

Alverthorpe St Paul's CofE (VA) School 3–11yrs

St Paul's Drive, Alverthorpe, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF2 0BT

Inspection dates

27–28 November 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

- Teaching has not been strong enough over time. This has resulted in gaps in pupils' skills and knowledge, particularly in reading and writing, in both key stages 1 and 2.
- The expectations of some teachers have been too low because they do not use the information about how well pupils are doing precisely enough to set work.
- Some teachers lack the subject knowledge of the whole curriculum needed to plan sequences of learning that will deepen pupils' understanding.
- In some classes, teachers do not use questions consistently well enough to check on pupils' knowledge or to stretch and challenge pupils in their learning.
- Some teachers have not ensured that all pupils, but particularly low prior attaining pupils, have developed their basic skills in phonics, spelling and handwriting sufficiently well.
- Although leaders monitor the quality of teaching and learning, some senior and middle leaders have not successfully guided teachers to improve their practice.
- Children in the early years make good progress. However, opportunities to learn early reading and writing skills are not consistently effective.
- In classrooms, additional adults are not consistently used to best effect in supporting pupils' rapid progress.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher has acted with urgency in driving school improvement. He has an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- The quality of teaching in some classes is improving, leading to better learning for some pupils, especially in mathematics.
- Strong teaching in upper key stage 2 has led to pupils making rapid gains in their learning.
- Leaders are successfully promoting pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural understanding. The safety and well-being of pupils are very important to all staff.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to accelerate pupils' progress in all areas of the curriculum by ensuring that:
 - all staff have the highest expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - teachers are equipped with strong subject knowledge that will support them in delivering learning of a high quality
 - assessment information is used effectively by teachers to plan learning which meets pupils' needs
 - teachers plan sequences of learning which enable pupils to make secure progress through the curriculum
 - teachers use questioning well to check on pupils' learning and to encourage deeper thinking
 - teachers make the best use of teaching assistants to promote effective learning for the pupils they work with.
- Embed recent changes to the teaching of English so that a higher proportion of pupils are well prepared for reading and writing by:
 - ensuring that activities in the early years are effective in enabling children to more swiftly develop early reading and writing skills
 - promoting the use of phonics so that all pupils, including those who are falling behind, confidently use phonics to read and write new words
 - providing pupils with meaningful opportunities to learn and understand more complex words that will enable them to rapidly identify, understand and use a wider range of vocabulary
 - providing support for pupils, particularly boys, to improve their writing skills by continuing to promote high expectations of spelling and handwriting at all key stages.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The headteacher has demonstrated strong leadership during his short time at the school. However, teaching is not consistently good enough to ensure that pupils make rapid progress in most subjects, but particularly in reading and writing, across the school.
- Checking of the school's work overall has not been sufficiently rigorous because the roles of senior and middle leaders are underdeveloped. The headteacher has now ensured that all leaders understand their responsibilities and is supporting them to make the changes necessary.
- Over time, leaders have not ensured that pupils receive consistently good teaching across the whole curriculum, leading to gaps in pupils' experience and knowledge in several subjects, including English, history and geography. The impact of leaders' work in improving teaching is beginning to be seen in mathematics.
- The headteacher has made clear his expectations of good-quality teaching and staff are being supported to ensure that their practice meets those high expectations. Teachers value this guidance and spoke highly of the headteacher's regard for their well-being. One teacher described the headteacher as 'amazing'.
- The special educational needs coordinator has a deep understanding of the needs of individual pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Working successfully with parents, carers and external agencies, she is ensuring additional money is well spent so that these pupils receive the support and guidance they need.
- Leaders have made sure the pupil premium is spent effectively to provide the small number of disadvantaged pupils with access to a wide range of clubs and activities, including music tuition. Some pupils attend a nurture group, which is helping to better prepare them for learning.
- The leader for physical education is successfully involving growing numbers of pupils in sports. Pupils take part in a wide range of activities, including gymnastics, dance, rugby, netball, boccia, volleyball and hockey. Over 100 pupils have represented the school in sports competitions, building their resilience and confidence to 'have a go' in other areas of learning.

Governance of the school

- Governors have a realistic view of the school's performance and understand that outcomes for pupils have not been good enough.
- Governors have an accurate overview of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching. They understand their responsibility for the performance of school leaders and teachers.
- Governors acknowledge they took their eye off the ball for a while. Because of detailed reporting by the headteacher, governors have the information they need to hold leaders to account.

- Minutes of meetings show that governors are now asking challenging questions about the quality of teaching and support for pupils and pupils' progress.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have ensured that all staff are careful and vigilant in their approach to safeguarding pupils. Safeguarding is given a high priority and cloakroom displays convey the school's policy and inform parents about who to go to should they have concerns.
- Leaders have made sure that staff training is up to date and all staff spoken to by inspectors have a secure understanding of their responsibilities. All staff are trained to recognise the signs of radicalisation.
- Inspectors observed timely and detailed recording of any concerns. Leaders are making effective use of their online record-keeping to track and analyse patterns in any incidents that have occurred.
- Leaders have invited presenters from external agencies to assemblies to help guide pupils on speaking out and keeping safe. As a result, pupils were able to share with inspectors the steps they should take if they feel unsafe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- There has been a lack of consistency in the quality of teaching over time. This has led to varied rates of progress across classes and subjects, so that pupils have not made enough progress until Year 6.
- While some teachers have high expectations of what pupils will learn, this is not evident in all classes. This is because some teachers have not paid enough attention to what pupils already know and tasks have not been matched well enough to their skills and ability.
- Some teachers lack the subject knowledge needed to plan sequences of learning that will help pupils really understand what they are learning and to retrieve learning to apply it in different circumstances. In some classes, pupils have been given too little time to practise what they have learned, making it difficult for pupils to use their newly acquired skills.
- Teachers have enthusiastically embraced a new approach to the teaching of reading and writing. While the resources and books being used have the potential to be exciting for pupils, some teachers are failing to question pupils well enough to deepen their understanding. Despite high proportions of pupils passing the phonics screening check in key stage 1, low prior attaining pupils are unable to use phonics to decode unfamiliar words and are faltering in their reading as they move through school.
- Teachers are not consistently effective in promoting the use of challenging vocabulary. As a result, middle and low prior attaining pupils are not consistently demonstrating writing of the standard expected for their age. Evidence in pupils' books shows that some pupils are unproductive and work is unfinished.

- Teachers are working with greater consistency to develop pupils' handwriting and spelling, following the introduction of a new whole-school approach. While there are classes in school where pupils' presentation is strong, this is not consistent across the school and low prior attaining boys are struggling to write and spell accurately.
- The effect of teaching assistants on pupils' learning is variable in different classrooms. Where activities are properly planned by teachers, additional adults in the class have a greater impact on the progress pupils make.
- Teaching in some subjects is improving. The leader for mathematics has introduced new methods of delivering mathematics. Teachers have welcomed the coaching they have received. Teachers' subject knowledge and confidence have improved, and pupils are making stronger progress in this subject as a result. Pupils' books show that pupils are systematically taught to reason about mathematics and can apply their skills effectively in problem-solving scenarios.
- Some teachers are providing highly stimulating, imaginative teaching which is helping pupils to learn well. This is typical in Year 6. Teaching in music and physical education is effective in involving pupils and is motivating them to perform to a high standard.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils say that behaviour has improved since the arrival of the new headteacher and that they are dealt with fairly. They enjoy earning 'shining stars', building to a 'gold planet' prize in recognition for doing the right thing.
- Staff successfully encourage pupils to care for each other. For example, during the inspection, Year 6 pupils were kind in their support for younger children, offering them a friendly ear. Pupils who struggle to cope in the playground can find a peaceful space in the 'Pacific' area.
- Teachers' high-profile displays and well-planned assemblies are helping pupils to learn facts about different faiths, including Islam and Hinduism. Pupils' understanding of Christianity is well developed through links with the church.
- The school's work to promote pupils' physical and emotional well-being is strong. Pupils are taught how to eat well. Pupils could explain how to keep safe when using the internet and say they are given regular reminders about this. Pupils interviewed by inspectors understood about bullying, including online intimidation, and knew who to go to for help.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. This is because of clear behaviour policies, recently revamped by the headteacher. In most classrooms, little time is wasted in checking pupils' behaviour and the vast majority of pupils display good attitudes to learning. Pupils are happy and confident during social times.
- A very small number of parents suggested that the school does not respond well to

concerns raised about bullying. However, pupils who spoke to inspectors look forward to playtime and say that although there is some bullying, it is not frequent and is dealt with quickly by staff. Leaders keep detailed records of incidents that occur, and the learning mentor is effective in her work to support pupils who may be having difficulties in managing their own behaviour.

- Supported by governors, the headteacher and learning mentor have taken effective action to ensure that pupils come to school every day. Consequently, the proportion of pupils who were frequently absent has fallen from 8% to 4%. Attendance is now above the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Despite many pupils leaving the Reception Year with a good level of development, their progress in key stage 1 has not been swift enough. Pupils in key stage 1, including those who are disadvantaged, have made less progress than have their peers nationally. Below-average proportions of pupils have attained the expected standard or higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics. This has been the pattern for three years.
- Pupils' attainment in the Year 1 phonics screening check has steadily improved over the past three years and in 2018, 92% succeeded in the check. However, many pupils do not readily deploy their phonics knowledge when reading or writing unfamiliar words.
- The school's own assessment information shows that in some classes, the outcomes of current pupils requires improvement. In some classes and in some subjects, the work set for pupils is not challenging enough, resulting in too many pupils working at standards below those expected for their age. This is particularly the case in reading and writing.
- Work in pupils' books shows inconsistency in pupils' progress in some foundation subjects. Pupils have been unable to demonstrate their understanding of science, history or geography, for example, because they have received too little teaching in these subjects.
- In 2017, the progress of key stage 2 pupils in reading, writing and mathematics was below the national average. In 2018, key stage 2 pupils made very strong progress in reading and mathematics and average progress in writing. Disadvantaged pupils achieved well and the progress of the most able pupils in reading and mathematics was impressive. However, most of this progress was achieved in their final year of school.
- In 2018, above-average proportions of pupils in key stage 2 attained the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined, ensuring that they were well prepared for the demands of secondary school.
- Pupils with SEND make good progress from their starting points. This is because of careful and precise teaching of the small steps required to support their learning in phonics, reading and mathematics.
- There are noteworthy strengths in pupils' achievements in music and sports. Pupils' talents are well developed in these subjects and they demonstrate a high level of expertise.

Early years provision

Good

- Children enter Nursery with skills and abilities broadly typical for their age. Staff successfully help children to grow in their social abilities and to develop confidence, so they are ready to attend and learn in the Reception Year.
- Children make good progress through the Reception Year and a slightly higher proportion than average leave the early years with a good level of development. Staff work well to stretch children. Consequently, almost all children make good progress and around one third leave with skills that exceed those demonstrated in a good level of development.
- The early years leader has a clear view of how to improve the setting. With the support of the headteacher, she has recently transformed outdoor learning. During the inspection, children were observed happily experimenting with natural materials, engaging in messy play and mastering gross motor skills in the safety of the outdoor area.
- Children were also observed deep in concentration while building rockets or crafting 'cakes' from glittery playdough. Adults' astute questioning is successfully helping children to express their thoughts and develop creative and language skills.
- Staff take care to plan activities that enable children to effectively acquire dexterity. During a 'project afternoon', inspectors observed the strong development of fine motor skills as children made rockets and painted them with a variety of applicators.
- Leaders have used the early years pupil premium to secure the support of a speech and language therapist who has trained staff to help children to learn new vocabulary and patterns of speech. Staff were observed sensitively guiding children through play with puppets, carefully introducing and repeating new vocabulary.
- Children are well occupied and interested in the activities on offer. Consequently, they behave well and learn cooperatively. Inspectors observed several examples of children chatting happily together, immersed in their learning.
- Leaders' work to involve parents in their child's learning is having a positive effect. Parents' attendance at meetings and workshops, for example to see how the school teaches phonics, is high.
- Staff are careful to make sure children are safe and secure in the setting. They have ensured that all equipment is well maintained and that risks to children are anticipated and minimised. Safe levels of supervision are maintained both inside and outdoors.
- The leader has adapted the setting to enhance reading, with the provision of bright and inviting library and storytelling areas. Children regularly take reading books home. However, not all first books can be read phonetically, hindering some children from making a rapid start to reading.
- Staff use the information they collect on children's achievements effectively to continually review the activities on offer. In this way, they are meeting children's needs well, reflecting their interests and maintaining children's curiosity. Staff regularly check on children's learning, setting weekly targets for each one in either reading, writing or number. However, teaching does not consistently lead to children rapidly developing early reading and writing skills.

School details

Unique reference number	108253
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	10052886

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	279
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Pam Denton
Headteacher	Lee Swift
Telephone number	01924 290125
Website	https://alverthorpe.eschools.co.uk
Email address	head@alverthorpestpauls.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 March 2018

Information about this school

- Alverthorpe St Paul's is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below average.
- Ninety per cent of pupils are from White British backgrounds. Ten per cent of pupils are from other minority ethnic groups. Five per cent of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- Children in the Reception class attend full time and children in the Nursery attend part time.
- The headteacher was newly appointed to the school in September 2018.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors looked at information regarding pupils' progress, documents relating to behaviour and safety and documents relating to safeguarding.
- The inspectors looked at pupils' work across the curriculum in books and observed pupils learning in 15 lessons. Inspectors were accompanied to many of the lessons observed by the headteacher.
- Inspectors listened to several Year 1, Year 2 and Year 6 pupils read, and observed pupils learning in small groups. They spoke with pupils in lessons, in a meeting, at lunchtime and at playtimes.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders and four members of the governing body. A telephone conversation was held with a representative of the local authority and the Diocese of Leeds.
- The views of 74 parents were taken into account through Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors also spoke to a small number of parents as they delivered their children to school.
- Inspectors also considered the views of the 27 pupils and the 30 staff who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaires.

Inspection team

Lesley Butcher, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Lesley Allwood	Ofsted Inspector
Mary Lanovy-Taylor	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