

St John's Church of England Primary School

Maple Road, Penge, London SE20 8HU

Inspection dates

3 to 4 July 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Since the last inspection, trustees, leaders and staff have improved the quality of education provided.
- Leaders ensure that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. As a result, most pupils in the school make strong progress in English, mathematics and in the wider curriculum.
- In 2018, pupils' progress at the end of key stage 2 in mathematics was below the national average. Leaders' actions have paid off in improving current pupils' progress in this subject.
- Trustees of the Aquinas Trust have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development. They support and challenge leaders well.
- Safeguarding is effective. Pupils report that they feel safe at school. They are taught how to keep themselves safe in a wide range of situations.
- Leaders' actions have been effective in improving pupils' attendance. It is now in line with the national average.
- Pupils are well behaved. They are respectful to their peers, adults and visitors.
- Children in the early years make good progress from their starting points. They benefit from a wide range of exciting opportunities to support their learning and development.
- Leaders have developed a broad and balanced curriculum. It enables most pupils to develop strong knowledge, understanding and skills in a wide range of subjects. However, at times, pupils, particularly the most able, are not sufficiently challenged in their learning. Consequently, pupils do not always achieve as well as they should.
- Although the teaching of phonics is strong, pupils' progress in reading in key stage 1 does not build on this sufficiently. This is because pupils are not given enough opportunities to practise what they have learned.
- The role of middle leaders is not developed enough to fully impact on pupils' progress in their respective areas, including the early years.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the impact of middle leaders by ensuring that they have a more strategic approach to the areas that they lead, including the early years provision.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that pupils make the best possible progress they can by:
 - raising class teachers' expectations of what the most able pupils can do and achieve
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to deepen their learning, particularly the most able pupils
 - ensuring that pupils, especially those who struggle with their reading, are provided with reading books that better match the sounds they are learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Trustees and leaders have been tenacious in improving the quality of teaching, learning and leadership. They have acted swiftly and skilfully to address weaknesses in these areas. Leaders support teachers effectively in order to ensure that pupils make good progress. As a result, pupils' progress and attainment is improving steadily.
- Most parents and carers agree that the school is well led and managed. They recognise and value the changes made by the new leadership team. Parents say that the school has improved since the last inspection. Parents typically feel that leaders 'have the vision and a commitment to turn the school around'.
- Leaders are rigorous in monitoring the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. They provide teachers with useful feedback, which helps them to improve their own teaching. Senior leaders skilfully check that pupils make good progress.
- The curriculum offers pupils many opportunities to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills in a broad range of subjects. Leaders have made strong links between subjects to make learning more interesting and meaningful for pupils. For example, as part of their history topic on 'Pre-historic Britain', in science Year 3 pupils learn about how pre-historic people made light at night.
- Leaders provide pupils with a wide range of activities to enrich their learning beyond the classroom. During the inspection, Year 2 pupils visited a local museum and Year 6 pupils went on their residential trip. Professionals visit the school to raise pupils' aspirations. For example, newly qualified solicitors motivated older pupils by talking to them about the effort and hard work that is required. Such experiences support pupils' learning and personal development well.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is effective. Leaders monitor the quality of teaching to make sure that these pupils make good progress in their learning. Leaders use the additional funding wisely to meet the needs of these pupils. They work closely with other professionals, such as counsellors, art therapists and educational psychologists to provide support for pupils when needed.
- Leaders also use the pupil premium prudently to ensure that it makes a positive difference to disadvantaged pupils' progress and attainment. They provide this group of pupils with a range of opportunities and learning experiences that are bespoke to their needs. As a result, disadvantaged pupils across the school make good progress and achieve well.
- Leaders' work to raise pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is effective. This is linked to the school's Christian values. Leaders provide pupils with a wide range of experiences and opportunities. The cultural diversity represented in the school is valued and celebrated through events such as 'Diversity Week'.
- Middle leaders have some understanding of what is working well and what they need to improve. They check the quality of learning and pupils' progress in their respective subjects and areas of responsibility. However, at times their approach lacks the necessary strategic planning, rigour and incisiveness to bring about rapid improvement.

Governance of the school

- There is a strong partnership between the trustees and senior leaders of the school. They have an accurate understanding of the school's performance. Trustees support leaders well and hold them to account for pupils' progress and attainment.
- Members of the trust board have stabilised the school by focusing on the quality of leadership in the school. They have been successful in improving leadership and the quality of teaching. Consequently, current pupils now receive a good quality of education.
- Trustees now capitalise on the expertise of leaders within the school to disseminate good practice to other schools within the trust.
- Trustees regularly carry out safeguarding audits to check that the school's policies and procedures are followed thoroughly to ensure pupils' safety and welfare.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. An overwhelming majority of parents agree that their children are safe and well cared for.
- Pupils report that they feel safe at school. They say that there are trusted adults within the school they can talk to, should they be worried about anything.
- Staff receive regular training and updates on safeguarding matters. Consequently, they are confident in knowing how to raise concerns about pupils, should they need to.
- Leaders are aware of the risks that pupils are exposed to within the local community. They work closely with parents and the police to safeguard pupils from potential harm. Older pupils receive workshops from the police about the dangers associated with knife crime, gangs and cyberbullying.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Since the previous inspection, leaders have improved the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. They are effective in demonstrating to teachers how they can improve further to ensure that pupils make good gains in their learning. Consequently, most pupils make strong progress and achieve well.
- Teachers build on pupils' prior knowledge well. They sequence lessons skilfully to embed pupils' learning in the subjects taught.
- Pupils are taught to write well. They are given plenty of opportunities to learn to write in different styles and for a range of purposes. For example, pupils in Year 5 learn to write newspaper articles based on the 'Titanic' disaster. Pupils apply their core skills effectively to write in subjects other than English.
- Typically, the teaching of mathematics is effective. Pupils develop strong calculation skills and a good understanding of mathematical concepts. They use their mathematical skills well to solve problems and develop reasoning skills. Pupils are given plenty of opportunities to apply these skills in other subjects, such as science. For example, pupils in Year 2 used their measurement skills of time to investigate whether they can

run faster as they get older.

- Science is taught well. Teachers provide pupils with opportunities to develop their scientific knowledge, understanding and skills. They provide pupils with the correct scientific vocabulary to help pupils use it correctly. In addition, pupils are provided with sufficient opportunities to explore scientific concepts.
- Overall, the teaching of reading is effective. Leaders and teachers make sure that pupils develop reading abilities that are appropriate for their age. Teachers read aloud to pupils regularly to promote a love of reading. Pupils told inspectors they enjoy reading both at home and at school. Within phonics lessons, pupils, especially those who struggle with their reading, are taught well to use their phonics knowledge and skills to read unfamiliar words. However, teachers do not routinely give them reading books that will help them practise the sounds they have learned. This limits their progress.
- Most pupils learn well in subjects across the curriculum. However, the work in pupils' books shows that, occasionally, the activities set for pupils do not routinely enable pupils to deepen their learning. This is especially so for the most able pupils and it varies across subjects. Teachers' expectations vary for what the most able pupils can achieve.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils enjoy coming to school.
- Pupils talked confidently about their favourite pieces of work in different subjects. They take great pride in presenting their work neatly and with care.
- Leaders provide pupils with many opportunities to take on additional roles and responsibilities within the school. There are school councillors, play leaders and travel ambassadors, who play an active role in the different aspects of school life. Pupils experience democracy first hand, as they are elected for their positions of responsibility. Such experiences support pupils' development of social skills well.
- Pupils say that bullying rarely happens and, if it does, adults are quick to resolve any issues quickly. This is confirmed by the school records. Events such as 'Anti-Bullying' day raise pupils' awareness about the different forms of bullying.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe in a variety of ways, such as the school's personal, social, health and economic education programme, assemblies and within the curriculum. As a result, pupils know how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations, including when using the internet.
- Pupils are encouraged to stay fit and live healthy lifestyles. Leaders use the sports funding effectively. They provide a range of sporting activities and physical education lessons, which promote pupils' physical development well. Similarly, leaders work closely with other professionals and are involved in projects to support pupils' emotional well-being effectively.

Behaviour

- Typically, the behaviour of pupils in and around the school is good.
- Leaders have put in place an effective behaviour management system, which is based on the school's values and Christian ethos, to promote positive behaviour. Pupils told inspectors that behaviour has improved since last year. This is reflected in the school's records, which show that incidents of poor behaviour have reduced significantly. A large majority of staff, parents and carers agree that pupils are well behaved.
- Pupils are polite and well-mannered. They listen attentively to each other's points of view and show respect.
- Leaders' actions to improve attendance have paid dividends. Their rigorous approach to ensuring that pupils attend school regularly has resulted in a significant reduction in persistent absence. The fixed-term exclusion rates have also reduced. Additionally, leaders work closely with external agencies and families to improve pupils' attendance and behaviour. As a result, attendance is now in line with the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The improvements to the quality of teaching have resulted in most pupils making strong progress in English, mathematics and in subjects across the curriculum.
- Over the last three years, pupils' progress at the end of key stage 2 in mathematics has been below average. Inspection evidence confirms that most current pupils make consistently good progress. Historical underachievement in this subject is being eliminated due to leaders' effective actions and their high expectations.
- The work in pupils' writing books shows that pupils make good progress in developing writing skills that are expected for their age.
- Leaders use the pupil premium funding well to improve the progress that disadvantaged pupils make in their learning. Consequently, most of these pupils make good progress in reading, writing, mathematics and in the wider curriculum.
- Pupils with SEND also make good progress in their learning. This is due to leaders' thorough monitoring of their progress, the additional support and interventions they receive.
- The most able pupils are not routinely challenged in their learning in subjects across the curriculum, including writing and mathematics. As a result, they do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Typically, pupils make good progress in reading. Older pupils read fluently and accurately. They use their knowledge of phonics effectively in order to read unfamiliar words. Although younger pupils use their phonics to read unfamiliar words, occasionally the books they read do not enable them to fully apply their phonics knowledge and skills.
- Overall, the work in pupils' books and on display around the school shows that most pupils make good progress in the wider curriculum. However, opportunities for them to

gain a deeper understanding vary across subjects. Occasionally, the tasks set by teachers limit pupils, particularly the most able pupils, from gaining deeper understanding.

Early years provision

Good

- Teaching in the early years is effective. Adults give children many opportunities and activities to support their learning and development. For example, inspectors noted how well children retold the story of 'The Boy who Cried Wolf'. Children used their knowledge of the story well to write their own story. Adults provided children with resources, such as sound mats and word banks to help them spell unfamiliar words.
- The teaching of phonics is good. Children learn to read and write words and sentences well, using the newly taught sounds.
- Children are well behaved. They are happy and feel safe in class because of the clearly established routines. Adults use praise effectively, to boost children's confidence.
- Children make good progress in all areas of learning from their different starting points. Adults use assessment information well to identify children's needs and provide appropriate activities to support their learning. They make strong progress due to effective teaching.
- Parents are kept well informed about their children's learning through regular newsletters. Leaders and staff support parents effectively in order to make sure that their children make a good start in the Reception class.
- Although the early years provision is led well overall, there is scope for leaders to work more strategically to secure improvement.

School details

Unique reference number	140648
Local authority	Bromley
Inspection number	10088887

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	198
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Simon Parker
Executive Headteacher	Lynda Doel
Telephone number	020 8778 5066
Website	www.st-johns.bromley.sch.uk
Email address	admin@st-johns.bromley.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	7 to 8 March 2017

Information about this school

- St John's Church of England School is part of the Aquinas Church of England Trust, which is a multi-academy trust. The trust is made up of members, a board of trustees, finance and audit, and education scrutiny committees. Trustees hold the senior leaders to account for all aspects of the school's work.
- Since the last inspection, there have been significant changes to the senior leadership team. The executive headteacher and the two assistant headteachers were appointed in September 2018.
- The school's last section 48 inspection took place in May 2016.
- This school is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is also above average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited lessons to observe pupils' learning, mainly with senior leaders. They scrutinised pupils' work within and outside of lessons.
- Inspectors met formally with two groups of pupils to elicit their views about learning and school life. They also spoke to pupils informally during playtimes and lunchtimes. Inspectors took into consideration the 20 responses to Ofsted's pupils' survey. They listened to pupils read from key stages 1 and 2.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in a range of contexts, including in the classroom, at playtime and lunchtime.
- Meetings were held with leaders, staff, trustees and the school improvement director.
- An inspector attended the whole-school assembly.
- An inspector spoke to parents informally before the start of the school day. They considered the 12 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including the eight free-text comments. They also considered emails received.
- Inspectors analysed the 18 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of school documentation, including documents related to safeguarding, self-evaluation and information pertaining to pupils' progress and attainment.

Inspection team

Rajeshree Mehta, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Lynn Martin

Ofsted Inspector

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