

# Royston St John Baptist CE Primary

Vicarage Lane, Royston, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S71 4QY

## Inspection dates

15–16 January 2019

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	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- There has been some significant turbulence in leadership and staffing over the last year. This has led to inconsistencies in the quality of teaching.
- Some teachers have low expectations of what pupils can do. As a result, the pace of learning is slow, and pupils have gaps in their knowledge and skills.
- The leadership of English and mathematics, although improving, has not been strong enough over time. This has resulted in variable teaching and pupils' outcomes that are not good.
- The teaching of phonics in key stage 1 is inconsistent. Teachers do not support pupils well enough in applying their phonics skills to their writing.
- Pupils' outcomes in reading and writing are below national averages. Pupils do not routinely have access to high-quality texts and books to support them in developing their reading and writing.
- Teachers do not use assessment information well enough to ensure that tasks meet pupils' needs. Teachers do not suitably challenge the most able pupils, especially in English and mathematics.
- Leaders' plans to improve teaching do not focus enough on pupils' learning. Teachers do not have a clear understanding of how to improve pupils' outcomes.
- Leaders do not evaluate sufficiently well how pupils' knowledge and skills across the curriculum build up over time.

### The school has the following strengths

- The acting executive headteacher, supported by a deputy headteacher and a lead practitioner from the trust, has worked hard to ensure that pupils' behaviour and their personal development and well-being are good.
- Children make good progress in the early years. Staff have high expectations of what children can achieve.
- Leaders and governors have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
- Governors have a wide range of skills. They have increased their level of challenge and support and are beginning to make improvements.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that it is good or better, and improve pupils' outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics by ensuring that:
  - teaching in all classes provides sufficient challenge for the most able pupils and appropriate support for the least able pupils, as well as for those pupils who are underachieving
  - the teaching of reading comprehension skills is effective, and pupils have access to high-quality texts and books to improve their reading and writing
  - pupils have frequent opportunities to develop their problem-solving and reasoning skills in mathematics
  - teachers have high expectations of what pupils include in their writing – including the consistent use of English grammar, punctuation and spelling – drawing on high-quality texts to support vocabulary development
  - assessment information is used effectively to plan work that is well matched to pupils of all abilities
  - pupils are supported in applying their phonics skills in their writing.
- Improve the impact of leadership, management and governance by making sure that:
  - there are close checks on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to ensure that it is consistently good or better
  - school improvement planning is sharply focused on improving teaching and learning
  - newly appointed middle leaders receive training and support so they have a sustained impact on school improvement
  - leaders make sharp and detailed use of assessment information to form a more accurate overview of the progress of different groups of pupils.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- There has been significant instability in leadership and staffing over the last year. The English and mathematics subject leaders are new to their posts and the school has an acting executive headteacher. This has led to inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, resulting in pupils' outcomes that are too low.
- The acting executive headteacher – supported by the trust – has demonstrated effective leadership in a short space of time. He has quickly identified key areas for development and has taken appropriate steps to improve behaviour across school, as well as improving the quality of learning in the early years. However, the quality of teaching across key stages 1 and 2 is too variable.
- The leaders of English and mathematics are becoming more effective in their roles but they are still underdeveloped. The leaders know some of the strengths and areas for development in their subjects and are carrying out monitoring and evaluation activities to check on teaching. However, their plans for improvement are not specific enough to identify the precise teaching that would enable pupils to make strong progress across subjects.
- Leaders' views on the quality and impact of teaching in a range of curriculum subjects are overly positive. Leaders' monitoring and evaluation do not focus sufficiently well on how knowledge and skills in different subjects build up over time.
- The school's assessment system does not provide leaders with reliable information about pupils' progress and attainment. This makes it difficult for leaders and governors to evaluate whole-school performance accurately. The whole-school targets that leaders have set using the assessments lack ambition and do not compare favourably against national averages.
- The school's plans for improvement do not clearly show how leaders and governors will check the impact of actions to improve pupils' outcomes and the quality of teaching at different times during the year.
- Senior leaders and governors accurately account for the pupil premium funding to ensure that the necessary resources and staffing support disadvantaged pupils. There has been some limited improvement for these pupils. Attendance has risen slightly, and some pupils' work shows gains in knowledge, skills and understanding. However, leaders are not sufficiently focused on ensuring that these pupils make accelerated progress in their work so they can catch up with their peers.
- Leaders make effective use of the primary physical education (PE) and sport premium funding to increase participation and improve pupils' health and fitness. Recently, pupils have taken part in trust-wide events such as the Winter Olympics.
- Leaders and staff promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well through the curriculum. Pupils have rich experiences that help them appreciate others and respect difference. The school actively supports local, national and international charities. Pupils say that they learn about diversity, different cultures and different religions through assemblies and in class.

## Governance of the school

- Governors and the trustees are experienced in their roles and execute their responsibilities well. They provide appropriate support for school leaders. However, governors and trustees have a clear understanding that aspects of leadership, teaching and pupils' outcomes require improvement.
- Governors receive a wealth of information, and offer challenge and support to school leaders. Individual governors and trustees hold specific responsibilities. They meet with staff and check on different aspects of the school's work, such as safeguarding and provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They use this information to stay up to date with the school's strengths and areas for improvement.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff receive regular safeguarding training and updates. There is a well-developed culture of keeping children safe. Staff are aware of the risks pupils can face and know what to do if they have a concern.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school. Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe online and know the importance of telling an adult if they see anything inappropriate on the internet.
- Parents and carers say that leaders and staff keep their children safe in school.
- The school follows all statutory requirements for the recruitment of staff.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- While there are some recent signs of improvement, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment presents a mixed picture across key stages 1 and 2. Over time, this has resulted in low rates of progress and attainment for too many pupils, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' books show that the teaching of reading and writing is too variable. Teachers do not ensure that pupils have regular opportunities to read or explore high-quality texts and books. This limits pupils' learning and hinders the development of comprehension skills. Pupils' writing shows that they rarely draw on their reading to inform the vocabulary and grammar of their writing. This means that some pupils do not write effectively for different purposes and audiences. The school's own assessment information shows that pupils' outcomes in reading and writing are too low.
- The teaching of phonics varies. While some staff demonstrate that they have a good grasp of the skills and knowledge to teach phonics well, other staff are not consistent in their approach. As a result, lower-ability pupils do not competently apply their phonics skills to their writing.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved. Work in pupils' books and in lessons demonstrates that pupils are becoming secure in their number work and calculation skills. However, pupils do not routinely apply these number skills to word problems or

more complex and challenging mathematical tasks.

- Some teachers do not use assessment information effectively in reading, writing and mathematics to plan work that appropriately matches pupils' needs and abilities. Too often, there is a lack of challenge for the most able pupils and disadvantaged pupils, as well as insufficient support for the least able and pupils with SEND. Consequently, not all pupils make the progress that should be expected of them.
- There is a wide range of opportunities across the curriculum in which pupils may engage. Pupils say that they particularly enjoy learning in mathematics, PE, art and religious education. Work in science shows examples of interactive experiments where pupils test out hypotheses. However, some books show that learning across the curriculum is not strong. For example, in history, pupils use historical artefacts to enquire about the past but, over time, pupils' knowledge and skills are not well developed and their understanding is limited.
- Some teachers and teaching assistants use questioning skilfully to interest and engage pupils and get them thinking more deeply about what they are learning. They use praise effectively to reward and encourage participation. These adults foster very positive relationships and ensure that pupils are motivated and immersed in their learning. Such effective practice is not a consistent feature across the school.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils appreciate what the school offers and are proud of their school. Pupils say that they enjoy leadership roles, such as being members of the school council. The school council helped to develop the school motto: 'Big hearts, big minds, big changes'.
- There is an inclusive culture across school which means that no one feels isolated. Pupils say that they learn about similarities and differences and that discrimination of any sort is not welcome. Bullying is rare. Pupils and parents say that children are safe in school.
- Pupils have a strong sense of community. They support a range of charities – such the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children – and regularly visit a residential home in the community.
- Pupils have regular opportunities to discuss and debate thought-provoking issues in relation to culture, faith and relationships in modern-day Britain. Pupils understand difference and have formed positive and tolerant views.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are courteous and friendly to staff and visitors and they cooperate and interact positively with their peers.
- Leaders have worked hard to improve pupils' behaviour across school. During the inspection, inspectors saw no sign of poor behaviour in classrooms, around school or in

the playground. Leaders' records, pupils' comments and parents' views all indicate that pupils' behaviour is good.

- Pupils' attendance overall is above the national average. There is a range of incentives and rewards to encourage pupils to attend school regularly. Leaders recognise that the attendance of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average but, as a result of leaders' actions, there are some signs of improvement.
- At times, pupils show a lack of engagement in their learning. However, this is not common and is mainly when teaching is not sufficiently engaging or when the challenge in an activity is too low.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Requires improvement

- Current progress across key stages 1 and 2 is too variable. Pupils' books show that there is too much inconsistency in teaching and learning and teachers do not use assessment well enough to match work to pupils' needs.
- In 2018, there was a decline in standards at the end of key stage 1, where the attainment of the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics was below the national average and in the lowest 10% nationally for all pupils. At the end of key stage 2 in 2018, pupils' attainment in reading and writing was below the national average. Attainment for disadvantaged pupils in mathematics has been in the bottom 20% nationally for at least two years.
- Current pupils – from their different starting points – are not supported well enough in their learning and, as a result, they do not make good progress across subjects or year groups. The level of challenge and expectation of what pupils can achieve is sometimes too low. This means that pupils do not always have the opportunity to improve and build upon their knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Too few of the most able pupils reach the higher standards across school. The level of challenge by teachers and the level of ambition from leaders are too low.
- The provision for pupils with SEND varies. Some teaching and support from staff are very effective in meeting the needs of these individuals. There are often positive relationships and the welfare of pupils with SEND is of high importance. However, some pupils with SEND do not make good progress in their learning compared with other pupils nationally with similar starting points. This is particularly the case in writing.

### Early years provision

### Good

- Leadership of the early years is effective. There have been some significant improvements in provision and, in 2018, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development in the early years was above the national average.
- Children in the early years make good progress from their below-typical starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. Staff have high expectations and move children's learning forward at a good pace.
- Staff in the early years ensure that children have a wide range of opportunities to

explore and develop their basic skills in phonics and reading. The language-rich learning environment offers children access to a wide range of books. Staff know the children well and use assessment to target individuals and support their learning.

- Teachers plan the indoor provision well, respond to children’s interests and needs and effectively address any gaps in learning. Children participate in activities with enthusiasm and interest and interact with adults and other children easily. There is a positive, productive learning atmosphere in the early years, where children enjoy learning.
- Children in the early years are happy, safe and well cared for. Leaders ensure that early years provision meets all statutory welfare requirements.
- Leaders recognise that the outdoor provision is less strong and does not offer children a wide range of appropriate learning opportunities to enhance and develop knowledge and skills across the curriculum.

## School details

Unique reference number	142556
Local authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	10059009

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	221
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Sharon Cook
Executive Headteacher	Lee Spencer
Telephone number	01226 722011
Website	<a href="http://www.royston-stjohn.org.uk">www.royston-stjohn.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:l.spencer@smat.org.uk">l.spencer@smat.org.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school became a member of St Mary's Academy Trust in February 2016. The management and governance arrangements for this trust are outlined in the scheme of delegation, which is available on the school's website. This is the first inspection since the school converted to an academy.
- The substantive headteacher left the school in the autumn term 2018. In September 2018, the trust appointed an acting executive headteacher.
- Royston St John Baptist Primary has formal designation as a Church of England school. A separate section 48 inspection of the school's ethos, the content of collective worship and the quality of religious education was conducted in February 2014. The report is available on the school's website.
- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is lower than average.



- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning on both days of the inspection. The acting executive headteacher and the trust's lead practitioner conducted joint observations with inspectors in all classes across the school.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, pupils, the chief executive officer and trustees, and those responsible for the governance of the school.
- Together with senior leaders, inspectors looked at pupils' progress data, information about the quality of teaching, documents relating to behaviour and safety and documents relating to safeguarding. Inspectors also scrutinised documents relating to the school's self-evaluation and improvement planning, trust documentation, governor minutes, numerous policies and the school's website.
- Inspectors listened to Year 1 and Year 5 pupils read and observed pupils' learning in small groups. They spoke with pupils in a meeting, in lessons and at lunch and breaktimes.
- By the end of the inspection, there were 16 parent responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and free-text comments. The inspectors noted these and spoke with parents during the inspection.

## Inspection team

Peter Heaton, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Mark Randall

Ofsted Inspector

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