

St Stephen's Church of England Primary School

Gaythorne Road, West Bowling, Bradford, West Yorkshire BD5 7HU

Inspection dates

12–13 February 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	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Current pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics is not good enough. Across all classes, the quality of teaching pupils have received over time has been inconsistent.
- The expectations of some teachers are still not high enough. Consequently, some pupils, particularly boys, do not complete their work sufficiently well.
- Some teachers lack the subject knowledge needed to plan series of lessons that will enable pupils to embed new learning. Some teachers do not regularly set work at the right level for pupils, particularly for the most able pupils.
- Where teaching is less successful, pupils' attitudes to their learning are not strong enough. They lose concentration and drift off task.
- Middle leaders do not all have the skills they need to drive change in a way that directly influences the quality of teaching and pupils' progress.
- Although the work of learning support assistants is generally effective, some pupils spend too much time being taught by them and too little time with their teachers.
- Teaching in science has not been consistently effective in helping pupils to secure and apply their skills in scientific enquiry.
- Attendance is improving. However, some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are too frequently absent from school and this is affecting their progress.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher is determined and unrelenting in his ambition to provide the best education for pupils in his care. He has been swift to evaluate the school and has approached areas for improvement systematically.
- Senior leaders have grown under the new headteacher and are successfully beginning to tackle weaker teaching.
- Children in early years are making strong progress because of well-planned teaching that is helping them to close gaps in their learning.
- The school's work to safeguard pupils is highly effective. The pastoral team works very effectively with external agencies. Pupils say that they feel safe in school.

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, but particularly in reading, writing and mathematics, by ensuring that:
 - all teachers have sufficiently high expectations of what their pupils can achieve
 - teachers continue to develop their subject knowledge
 - assessment information is used effectively by teachers to plan learning activities that are closely matched to pupils' skills and abilities
 - greater attention is given to the planning of sequences of learning that will enable pupils to acquire and embed new knowledge
 - teachers more frequently teach low prior attaining pupils
 - teachers provide appropriate challenge and inspire the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, to excel
 - teachers exploit every opportunity to enhance pupils' scientific knowledge and to apply their skills to predict and test their ideas.
- Improve the impact and effectiveness of leaders, by:
 - developing the skills of middle leaders so they can more rigorously monitor the quality of teaching and learning and more effectively contribute to securing improvements in the quality of teaching
 - continuing to raise expectations of teachers so the teaching they provide is more consistently good
 - taking actions to diminish differences in the attainment and progress of boys and girls.
- Improve pupils' learning behaviours, by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of the quality and quantity of work that pupils will complete
 - staff consistently applying school policies to positively draw attention to those pupils who are applying themselves to their work
 - working effectively with pupils, particularly those with SEND, and their parents and carers, to reduce the rate of persistent absence.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- There has been much turbulence in staffing at St Stephen's Church of England Primary School over the last four years. This has led to a decline in the quality of teaching over time, such that it no longer ensures that all pupils make consistently good progress.
- Middle leaders are new to their roles. Although they have received guidance from leaders on how to effectively measure the impact of teaching, they are inexperienced and have had limited impact in supporting other teachers to improve.
- Over time, the quality of the curriculum pupils receive has been stripped back to English and mathematics, leaving pupils with too few skills across other subjects. This is changing because leaders have introduced a new curriculum, rooting learning in global issues. Pupils spoke excitedly about these lessons. However, pupils' books show that they still have too few opportunities to develop and practise scientific skills.
- The headteacher is a 'tour de force'. He arrived in school with a comprehensive understanding of the issues he was facing and set about introducing policies, systems and procedures that made his expectations crystal clear. The headteacher has taken effective action to eradicate inadequate teaching.
- The headteacher has the full confidence of staff and morale is high. Pupils, parents, the local authority and Leeds Diocese all express their faith in the headteacher and enthusiastically describe the changes he has made to improve the school.
- Senior leaders are flourishing under the leadership of the headteacher. They fully subscribe to his vision and in the urgency to improve the quality of education for pupils. Each has contributed effectively to improving the areas on which they lead.
- Leaders' checks on the school's work are detailed and rigorous. They use this information to provide training and support for all staff to continually improve their practice. Newly qualified teachers value the training and guidance they have received from leaders.
- The leader with responsibility for SEND has overhauled the way the school identifies those in need of support and has honed provision, ensuring that the specific funding for these pupils is spent appropriately. She carefully monitors the teaching that pupils with SEND receive and provides effective direction for teachers and learning support assistants to help pupils make progress.
- Leaders and governors have ensured that pupil premium funding has been spent to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. Additional teaching, pastoral care and subsidies for visits are all helping disadvantaged pupils to make secure progress.
- Leaders' work to promote pupils' awareness of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues is a strength. Pupils express tolerance and some understanding of different faiths and cultures because of leaders' work to get pupils thinking about differences and similarities. Displays around school show evidence of pupils' learning about inspirational people from history and from world religions.
- Leaders use the physical education (PE) and sport funding effectively to provide

specialist coaching so that pupils can develop their skills in basketball and football. Funding is also spent well to subsidise residential visits to outdoor activity centres.

- Staff work successfully to engage parents and the wider community in the life of the school. English classes are available for parents who are new to English, who in turn are better able to support their own child in learning. Events such as 'Dads and Lads', weekly parents' coffee mornings and curriculum days have helped parents to feel welcome. Parents who spoke with inspectors were unanimous in their praise for leaders and staff in school.

Governance of the school

- Governors have worked closely with the local authority to steer the school through difficult times. They ensured that the headteacher was in full possession of the facts regarding the school's performance at the time of his recruitment, allowing them to secure the best appointment.
- Governors receive very detailed reports from the headteacher that allow them to offer appropriate challenge and support for leaders. They are fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and regularly review the school improvement plan. Minutes of governing body meetings show robust questioning about the school's performance.
- The governing body has sought ways to improve its effectiveness, acting on recommendations through audits on their methods of operating and on safeguarding, for example.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Safeguarding at the school is underpinned by risk assessments, procedures and policies that make the duties of staff explicit. All staff have been trained in spotting signs of abuse or potential radicalisation of pupils.
- The scrupulous work of the pastoral team in caring for vulnerable pupils is helping these pupils and their families to overcome substantial barriers to learning. Staff work effectively in school and with external agencies to get families the assistance they need. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about actions taken by leaders to keep them safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- There has been considerable change in staffing since the last inspection and around one third of teachers are new to the school this year. Some teachers have gaps in their subject knowledge and have been unable to plan sets of lessons that will enable pupils to successfully acquire and embed new knowledge.
- Although improving under the new headteacher, some teachers' expectations of what pupils will learn and the quality of work they produce are not high enough. Teachers have not been consistent in using pupils' prior knowledge to plan learning that will help pupils to make rapid progress. This has led to the underachievement of some pupils,

particularly the most able and boys.

- Learning support assistants are effective in their work with pupils, particularly when leading phonics. However, in some classes, low prior attaining pupils are spending too much time with learning support assistants and too little time being taught by a teacher, hindering the progress they make.
- While the teaching of phonics is effective, low prior attaining readers are less able to use a range of skills and are over-dependent on segmenting words, interrupting their fluency and understanding. The most able pupils read with expression in both key stages 1 and 2.
- Work in pupils' books shows that their progress in mathematics is inconsistent across the school. In some classes, teachers are making good use of resources and ensuring that pupils have ample opportunity to acquire new knowledge in a graduated way. However, this is not the case in all classes because tasks are not well matched to pupils' ability, resulting in some pupils making slow progress, particularly in lower key stage 2.
- Some teachers are not consistent in their use of the school's behaviour policy. This is especially the case where teaching is less effective in meeting pupils' needs, so pupils do not remain on task and their work suffers.
- Teachers are receiving guidance from leaders on how to enliven and make their teaching in science relevant for pupils. However, to date, pupils have not been given enough opportunity to develop their scientific enquiry or experimental skills fully.
- Teaching is improving because teachers have belief in their leaders and want to succeed. They welcome the training and guidance they have received. Some pupils value their teachers, saying, 'teachers have a fun way of doing the learning,' and, 'they try to challenge you'.
- Some teaching is leading to good learning, particularly in upper key stage 1 and upper key stage 2. In these classes, teachers are capturing pupils' interests so they are keen to learn. Teachers have chosen their methods carefully so their pupils are making stronger progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils of all ages benefit from a raft of activities designed to help them live a healthy and active life. For example, Year 5 pupils take part in a programme to help them to resist peer pressure. Pupils benefit from taking part in fitness programmes, and speakers have visited school to advise pupils on how to eat well.
- Leaders regularly deliver assemblies to teach pupils about British values and to introduce them to inspirational role models. Pupils spoke well about the characteristics of Nelson Mandela and Martin Luther King, for example. Teachers have taken pupils to the local mosque and relationships with St Stephen's Church have helped pupils to deepen their understanding of similarities between faiths.

- Staff are acutely aware of the need to support pupils' social and emotional well-being. Supported by the leader for SEND, they have detailed knowledge of individual pupils and work closely with social care to support pupils who are vulnerable. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own actions and consequently, pupils are kind and considerate towards each other.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. This is because pupils' attitudes to learning are not as good as they could be in every class. Most pupils show respect for each other, but when activities are not interesting enough, some pupils become restless and are not always willing to try their best.
- The school attendance officer is effective in her support for families who are struggling to attend regularly and on time. As a result, pupils' attendance is improving and is now broadly in line with national averages. Leaders have been robust in promoting punctuality and most pupils arrive to school on time. However, a few pupils with SEND are too frequently absent from school. This is hampering their ability to make the rapid progress they need to catch up with others.
- Pupils conduct themselves well around school and during playtimes. Lunchtimes are sociable and pupils play calmly alongside each other. High levels of supervision contribute to pupils feeling safe and happy in school.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- In 2017, the attainment of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 was well below national averages. In 2018, pupils' attainment was below national figures in reading, but broadly in line with national figures in writing and mathematics. Too few high prior attaining pupils attained the higher standard.
- In 2017, pupils' progress in writing was well above the national figure in writing, broadly in line in reading and below national averages in mathematics. In 2018, while pupils' progress was broadly average in reading and writing, progress in mathematics was above national figures.
- The attainment of boys in key stage 2 in 2018 was well below that of girls in reading and writing. Boys made better progress than girls in mathematics. Disadvantaged pupils made better progress than other pupils in school, but less than other pupils nationally.
- In 2018, only half of Year 6 pupils attained the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined, leaving half poorly prepared for secondary school. Nearly two thirds of Year 6 pupils are on track to achieve the combined standard this year.
- In key stage 1, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has been in the bottom 20% when compared with that of pupils nationally for at least three years. In 2018, pupils overall did not make secure progress from their starting points. Disadvantaged pupils did better than other pupils in school, but no disadvantaged pupils attained the higher standard in mathematics.

- The proportion of pupils achieving the Year 1 phonics screening check has improved for the last two years, but remains below the national average. This year, more pupils are on track to achieve the phonics check.
- Work in pupils' books shows that the amount of progress they make is inconsistent across the school. Pupils are currently making the most secure progress in Years 5 and 6. Overall, disadvantaged pupils are making steady progress in all key stages. High prior attainers are not yet showing they can reach the higher standard, and low prior attainers are struggling to complete work to a standard expected for their age.
- The school's own assessment information shows that the rate of pupils' progress overall is accelerating. More pupils are on track to attain expected standards, particularly in key stage 2. However, differences between boys and girls are stark in some classes, with more girls on track to achieve well in reading and writing.
- Pupils with SEND make secure 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.

Early years provision

Good

- Almost all children enter Nursery with skills and knowledge below those typically seen for their age. Staff help them to settle well and to acquire readiness for learning so that around one quarter enter the Reception class with skills that are typical for their age.
- The early years leader and deputy headteacher have a clear view of the impact of teaching in the setting. They carefully track children's progress through the early learning goals and adjust activities regularly to help children to develop the skills they need to equip them for school.
- Staff across the setting have high expectations of what children can do. Thus, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development has risen incrementally over the last three years. This year, the number of children on track to achieve the expected standard is broadly in line with national figures.
- Leaders use staff to good effect to meet the needs of children with varying abilities. Learning support assistants effectively support children's learning in all areas, particularly in phonics. Effective teaching is helping disadvantaged children to make rapid progress so that when they leave Reception, differences between these children and others are negligible.
- Boys generally arrive less well prepared than girls for the demands of Reception and leaders have done much to help boys accelerate their progress. Staff run many small teaching groups to help boys to develop their number, speech and phonic awareness. As a result of this work, differences between the attainment of boys and girls are rapidly diminishing.
- Children demonstrate good learning behaviours. Some can stay at activities for sustained periods of time, concentrating hard and learning through play. This is because activities are thoughtfully planned and challenge children, developing their ability to think.
- Staff have ensured that safeguarding is effective and statutory welfare requirements

are met. Risk assessments are in place to mitigate potential dangers when using equipment. Staff are appropriately trained in safeguarding and paediatric first aid. Staff have successfully worked to involve parents in their child's education. Parents are supported and encouraged to share books at home, to join workshops to find out how their child learns, and to contribute to their child's online learning journal. During the inspection, some parents were accompanying their children and teachers to the local park to take part in forest skills. Parents spoken to by inspectors were very appreciative of these initiatives and feel staff do a really good job.

School details

Unique reference number	107323
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	10086827

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	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	495
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joyce Simpson
Headteacher	Paul Urry
Telephone number	01274 731698
Website	www.ststephens.bradford.sch.uk
Email address	office@ststephens.bradford.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 March 2010

Information about this school

- St Stephen's Church of England (Aided) Primary School is twice the size of an average primary school. The school has doubled in size since the previous inspection.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above average.
- 90% of pupils are from a range of different ethnic backgrounds, the largest of which is Asian or Asian British Pakistani. 70% of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- Children in the Reception class attend full time. Children in Nursery and the provision for two-year-olds attend part time.
- The headteacher was newly appointed to the school in September 2018. At this point, he became the sixth headteacher in four years.

- There has been considerable turnover of staff. Over 60% of staff were not at the school during the previous inspection and many staff are new to teaching.
- The school last received a section 48 inspection in January 2015.

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 all classes. Inspectors were accompanied to several of the lessons by senior leaders.
- 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 three 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 15 parents were taken into account through Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. They considered the views of 44 parents expressed through the school's own questionnaire. Inspectors also spoke to 12 parents who attended a meeting and several more as they brought their children to school.
- Inspectors also considered the views of the 279 pupils taken from the school's own questionnaire and the 44 staff who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire.

Inspection team

Lesley Butcher, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Alison Ashworth	Ofsted Inspector
Mary Lanovy-Taylor	Ofsted Inspector
Linda Collier	Ofsted Inspector

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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.

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