

St Marys C of E Primary and Nursery, Academy, Handsworth

Hamstead Road, Handsworth, Birmingham, West Midlands B20 2RW

Inspection dates

3–4 July 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	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The recently appointed headteacher has a clear vision for the school. She has quickly gained an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and is addressing areas where improvements are needed.
- Leaders promote and celebrate the diversity in the local community well. Consequently, pupils have a strong appreciation of different faiths and cultures.
- Staff receive regular training and feedback to improve their teaching skills. As a result, the quality of teaching is good.
- Teachers plan lessons that interest pupils and support them to make good progress from their different starting points, including pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities.
- Children get off to a good start in the early years. Adults support them well to become confident and independent learners. As a result, children make strong progress.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They are keen to learn and they take pride in their work. Levels of persistent absence have reduced recently and are now below the national average.
- The curriculum provides interesting and relevant opportunities for pupils to develop knowledge and understanding in a wide range of subjects.
- Current disadvantaged pupils are making good progress, although a gap remains between the attainment and progress of these pupils and other pupils nationally.
- At times, there is a lack of challenge for the most able pupils. As a result, some of these pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Leaders have taken effective action to improve the teaching of reading and ensure that current pupils are making good progress. However, pupils' inference and deduction skills need further development. Teachers do not consistently address pupils' errors in writing.
- Governors have an accurate understanding of the school's performance. However, they do not hold leaders to account for pupils' outcomes rigorously enough.
- The role of middle leaders in making checks on teaching and pupils' progress in their areas of responsibility is at an early stage of development.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - developing the role of middle leaders in monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility
 - improving governors' understanding of pupils' attainment and progress so that they can hold leaders to account more rigorously.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and thereby further strengthen pupils' outcomes, by:
 - further developing pupils' higher-order reading skills, including their ability to use inference and deduction
 - giving clear feedback to pupils about how they can improve their writing, including addressing errors in grammar and punctuation so that these are not repeated
 - continuing to diminish the differences between the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in reading, writing and mathematics
 - ensuring that the most able pupils are consistently challenged to make the rapid progress of which they are capable, particularly in key stage 2.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher has evaluated the school's strengths and weaknesses swiftly and accurately since she took up post in January 2018. Together with the senior leadership team, she has started to take effective action to address the most important priorities. As a result, teaching is good and current pupils are making good progress.
- Leaders use information about pupils' attainment and progress to plan actions to improve the quality of teaching and learning. They meticulously analyse assessment information to ensure that teaching supports pupils to make good progress. Leaders meet regularly with teachers to identify pupils who are not making the progress they should. Teachers then plan targeted interventions to enable these pupils to catch up.
- Senior leaders make frequent checks on the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. They observe teaching, look at pupils' work and provide feedback to teachers about how to improve their practice. Leaders make follow-up checks to ensure that teachers act on the advice they are given. As a result, teaching is securely good and, where there are weaknesses, teaching is improving quickly.
- Leaders provide a wide range of training activities for staff, which are linked to the school's improvement priorities and pupils' progress. Staff respond positively to this training, adapting to new approaches to teaching, for example in reading. As a result, current pupils make strong progress. In reading, pupils' progress is good and improving.
- The curriculum reflects pupils' needs and interests well. Carefully chosen topics offer pupils interesting opportunities to develop their understanding of the community in which they live and of the wider world. As a result, pupils become fully engaged in their learning and make good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding. Attractive and high-quality displays throughout the school celebrate the rich culture and diversity of the school and local community.
- Leadership of English and mathematics is effective. Leaders are knowledgeable about their areas of responsibility and monitor teaching regularly. Their plans for improvement are having a positive impact. In mathematics, a greater focus on reasoning and problem-solving has improved pupils' rates of progress. In English, leaders have identified weaknesses in the teaching of reading and have introduced a new approach to develop pupils' comprehension skills. As a result, current pupils are making good progress, although leaders' monitoring and inspection evidence shows that some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching still remain.
- Leaders use the primary physical education and sport premium to increase the opportunities pupils have to enjoy physical activity and participate in competitive sports. This provides pupils with access to a wide range of sports, including rounders, handball, rugby, football, cricket, netball and athletics. Provision for dance is strong and pupils who show an aptitude in this area have the opportunity to work with professional dancers from the Royal Ballet so that they can excel.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Leaders have created

a culture of inclusion which ensures that pupils learn to value the school's diverse community. As a result, they acknowledge, respect and celebrate each other's cultures and faiths. As one pupil explained, 'Our school is a seamless blend of cultures.' British values are an integral part of all that the school does. Consequently, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

- Leaders make effective use of pupil premium funding to diminish the differences between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally. However, a gap remains in the progress and attainment of these pupils in some year groups and subjects. Leaders recognise this and have firm plans to strengthen provision further so that these pupils make even more rapid progress.
- The role of middle leaders, including leadership of provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, is at an early stage of development. The recently appointed special educational needs coordinator has a clear understanding of individual pupils' needs. The leaders for science, history and geography check teaching in these subjects each term. However, the role of middle leaders in making checks on teaching and learning and contributing to school improvement is underdeveloped.

Governance of the school

- The board of trustees maintains a clear overview of the school's performance. Trustees receive regular reports about the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and pupils' outcomes. They also make visits to see the school in action. As a result, governors have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Trustees have been proactive in addressing gaps in expertise when recruiting new members. Consequently, governors have the knowledge and skills to hold leaders to account for all aspects of the school's work.
- The board of trustees has an accurate understanding of pupils' attainment and progress at the end of each key stage. However, until recently, they have not made the best use of this information to hold leaders to account for weaknesses in pupils' outcomes, particularly in reading. Governors' understanding of current pupils' progress lacks the depth needed to hold leaders to account with sufficient rigour.
- Trustees are reflective about their own effectiveness and have recently commissioned an external review to sharpen their focus.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff receive regular training and updates in safeguarding. As a result, they know how to recognise signs of abuse and neglect. They are clear about how to report concerns using the school's agreed procedures.
- Records show that leaders take appropriate action in response to concerns about pupils' safety and welfare. They work closely with external agencies to provide effective support for vulnerable pupils and their families.
- Governors ensure that the school fulfils its statutory safeguarding duties. For example,

they regularly monitor the record of checks carried out on adults who work and volunteer at the school.

- Pupils say they feel safe in school and that adults will help them if they have any concerns.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good because teachers plan interesting work that motivates pupils to work hard and make good progress.
- Relationships in lessons are strong and supportive. Pupils collaborate well in pairs and small groups and listen carefully to each other's ideas. Teachers encourage pupils to 'have a go' and value their responses. As a result, pupils are not afraid to give answers that might be wrong. This builds their confidence and means they develop into confident learners who are willing to take risks.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge which they use well to plan a range of interesting activities. They model new concepts effectively and provide clear explanations. As a result, pupils settle quickly to tasks and understand what they are learning.
- The teaching of mathematics is good. Teachers use questioning effectively to check and develop pupils' understanding and to address misconceptions. Teachers ensure that pupils are fluent in number and calculation and have regular opportunities to develop their reasoning and problem-solving skills.
- Following a trend of poor progress in reading, leaders identified some weaknesses in teaching. They have worked closely with teachers to address these. Daily reading sessions now focus on developing pupils' understanding of vocabulary and their ability to comprehend what they read. As a result, pupils are making better progress in reading than has previously been the case. Middle- and high-attaining pupils in key stage 2 read with fluency, expression and understanding. However, teachers do not consistently develop pupils' higher-order reading skills to deepen their understanding, such as how to interpret text and make deductions from it.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. As a result, pupils use their phonics skills to decode words and spell with increasing accuracy. A high proportion of pupils achieve the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check.
- Teachers provide pupils with purposeful opportunities to write at length in a range of subjects. This means that pupils gain a strong understanding of how to write in different styles and for different purposes and audiences. Pupils learn how to vary the structure of their sentences and use increasingly sophisticated and well-chosen vocabulary. However, sometimes, teachers do not provide clear enough feedback to help pupils improve their writing. They do not consistently address errors in pupils' grammar and punctuation. As a result, pupils repeat errors, which slows their progress.
- Teachers use assessment information effectively to plan learning that matches the needs of most pupils. Learning builds progressively on pupils' existing knowledge and understanding. However, teachers sometimes do not have high enough expectations of what the most able pupils can achieve. They do not ensure that teaching consistently

deepens learning and provides sufficient challenge for this group of pupils. This limits these pupils' progress, particularly in key stage 2.

- Staff communicate well with parents and carers and provide guidance on how they can support their children's learning at home. For example, teachers have led workshops to explain how they teach phonics and mathematics in school. Attendance at these information sessions is high.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Leaders have created a strong community spirit. This, along with the school's caring and supportive ethos, ensures that pupils feel safe and helps them to develop into happy and confident learners.
- Pupils are tolerant and respectful of people's differences. They have a well-developed understanding of different faiths, cultures and religions because leaders promote this well. As a result, pupils from different backgrounds work and play happily together. They are proud of their school and the diverse community of which they are part.
- The school's values of 'love, peace and hope' permeate all aspects of its work. Consequently, pupils are kind and thoughtful. Pupils enjoy opportunities to take on responsibility, for example as head boy and girl, prefects, members of the school council and representatives on the school's worship committee.
- Pupils understand the difference between bullying and 'falling out'. They say that bullying rarely happens and that if it does, adults address this promptly. Pupils also know how to resolve friendship issues and what to do if they are worried or upset.
- Staff teach pupils to understand local risks, for example those associated with crossing the road and playing on or near a railway line. Partnerships with external agencies, such as the police, help to ensure that pupils know how to make safe choices when they are out in the community. Pupils understand how to stay safe online.
- Pupils who attend breakfast club enjoy the activities on offer at the start of the school day. They interact well with their friends and benefit from positive relationships with adults.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. This is because staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour, which they reinforce consistently.
- Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. They concentrate well in lessons and apply themselves productively to tasks. Pupils are independent and resilient learners. They work well on their own and with their peers, sharing ideas and taking turns. Pupils listen carefully to adults and to one another. They take pride in their work and present it neatly.
- Conduct at break and lunchtimes is typically positive. Pupils of different ages play well

together and make use of the 'friendship stop' to ensure that everyone has someone to play with.

- Pupils are polite, confident and well mannered. They respond quickly to adults' instructions and move around the school sensibly and quietly.
- Leaders have taken effective action to improve pupils' attendance. They monitor the attendance of individuals closely and put appropriate support in place to ensure that pupils attend regularly. As a result, pupils' rates of absence are broadly in line with national averages. The proportion of pupils who are frequently absent from school has reduced considerably this academic year.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In 2016 and 2017, pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 was above national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportions of pupils working at greater depth were in line with national averages.
- School assessment information and work in pupils' books show that the majority of key stage 1 pupils are working at the standard expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils make secure progress in phonics in the early years and key stage 1. As a result, the proportion of pupils who meet the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has been consistently above national averages for the past three years.
- Over the past two years, the proportions of pupils attaining the expected standard at the end of Year 6 have been above national averages in writing and mathematics. However, in 2017, pupils' attainment in reading fell to below the national average. Furthermore, pupils' progress in reading has been well below the national average for the past three years. Improvements to the teaching of reading mean that current pupils are making good progress across all year groups. Pupils' progress in Years 5 and 6 is particularly strong.
- A high proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics this academic year. This is because staff make effective provision for these pupils' individual needs. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make progress in line with other pupils.
- Pupils make good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding in a wide range of subjects. This is because the curriculum builds progressively on what pupils know, understand and can do.
- In 2017, the gaps between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally closed in mathematics. However, the gap between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils increased in reading and writing. The school's assessment information shows that current disadvantaged pupils are making progress that is at least in line with, and sometimes better than, other pupils in reading, writing and mathematics in Years 4, 5 and 6 and in mathematics in Year 2. However, a gap remains between these pupils' progress and that of other pupils over time.

- The proportions of pupils achieving the higher standards at the end of key stage 2 in reading and writing have been below national averages for the past two years. This is because work does not consistently challenge the most able pupils to achieve the high standards of which they are capable.

Early years provision

Good

- Most children enter the early years with knowledge and skills below those typical for their age. Children make strong progress in Nursery and Reception because of the good teaching they receive. As a result, the proportions of children who reach a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year have been above national averages for the past three years.
- Adults focus well on developing children's language and communication skills. Children who join the early years speaking English as an additional language make rapid progress in English. This is because adults model language effectively.
- The learning environment is stimulating and well resourced. Activities are interesting and capture children's imagination. As a result, children are enthusiastic learners and are keen to access the activities on offer. They confidently move around the setting and show independence, for example when choosing activities and selecting resources.
- Adults plan tasks carefully to match children's needs and interests. As a result, children sustain their concentration well, and persevere with reading and writing tasks. For example, in Reception, one pupil was engrossed in using letter blocks to spell words, while in Nursery, a small group of children shared books together.
- There is an appropriate balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities in Nursery and Reception, which supports children to make good progress. These activities become increasingly challenging as children move through the early years. This prepares children well for learning in Year 1. For example, in Reception, children show strong learning behaviours, applying themselves well to written tasks, both independently and with adult support.
- Adults are aware that, in the past, boys have not achieved as well as girls. They have adapted the curriculum to provide more practical and engaging activities to encourage boys to read and write. As a result, boys are making more rapid progress and the gap between the attainment of boys and girls is closing.
- Clear routines and high expectations support children to behave well. Children are quick to follow adults' instructions and are keen to do well. Adults manage children's behaviour sensitively, for example encouraging children to apologise to one another and explaining 'we don't tell anyone they are naughty'.
- Relationships between adults and children are strong. As a result, children are happy and enjoy coming to school. They work and play well together, sharing and taking turns.
- Leadership of the early years is effective. Leaders have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the provision and children's outcomes. This is because they make regular checks on the quality of teaching and children's progress. Leaders

use professional development well to improve teaching and learning.

School details

Unique reference number	139041
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10048296

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	395
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	David Bagley
Headteacher	Jo Booker
Telephone number	0121 554 3751
Website	www.stmryb20.bham.sch.uk/
Email address	enquiry@stmryb20.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- St Marys C of E Primary and Nursery, Academy, Handsworth is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school converted to become an academy in February 2013. When Ofsted last inspected the predecessor school, it judged it as 'outstanding'.
- The school is a stand-alone academy. It is governed by a board of trustees who are accountable for all aspects of the school's performance.
- A new headteacher took up post in January 2018.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportion pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above the national average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education,

health and care plan is below the national average.

- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the national average. Those from minority ethnic backgrounds represent a larger proportion of pupils than that seen nationally.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in parts of 22 lessons. Four of these observations were undertaken jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors spoke formally with two groups of pupils, as well as talking to pupils in lessons and around the school.
- An inspector listened to a group of pupils read and talked to them about their reading.
- Inspectors examined the quality of work in pupils' English, mathematics, science and topic books jointly with senior leaders.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, two assistant headteachers and other school leaders. The lead inspector met with a group of staff to gather their views on safeguarding, professional development and pupils' learning.
- An inspector visited the breakfast club.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the governing body and one governor.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, information about current pupils' attainment and progress, records relating to safeguarding, minutes of meetings of the governing body and information on the school's website.
- An inspector spoke to parents at the beginning of the school day.

Inspection team

Claire Jones, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
David Walker	Ofsted Inspector
Susan Lowry	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2018