

Over St John's CofE Primary School

Delamere Street, Winsford, Cheshire CW7 2LU

Inspection dates

9–10 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	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Despite the absence of key staff, the headteacher has ensured that the priorities from the school's short inspection in January 2018 have been addressed effectively.
- Senior leaders and governors know the school well. They have created a nurturing and collaborative ethos at the school that is underpinned by the school's Christian values.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. Teachers check on pupils' learning continually to support pupils who find their learning difficult. However, some of the most able pupils are not challenged to achieve the highest standards in writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2.
- Leaders have brought about improvements to the teaching of mathematics across the school. As a result, pupils in all year groups make good progress.
- There is effective identification of, and support for, the growing number of pupils at the school with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These pupils make good progress in subjects across the curriculum.
- Leaders have equipped pupils with an excellent understanding of British values and equality. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development also contributes to their outstanding personal development.
- Leaders have established a broad and balanced curriculum. Subjects across the curriculum focus on developing pupils' skills well. Pupils have opportunities to study interesting and engaging topics.
- In the early years, children are nurtured well to make good progress, often from starting points that are below, and sometimes well below, those that are typical for their age in communication, language and literacy.
- The quality of adult interactions in the early years directs and supports children well. However, adults' questions are too narrow. There are lost opportunities for children to think more carefully about their learning.
- Governors have not questioned leaders well enough about the use of the pupil premium funding, particularly how it supports some of the less able disadvantaged pupils to develop a fluent reading style.
- Writing is not taught effectively in some parts of key stage 1. This means that pupils' progress and attainment are not as good as they could otherwise be.
- Pupils are keen learners. They engage well in their work and their conduct is excellent.
- Pupils feel safe because staff care for them well. There is a culture of vigilance in school so that pupils are kept safe from harm.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that governors question leaders more closely about how the pupil premium funding is used, particularly the effect on raising disadvantaged pupils' fluency in reading.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in key stage 1 so that pupils make good progress in their writing.
- Further improve outcomes in writing and mathematics by challenging some of the most able pupils to achieve even higher standards in their work at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2.
- Improve the quality of adult interactions in the early years to encourage children to think more deeply about their learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since the school's short inspection in January 2018, the headteacher has ensured that disruption to pupils' education caused by staff absence has been handled well. Furthermore, the areas for improvement from the school's short inspection in January 2018 have been addressed effectively to ensure that the school is improving.
- Leaders have ensured that there is strong provision for promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They have also worked hard to ensure that pupils have an excellent awareness of equalities and British values. Leaders have ensured that pupils' outstanding personal development prepares them well for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders and governors have established a strong collaborative ethos among the staff team. All staff are united by the ambition to 'encourage challenge, develop confidence and inspire learning'. As a result, aspirations for pupils are high and key aspects of pupils' progress and attainment are improving.
- The headteacher has effectively addressed the weaknesses in teaching and learning which led to the low progress of pupils in writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 in 2018. The development of staff has been a central to this improvement, especially in mathematics, where leaders have implemented the curriculum well so that pupils make strong progress in their learning. Most of the staff who responded to the staff survey said that they value the opportunities that they have had to develop their skills.
- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) has ensured that the identification of pupils with SEND is based on clear evidence of need. The proportion of pupils with SEND in the school has increased, especially in key stage 1, to be well above the national average. The SENCo has ensured that there is early identification of pupils' need so that staff can support these pupils effectively. Additional funding for pupils with SEND is used well to provide resources and additional support from staff.
- Leaders have been provided with specific training to develop their areas of responsibility. The headteacher has brokered highly effective support from the local authority to support leaders to improve. Senior and middle leaders have developed a consistent approach to the leadership of their subjects which is based on a clear understanding of pupils' performance. For example, the physical education (PE) leader has made good use of the PE and sport funding to provide additional swimming sessions for Year 6 pupils so that all pupils can swim confidently and proficiently.
- Leaders have designed a broad and balanced curriculum so that pupils progressively build upon their prior learning. Leaders have ensured that topics develop pupils' subject-specific skills through interesting and engaging themes.
- Senior leaders understand their school well. This is because they have a detailed understanding of pupils' needs and have developed strong partnerships with parents and carers. The majority of parents responding to Ofsted's survey, Parent View, commented on the nurturing approach of staff. This is exemplified by the genuine warmth with which the headteacher greets each pupil by name at the start of the

school day.

Governance of the school

- In the absence of the deputy headteacher, governors revised their governance arrangements to have more frequent, focused meetings. They recently approved the temporary appointment of two acting assistant headteachers to bring about greater leadership capacity. These leaders have brought about positive changes in a short space of time, such as developing the quality of pupils' handwriting.
- Governors understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school well. However, in the absence of the pupil premium leader, they have lost sight of the effectiveness of the funding for disadvantaged pupils. They have not questioned leaders in enough depth about the outcomes achieved by pupils. Although this has not had a negative effect, they cannot accurately account for the difference that this grant is making, especially for the actions taken to improve pupils' proficiency in reading.
- Governors have a strong understanding of the measures taken to ensure that pupils are safe. They have completed basic awareness training as well as ensuring that there are governors trained in safer recruitment.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Pupils feel safe because of the caring nature of staff. All of the pupils who responded to the pupil survey say that they can talk to staff about any concerns that they have. This is because of the excellent relationships that staff have with pupils.
- Staff are vigilant because of the training and updates that they receive about safeguarding issues. Leaders and staff understand well the local risks to pupils.
- Leaders have ensured that all processes and procedures are fit for purpose. For example, the checks made on the suitability of staff are efficient and detailed.
- Leaders engage well with parents and carers to offer early support for pupils and families in need. The school has effective links with other agencies that offer more specialist services.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers design interesting and engaging tasks for pupils in subjects across the curriculum. It is clear from their books that pupils invest time and thought into their learning.
- Younger pupils decode words using their phonics skills well. They have opportunities to read, spell and write words containing their focused sounds to help them to consolidate their learning. When applying their phonics skills to their reading, pupils are successful in reading accurately. However, lower-ability pupils, and lower-ability disadvantaged pupils, continue to read from word to word rather than reading in complete sentences. The actions detailed in leaders' plans for the use of the pupil premium do not extend to ensuring that disadvantaged pupils read with fluency.

- Teaching in key stage 1 for writing is inconsistent. Pupils' work shows that errors in punctuation and grammar persist. This contrasts with pupils' work in key stage 2, which becomes progressively more accomplished. The tasks that are set for the more able pupils provide a different context to the work rather than adding additional challenge. Consequently, some of the most able pupils are not challenged to achieve greater depth in their work at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2.
- In mathematics, there is a well-thought-out curriculum plan that is sequenced to ensure that pupils build on their prior learning. Pupils' books feature a diverse range of problem-solving tasks. This provides a context for pupils' calculations and assists in developing their mathematical reasoning skills. Disadvantaged pupils' work shows that they make the same good progress as other pupils because teachers set clear expectations for all pupils' learning. However, there is a lack of challenge for some of the most able pupils to enable them to achieve the highest standards at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2.
- Pupils' work across the curriculum shows that teachers have thought clearly about how to develop pupils' knowledge and skills in different subjects by building on pupils' prior learning. For example, there is a strong progression of skills evident in pupils' ability to write in French.
- In science, pupils have frequent opportunities to conduct experiments to practise their investigative skills. This is complemented by the development of their knowledge of the science topics that they study.
- Teachers assess pupils' understanding during lessons so that they can provide pupils with support where this is necessary. Teachers question skilfully and prompt pupils to think carefully about the work that they are doing. Pupils with SEND are supported well by staff who understand their needs and next steps in learning. They ensure that expectations for pupils with SEND are high and similar to those for other pupils in the class.
- The relationships that staff have with pupils has a notable effect on pupils' engagement with their learning. Staff question pupils well so that pupils think carefully about their learning. Pupils are clear about what they are learning because of the effective examples that teachers provide for pupils to learn from. Teachers make it clear what a successful task looks like and they are adept at addressing pupils' misconceptions to ensure that pupils gain a deeper understanding of what they are learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of online safety because of the highly effective way in which this is taught. Other aspects of safety and healthy lifestyles are promoted throughout the curriculum and through the use of relevant trips and visitors to the school.
- In response to the findings of the short inspection in January 2018, leaders and governors have ensured that pupils have developed an exceptional awareness of

equality and diversity. Pupils have studied famous people and their families to celebrate difference. The Year 5 and Year 6 pupils with whom the inspector spoke clearly described the protected characteristics of the 2010 Equality Act. For example, they know that not all disabilities are visible and described in detail how differently some autistic people experience the world.

- Pupils have an excellent understanding of British values. They have a complete understanding of democracy. For example, they debate issues in class and have a precise awareness of how laws are made.
- The Christian values of the school provide a secure foundation for pupils' personal and SMSC development. For example, pupils have a detailed understanding of other faiths and how they differ from, and are similar to, their own.
- The school has been involved with the Winsford Education Partnership project to raise pupil aspirations. This has provided pupils with effective careers education. They have had opportunities to visit a range of employers, such as Manchester Airport, to widen their awareness of what career opportunities are available.
- Pupils enjoy their work. They are confident in their own abilities and display the qualities of successful learners well. Pupils have very positive attitudes towards each other. They are motivated, inquisitive and keen to learn.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' conduct in and around the school is excellent. They are polite and well-mannered at all times. They are welcoming to guests and demonstrate a clear enjoyment of their school.
- There are clear procedures in place to monitor incidents of poor behaviour. Staff log small incidents of low-level behaviour to demonstrate their vigilance. Pupils respond well to the reward systems that are in place to encourage them to behave well. They engage well in lessons. There is no disruption to learning.
- The school environment is ordered and calm. This has a clear effect on pupils' conduct. For example, pupils leave assemblies efficiently and in comfortable silence.
- The persistent absence of a very small minority of pupils affects the school's overall attendance figures, which would otherwise be broadly average. Leaders have put in place all reasonable efforts to reduce persistent absence, including the use of penalty fines. They have also ensured that there are termly rewards in place for pupils with high attendance.
- Pupils behave well on the playground and when moving around the school. The pupils who spoke to inspectors said that the use of the word 'gay' as a derogatory term is reducing but it persists. Leaders have been successful in ensuring that pupils do not use racist language.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Outcomes over time have been variable, which is, in part, due to the small numbers of pupils at the school. Pupils' progress at the end of key stage 2 in reading has been steady in the past three years and attainment over time has been broadly average.
- Leaders have responded well to the low progress made by pupils at the end of key stage 2 in 2018. As a result of their efforts, the work of current pupils demonstrates better progress in writing and mathematics. However, some of the most able pupils are not challenged well enough to achieve greater depth in writing and the higher standard in mathematics that they might otherwise be capable of achieving.
- In 2018, pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 1 was broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. The progress of current pupils in reading and mathematics is strong. However, the quality of writing in pupils' books is inconsistent and common errors persist.
- There is a growing number of pupils in key stage 1 who are supported for SEND, many of whom have autism spectrum disorder. Pupils with SEND make good progress in all aspects of their work. This is sometimes better than that of other pupils of similar ability because of the individualised support that they receive.
- Pupils' attainment in the Year 1 phonics screening check has been broadly average over time. Present pupils' attainment, as seen in their application of their phonics skills during the inspection, appears to be similarly positive.
- The majority of disadvantaged pupils across the school are lower-ability pupils. Their writing and their mathematics work show that they make good progress. Their outcomes are similar to those of other pupils in the school who have the same ability. Overall, their attainment is lower than that of other pupils nationally because of their low starting points.
- The standard of pupils' work across the broad and balanced curriculum demonstrates a strong grasp of subject-specific skills. The crisp, well-presented work in pupils' books shows that they take pride in their work and that they value their achievements.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years is led well by a reflective and experienced leader. She has an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. In response to areas for improvement identified at the short inspection in January 2018, she has taken effective action to develop the indoor and outdoor learning areas. As a result of this work, the early years staff have developed areas of learning that focus more keenly on developing children's literacy and number skills. For example, in the outdoor area, children have opportunities to weigh objects, measure the growth of sunflowers or count by walking on stepping stones.
- Staff make careful assessments of children's progress in all areas of learning to inform the learning tasks that they provide for children. They deliver a broad and balanced curriculum in a highly nurturing environment. The relationships between staff and children are excellent. This has a notable effect on children's learning. They feel safe and comfortable to explore their environment and are willing to learn.
- Children behave well. They are supported well as individuals to develop their own interests and personalities. Staff ensure that there is highly effective support for

children's personal development and welfare. However, in their interactions with children, staff are too focused on completing tasks. They do not ask open-ended questions, missing opportunities for children to develop their thinking and to direct their own learning.

- Children are taught phonics well. They are ambitious in their attempts to sound out words. For example, when reading 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' children sought to sound out the word 'metamorphosis' with some success. Staff constantly support children's phonics skills and word recognition. For example, common words are written on the classroom floor where children line up so that they can match spoken words to their written form in a practical way. Most children confidently read in class and the most able read their own work well to make sure their writing makes sense.
- Children progress well in their writing. From low starting points, the lower- and middle-ability children progress well to write statements that make sense. However, the most able children excel. Their writing is punctuated correctly and includes simple description.
- Children's mathematics work demonstrates good progress in their understanding of number from very simple starting points. In their practical and written work, pupils develop confidence in their use of addition and subtraction with numbers to 20.
- The proportion of children achieving a good level of development has fluctuated over time due to the small cohorts of children. It has been broadly average for the past two years. Attainment in 2019 is lower than it was in the past because the starting points of many of the present children are low, sometimes very low, especially in language. However, their progress is strong, as shown in examination of children's work and teachers' records during the inspection.
- Staff in the early years work well with other agencies to support children with SEND. They have played a pivotal role in identifying, as early as possible, the growing number of children in the school who have SEND.
- The early years leader has ensured that links with parents and carers are well established through frequent parents' evenings. Those parents and carers with whom the inspector spoke prized the approachability of staff and the way in which they welcome and look after children. These parents were particularly pleased with the way in which their children have progressed since starting at the school.

School details

Unique reference number	111263
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	10052941

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

This follows the short inspection that the school received under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 in January 2018.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	142
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Sarah McClellan
Headteacher	Mrs Emma Snowdon
Telephone number	01606 592608
Website	www.overstjohns.cheshire.sch.uk/
Email address	head@overstjohns.cheshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	10–11 June 2014

Information about this school

- Over St John's is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Since the school's last inspection, the deputy headteacher has left the school following a long period of absence. The member of staff responsible for the leadership of the pupil premium and science has been on maternity leave.
- The school's last section 48 inspection, which is an inspection of the school's religious character, took place in June 2015 as part of a continuing five-year cycle.
- The proportion of pupils identified as having SEND has increased to be well above the national average, as has the proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. The school's own information shows that 24% of pupils in the school have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

- An average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium.
- The great majority of pupils are White British. The few pupils from minority ethnic groups all speak English as an additional language.
- The school is part of the Winsford Education Partnership, which is a group of local schools that work together to improve outcomes for pupils in Winsford.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in each class, including joint observations with the headteacher.
- The inspector examined a range of pupils' work in mathematics, writing and from across the curriculum.
- The inspector listened to individual pupils from key stage 1 and key stage 2 read. He observed phonics lessons in the Reception and Year 1 classes and also heard children and pupils read as part of their classroom activities.
- The inspector spoke with pupils formally in groups and informally around the school.
- The inspector made observations of pupils' behaviour during lessons and when pupils were moving around the school.
- The inspector took account of the views of 12 parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, 17 staff who completed the staff survey and 103 pupils' responses to the pupil survey.
- Meetings were held with governors, senior leaders, middle leaders and support staff.
- A range of documentation was considered, including the school's evaluation of its own performance and its areas for development.
- The inspector looked at attendance and behaviour records.
- The inspector reviewed safeguarding documentation, considered how this related to daily practice and spoke with staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Steve Bentham, lead inspector

Her Majesty's 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 2019