provide additional equipment and to support pupils in taking more exercise.
- The school has benefited from support provided by the local authority. Representatives of the local authority visit the school regularly and provide an external view of the progress being made to improve the school. This has helped to strengthen leadership, which has sufficient capacity to make further and rapid improvement.

Governance of the school

- Governance is good. An experienced and able governing body provides a good level of support and challenge to the school.
- The governing body receives regular and useful reports about the school's performance, which it uses to set direction and check on the quality of education being provided in the school.
- Governors are diligent in carrying out their responsibilities, including in relation to safeguarding. They monitor spending of additional funding, such as the sport premium, carefully.
- Governors provide useful links into the local church and wider community. They make frequent visits to the school.
- Governors oversee an established and effective approach to the performance management of staff, including the headteacher.
- Training for governors is effective and well attended. The governing body reviews its training needs regularly.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safeguarding is very well led. A strong culture of care pervades the school, which provides intensive support for any pupils who need it. Pupils feel safe and know whom to turn to if they are worried. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, in age-appropriate ways, and work safely when in lessons and online. Informative displays around the school remind pupils about how they can keep themselves safe.
- Staff are provided with relevant training, which reflects local and national needs. Staff in the school know what to do if any concerns arises. Procedures for safeguarding are robust, well understood and reviewed regularly. Communication is strong, in the school and among staff, and with external agencies. Safeguarding records are carefully and regularly checked by governors.
- The school is a safe environment for pupils. Safeguarding audits are conducted regularly. The site is secure and risk assessment is done effectively. During the inspection, building work was being undertaken in a playground but this was very well managed. All safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Although it has improved since the last inspection, the quality of teaching is not yet consistently good enough. Staffing turbulence and absence have had an impact on the rate of improvement in teaching. Weaknesses remain in developing deeper understanding and practising basic skills when writing. Earlier weaker teaching has left some pupils in key stage 2 with gaps in their mathematical knowledge and ability to reason. These pupils need greater support.

- Strong and positive relationships exist in nearly all classes. This has helped to foster a palpable enthusiasm for learning in many pupils.
- Lessons are generally organised very well. Activities for pupils are usually pitched at the right level for different pupils. A strong focus on teaching knowledge, in most subjects, is helping pupils to develop confidence. Many pupils are developing very good learning habits, including thinking about how to improve their work.
- An accurate and effective system of assessment gives leaders, governors, teachers, pupils and parents a useful framework against which to measure pupils' progress. After reviewing how well pupils are doing, most teachers regularly adjust their plans for the next lesson so that they can correct any misconceptions.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is sufficient. It has improved in mathematics as a result of an effective programme of staff training. Teachers share ideas for lessons and support each other whenever they need specific or additional advice.
- In the best lessons, teaching focuses relentlessly on helping pupils to understand what they are learning. It encourages all pupils to participate and draws on well-established routines in a calm and friendly learning environment. Where such teaching occurs, expectations of pupils are high.
- However, not all teaching makes the most of opportunities to broaden and deepen pupils' understanding. For example, pupils are taught how to improve writing by varying structure and vocabulary without understanding the impact of changes on the text or the reader.
- Moreover, some teaching does not routinely remind pupils about the need to use capital letters and full stops or insist that work is spelled and presented carefully enough. Pupils do not focus enough on these basic skills, including when writing in topic books.

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 taught to respect themselves and others from an early age.
- Pupils develop confidence and self-awareness during their time at school. They care for their environment and the school is free from litter.
- Strong relationships permeate the life of the school. Staff know individual pupils and their different needs well. This helps them to plan effectively for the welfare needs of pupils, including those whose circumstances make them vulnerable.
- Pupils with medical or other additional needs are cared for and supported effectively.
- Leaders in the school are aware of the changing needs of pupils as they develop and as circumstances alter. Pupils are helped to understand the importance of common values, including tolerance, in making our communities safe. They are taking well-judged steps to introduce a new programme to bolster the pupils' resilience and emotional well-being.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and wear their uniform with pride.
- Pupils move around the school safely. Their behaviour at break and lunchtime is very sensible. In some classes, behaviour is exemplary.
- Pupils are usually thoughtful, polite and courteous. Most are attentive in lessons. In a very few instances, pupils chatter when they are asked to work quietly or are easily distracted.
- Pupils speak very positively about the 'Griffin' points system. This rewards positive learning behaviour and helps motivate pupils to do well. Good behaviour is usually rewarded consistently, and fairly, by staff.
- Attendance levels are monitored closely. Levels of absence are broadly average. Careful checks are made on the attendance of vulnerable pupils. Exclusions are very rare.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' key stage 2 test results in mathematics were lower than they should have been in 2016 and 2017. These test results showed that pupils made insufficient progress in mathematics during their time at school.
- Pupils' results in the key stage 2 reading tests increased in 2017. Pupils' progress in reading was broadly average. This was a marked improvement on the 2016 results, when pupils made well below average progress in reading. In writing, pupils made broadly average progress in 2016 and 2017.
- The proportion of pupils achieving or exceeding the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics, by the end of key stage 1, has improved since 2016. Although broadly average proportions of pupils achieve or exceed the expected standards overall, not all higher-attaining pupils are doing as well in reading as they should be. Pupils' performance in the most recent phonics test showed that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standards is broadly average.
- Assessment information held by the school is verified through standardised testing and a system of internal checks. This information shows that pupils' outcomes are improving, but not yet consistently good enough across all year groups and subjects. In a small number of classes, pupils are not making the progress they are capable of in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In a few lessons, pupils do not write accurately enough. They make basic errors with spelling and punctuation. In mathematics, some older pupils still struggle with mathematical fluency and reasoning.
- In the other subjects taught by the school, pupils are making average progress, given their starting points. A notable feature of the school is its focus on learning how to learn, using the 'Griffin' points system. This approach helps pupils develop useful learning habits. It prepares them well for life after primary school.

Early years provision

Good

- Leadership of early years is very effective. Leaders have a well understood vision for early years. They are keen to reflect on how they can improve provision even further.
- Staff are ambitious and set high expectations for all children. Children start at the Nursery with broadly average levels of development. Good teaching and a wide range of opportunities ensure that most children are at or above the expected level in the different aspects of learning as they enter Year 1.
- Adults plan and assess learning carefully and, with few exceptions, children benefit from a range of structured play and well-organised teaching, including modelled reading, writing activities and exploration of the outdoors. Resources are varied and sufficient.
- Teachers and other staff are usually adept at knowing how much progress children are making and what they need to do next. They work together to develop best practice and to track the progress of children, including the most vulnerable. In a few instances, in the Nursery, children struggled with the instructions provided for indoor activities.
- Outdoor provision is well supervised and offers a range of stimulating activities. It allows children to be inquisitive and take risks as well as supporting more formal learning.
- Staff in the Nursery and Reception classes are well trained, including in relation to health and safety, first aid, safeguarding and statutory requirements.
- Children in early years are happy, engaged and enthused at school. Parents speak highly of the care and education given to their children. They contribute to the assessments made about their child's progress.

School details

Unique reference number	124331
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10048234

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	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	171
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs S Simcock
Headteacher	Mrs S George
Telephone number	01782 393118
Website	www.st-peters-caverswall.staffs.sch.uk/
Email address	headteacher@st-peters-caverswall.staffs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	28–19 June 2016

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school opened a new Nursery, alongside the existing Reception class, on 1 September 2017.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is similar to the national average.
- The school met the government's current floor standards in 2017. These are the minimum expectations set for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- A breakfast club is run on the school site. It is managed by the governing body.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited all of the classes in the school to observe teaching and learning.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils, and younger children in the Nursery and Reception classes, about their experiences of school. Inspectors listened to pupils read, looked in a large selection of their books, and talked to pupils about their learning. Inspectors observed pupils at play and lunchtime.
- Inspectors spoke with parents before and after school. They met with senior leaders, teachers and other staff. They met with members of the governing body and spoke to a local authority representative on the telephone.
- Inspectors looked at published information about pupils' progress and the records kept by the school. They scrutinised a range of other key documents, including those relating to keeping pupils safe.
- Inspectors took account of 33 responses to Parent View, the online Ofsted questionnaire, including 25 written comments.

Inspection team

Mike Cladingbowl, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Jo Knowles	Ofsted Inspector

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