

Jesson's CofE Primary School (VA)

School Street, Dudley, West Midlands DY1 2AQ

Inspection dates

30 April – 1 May 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	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The school has been through a period of disrupted leadership. As a result, leaders and governors have not maintained the standards of education that were in place at the time of the last inspection.
- In recent years, not all leaders' and teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve have been high enough, especially for those who are vulnerable. Consequently, too few pupils achieve the standards expected for their age, especially at the end of early years and key stage 2.
- The support provided by some teaching assistants is not as effective as it could be. Pupils are not always moved on in their learning.
- The quality of teaching is inconsistent, including in the early years. Some lessons are not well matched to pupils' needs, or pupils may not take a full part in lessons. When this happens, it slows the progress that they make.
- Pupil premium funding has not been used well to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply their learning independently.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. However, teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not equally high in each subject and across each year group.
- Assessment and monitoring systems do not yet fully support leaders and governors in monitoring pupils' progress effectively.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher, supported by governors, has taken decisive action to strengthen the school's leadership.
- Governors and leaders are fully aware of the areas requiring improvement. They are now taking effective action to address these.
- Pupils' behaviour is well managed and there are effective systems in place for pupils who need additional support.
- Effective approaches to teaching phonics, reading and writing have been developed, including additional resources and staff training. As a result, pupils' attainment is starting to improve.
- Most pupils enjoy coming to school. They are polite, happy and keen to learn.
- Pupils are very well cared for. Pastoral support for pupils and their families is strong.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - the new leadership team works together effectively to maximise its impact on pupils' outcomes
 - the curriculum is further developed and pupils make good progress across a wide range of subjects
 - pupil premium funding is used well to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils, including in the early years
 - governors implement their action plan to further strengthen their effectiveness in holding leaders to account.
- Improve pupils' outcomes across the school by ensuring that:
 - leaders and teachers have consistently high expectations about what pupils can achieve, especially those who are disadvantaged, those who speak English as an additional language or those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)
 - lessons are carefully planned to maximise pupils' progress.
- Further improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, including in the early years, by ensuring that:
 - the revised approaches to the teaching of phonics, reading and writing are embedded
 - teaching is well matched to pupils' needs and little lesson time is lost
 - teachers and teaching assistants apply recent training to develop strong and consistent practice
 - questioning is used to deepen pupils' understanding and encourage pupils to take a full part in lessons
 - pupils are given opportunities to apply their learning independently in a range of contexts
 - assessment and monitoring processes are robust
 - all teaching assistants are used effectively to maximise pupils' outcomes.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- In recent years, the school has experienced a period of significant disruption to its leadership, which has had a detrimental impact on many aspects of school life, including the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes. However, the headteacher, supported by governors, has taken effective action to address this underperformance. Although inconsistencies remain, there is evidence of improvement in many areas. Further improvements and time to embed developments are required to secure consistently strong outcomes.
- Leaders and governors have responded positively to the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. For example, approaches to the teaching of phonics, reading and writing have been revised. The school's senior leadership team has been expanded and strengthened. The newly formed team now has the capacity to undertake, and sustain, the necessary developments.
- Leaders and governors have a shared understanding of the school's current priorities. Stronger performance management and training for staff at all levels are helping to raise expectations. Everyone is working to achieve the school's vision for pupils to 'be the best that you can be'. Staff are optimistic about the changes which are taking place and feel that they are having a positive effect. Almost all staff who completed Ofsted's staff questionnaire are proud to work in the school and feel well supported by their leaders.
- Leaders have recently strengthened systems to assess and monitor pupils' progress in English and mathematics. However, leaders are not yet fully confident about the accuracy of all the information provided.
- All pupils experience a broad and balanced curriculum which is linked to the requirements of the national curriculum. Music and the arts have a high profile across the school and all pupils learn a musical instrument in Year 4. Pupils benefit from specialist teaching in music, Spanish and computing. However, the quality of teaching in some subjects is not good enough. For example, some teachers' subject knowledge is not strong enough in some subjects, such as science and physical education, to ensure that pupils make consistently strong progress.
- Pupils benefit from a range of extra-curricular activities, such as sports, singing in a choir and computing.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is strong and closely linked to the school's Christian ethos. The school ensures that pupils experience a wide range of opportunities to develop their understanding, such as visits and residential trips, raising money for charity and the discussion of spiritual 'big questions'. Pupils demonstrate an age-appropriate understanding of fundamental British values, such as democracy and tolerance. They learn about a range of different faiths and cultures and are generally respectful of each other. As a result, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Until recently, leaders and governors did not monitor the use of additional funding rigorously enough. Pupil premium funding, in particular, has had too little impact on improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. Current funding is being spent appropriately to support stronger teaching and to enable all pupils to access clubs and

trips. The primary physical education (PE) and sport premium is used to provide a wide range of effective after-school sporting opportunities for pupils, including netball, cricket and football clubs. It is also used to enable staff to share good practice across the school, improving the overall quality of PE teaching.

- Support for pupils with SEND is increasingly effective. Pupils' needs are identified earlier and addressed in a variety of ways, including extra support in class and specialist interventions from both school staff and external agencies. The SEND co-ordinators plan an appropriate programme of support for each pupil. However, the impact of this support on the progress made by pupils with SEND is not always tracked effectively. Training for teaching assistants is having a positive effect, for example in relation to support for pupils with social and emotional needs. However, more training is needed to maximise teaching assistants' effectiveness during lessons. Parents and carers are involved in regular reviews of their children's progress.
- Leaders are improving the support for pupils who speak English as an additional language, for both those new to speaking English and advanced bilingual speakers. It is too soon to see the impact of this work on such pupils' outcomes.
- Parents spoken to during the inspection were generally positive about the work of the school. Some parents who completed Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, raised concerns about behaviour and bullying. These concerns were not substantiated during the inspection.

Governance of the school

- The governing body is well led by the chair of governors. Governors are increasingly effective and now hold leaders better to account for pupils' progress. They have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas that require improvement. For example, they are well informed about the developments in the curriculum that have taken place since the last inspection. The school is now on a more secure financial footing and governors have better oversight of the use of pupil premium and sports funding. Governors actions are clearly recorded in the minutes of their meetings.
- When the school experienced disrupted leadership, governors were initially unaware of some of the difficulties and did not respond quickly enough. When these became known, the governing body took appropriate action to improve the school's leadership.
- Governors recently completed a skills' audit, and an action plan has been created to help maximise their effectiveness. Many governors have completed a range of training courses to support them in their roles.
- Despite making efforts to recruit new governors, there have been several vacancies on the governing body for a considerable period of time, especially for foundation governors. This has reduced the overall capacity of the governing body.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Ensuring that children are kept safe is central to the work of the school, and leaders have created a culture where all staff know that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. The school is a safe environment for pupils and they are well cared for at all times. All staff understand their

responsibilities in keeping pupils safe and they have regular child protection and 'Prevent' duty training.

- The safeguarding team maintains the required confidential records and, when appropriate, works closely with relevant external agencies. Leaders follow up concerns with these agencies as necessary.
- Leaders ensure that appropriate checks are carried out on all adults appointed to work at the school.
- Pupils spoken to said that they feel safe in school and know that the staff are there to look after them. Pupils learn how to keep safe, for example when online, through visits from external agencies such as the NSPCC and how to look after themselves when they are out and about in the community.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- While there is much effective and engaging teaching across the school, the quality of teaching overall is not good enough. Some teachers' expectations continue to be too low and so some pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable. For example, the tasks given to middle- and lower-ability pupils sometimes do not match their needs, being either too easy or too hard. Teaching is often stronger for the most able pupils and, as a result, they make more progress.
- Teachers generally use questioning effectively to deepen pupils' understanding. They encourage pupils to make links with previous learning and apply their knowledge to new contexts. However, in some lessons, pupils can avoid taking an active part by not volunteering answers or working very slowly so that they do not complete many activities. Adults do not always pick up on this, which means that those pupils do not make as much progress as they could. In some lessons, adults control the pace of the learning too tightly so that pupils cannot move on to the next task when they are ready, or the activity puts a limit on what the pupils can achieve. This also has a negative impact on the amount of progress pupils make.
- The quality of support provided by teaching assistants varies. Opportunities to support learning or address misconceptions are sometimes missed. Where support is most effective, teaching assistants and teachers work together so that teaching assistants are aware of the lesson's content and have the necessary subject knowledge to support pupils' learning effectively.
- Mathematics teaching is improving across the school and staff are well supported by the subject leader. Pupils successfully develop number skills and have regular opportunities to reason mathematically and apply their knowledge to solve problems. Most pupils enjoy mathematics lessons, which include a broad range of practical and engaging activities.
- Since the last inspection, as a result of training and the work of subject leaders, the teaching of phonics has improved. There are now clear routines in place and teachers model sounds accurately. Most pupils engage well in lessons and are increasingly using phonics skills to decode unknown words. However, sometimes activities lack challenge and pupils do not move on quickly enough. The subject knowledge of some teaching assistants is not yet sufficiently developed to provide consistently effective support.

- Reading has an increasingly high profile across the school, and the reading books pupils take home are now more closely matched to their phonic abilities. A wider selection of books is available, including non-fiction, to encourage pupils to read widely and often. All year groups read a broad range of high-quality texts. Effective systems to assess and record pupils' progress in reading have been developed. Pupils who need more reading practice are heard to read regularly in school.
- A highly structured approach to the teaching of writing is used consistently across the school. This is helping to improve the quality of writing for most pupils. Pupils have regular opportunities to improve their writing. There is a clear focus on developing and extending pupils' knowledge of vocabulary. Pupils currently have limited opportunities to apply their writing skills independently in new contexts and across a range of subjects. The quality of pupils' handwriting is improving.
- The quality of teaching across the foundation subjects is not consistently good enough, for instance in history, science and PE. Some teaching is highly effective, building on pupils' prior learning and actively developing their subject knowledge or skills. Conversely, some tasks are too simplistic and do not allow pupils to demonstrate what they know. Leaders do not have an agreed view about the accurate use of spelling or punctuation in subjects other than English.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils generally show positive attitudes to learning and they are polite and happy.
- Classrooms are welcoming environments, which are mostly well organised and resourced. There are strong relationships across the school, and adults model the positive behaviour that they expect from pupils. A wide range of displays support pupils' learning and celebrate their achievements. Celebration assemblies acknowledge pupils' successes, whether they are in academic achievement, effort or behaviour.
- The pastoral support available to pupils and their families is a strength of the school. Examples include counselling sessions, parenting and adult literacy classes and practical day-to-day help.
- Pupils have opportunities to contribute to school life and the wider community, for instance, by being a 'Jesson's young leader' or by taking part in events to raise money for charity. Pupils take these roles seriously and are proud to undertake them. Such experiences help prepare pupils well for the next stage in their education.
- Pupils who attend the school's breakfast and after-school clubs are well looked after and have access to a range of activities. There are effective systems in place to safeguard pupils on arrival and departure. Pupils socialise well with adults and each other.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.

- Behaviour in classrooms and around school is generally of a high standard, and most pupils are keen to learn. There is a sense of order and calmness throughout the school. When an incident of poor behaviour occurs, adults deal with it effectively and disruption to learning for others is minimised. Pupils follow clear routines at breaktime and lunchtime. No poor behaviour was seen during the inspection.
- The school's behaviour policy, which focuses on encouraging positive behaviour, was written in consultation with staff, pupils and parents. It is simple and straightforward. School behaviour records are regularly analysed to identify patterns in behaviour so that these can be addressed effectively.
- Pupils generally show a high degree of tolerance and respect for others. They understand what bullying is and the various forms that it may take. Pupils spoken to are confident that should incidents of bullying or racism occur, an adult will deal with them quickly.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school, and attendance is in line with the national average. The importance of good attendance has a high profile across the school. Leaders track attendance carefully and promptly follow up any absence. They are alert to the possibility of children going missing from education and work with external agencies to minimise any risk.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Following the appointment of the headteacher in 2015, outcomes improved across many areas of the school, although attainment remained below national averages. However, in 2018, outcomes declined. Fewer than half of the pupils in key stage 2 achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics. This was significantly lower than the national average. The attainment of the most able pupils was stronger and at least in line with the national average.
- Evidence in pupils' books shows that more pupils are now working at the standards expected for their age. Leaders and teachers are clearer on the standards pupils should be reaching and the need for pupils to make stronger progress to attain well. However, improvements in outcomes do not yet apply equally to all subjects and year groups. There is more to do to ensure that all pupils make good progress across the school.
- Interventions for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND are now more closely matched to pupils' needs. The effectiveness of interventions to support the development of pupils' reading skills is carefully tracked and many pupils are making strong progress. The tracking of pupils' progress linked to other areas of support is not as well developed.
- Outcomes in the Year 1 phonics screening check have been variable over time. In 2018, just over half of the pupils met the expected standard. Improvements in the quality of teaching are having a positive impact on pupils' progress, and the standards of current pupils are higher than in the past, including those who speak English as an additional language. Systems are in place to assess regularly all pupils' reading and comprehension skills. Progress is currently strongest for pupils in key stage 1 and those with SEND.
- Over time, attainment in writing has been particularly low at the end of key stage 2. The writing of current pupils, however, demonstrates better progress for most pupils.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- On average, children join the early years unit with knowledge and skills a little below those which are typical for their age. In the past, rates of progress have been too variable and, as a result, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development has been well below that seen nationally. Children who attend the school's Nursery generally achieve better than those who join the school at the start of Reception. Children are well supported so that they can make an effective start when they move into Year 1.
- Leaders and the early years team are taking appropriate steps to strengthen the provision in the early years, although it is not yet consistently good. Staff training and a clear vision ensure that children increasingly benefit from a wide range of engaging and purposeful activities. Improvements to the early years' environment, both indoors and outdoors, along with changes to the curriculum, are having a positive impact on children's learning. Children's 'learning journeys' indicate that all children are making progress, although for some children it is too slow.
- The early years leader knows the children well, and for those children who need additional help to catch up with their peers, interventions are increasingly well planned. The early years unit is a language-rich environment. This is helping children at the early stages of learning English to develop their oracy skills, although leaders recognise that support could be more focused.
- Safeguarding procedures are effective and welfare requirements are met fully. Support for children with social and emotional needs is strong.
- The teaching of phonics skills, which begins in Nursery, is generally effective and matched to children's needs. However, some teaching assistants do not yet have the subject knowledge to support the children's development effectively. Misconceptions are sometimes not picked up and children are not moved on as quickly as they could be. This reduces the progress many children make.
- Staff are working hard to improve the quality of children's writing. Children write regularly and their writing is celebrated through classroom displays. The most able children apply their phonics skills to support their writing and can write in simple sentences. However, the progress of some children is inhibited because the activities that they are asked to complete lack challenge or limit the amount that they can write.
- Pupil premium funding is not currently used to support developments in the early years.
- The early years staff are welcoming and encourage regular communication with parents. Transition into school is supported through home visits and workshops to help parents support their children's learning, for example in phonics and mathematics.

School details

Unique reference number	103845
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	10086941

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	698
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Emma Woodhouse
Headteacher	Sarah Lea
Telephone number	01384 816825
Website	www.jessons.dudley.sch.uk/
Email address	data@jessons.dudley.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	7 November 2018

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school. There are three classes per year group from Reception to Year 6.
- A section 48 inspection to evaluate the distinctiveness and effectiveness of Jesson's CofE Primary (VA) as a Church of England school took place in March 2015.
- Nursery children attend school on a part-time or a full-time basis from the age of three years. Children in Reception attend full time.
- The headteacher has been in post since January 2015. The school's senior leadership team has recently been expanded and now includes the headteacher, a deputy headteacher and three assistant headteachers.
- Pupils are from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. Around half of the pupils speak English as an additional language, although only a small proportion of pupils are at an early stage of learning to speak English.

- The school has a higher than average proportion of pupils who receive support for SEND. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is a little lower than that found nationally.
- A small number of pupils attend the Intensive Learning Unit for two sessions per week. This provision is run by Dudley Learning Support Service.
- The school offers a breakfast club and an after-school club. The local governing body manages this provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in over 30 lessons. A number of these observations were undertaken jointly with a member of the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors met with pupils, looked at many examples of pupils' work and spoke to pupils formally and informally. One inspector listened to some pupils read. The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime, lunchtime and around the school, as well as in lessons. An inspector also observed pupils at the breakfast and after-school clubs.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, leaders and members of staff. The lead inspector met with five representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The lead inspector spoke to a representative of the local authority on the telephone.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation. This included the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, records relating to safeguarding and attendance, minutes of meetings of the governing body, school performance data and the school's website.
- Inspectors considered parents' opinions through 23 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 16 free-text responses. Inspectors spoke to some parents before school on the first day of the inspection.
- As part of the inspection, 22 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire were considered.

Inspection team

Catherine Crooks, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Julie Griffiths	Ofsted Inspector
Susan Helps	Ofsted Inspector
David Walker	Ofsted Inspector

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