

St Edmund's Catholic Primary School

Rosebery Street, Springhill, Birmingham, West Midlands B18 7PA

Inspection dates

2–3 July 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

- Teaching across the school is not good enough. This is because teachers' subject-specific knowledge is not strong enough.
- Teachers do not use assessment information well enough in lessons to support those pupils who struggle with their learning.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can and should achieve are not high enough, especially for the most able pupils. Attainment across the school is not rising.
- Too few pupils reach the higher standards across the school, particularly at the end of key stage 1.
- Middle leaders' monitoring does not focus enough on improving teaching and pupils' outcomes.
- The teaching of phonics across the early years and key stage 1 is not effective.
- Indoor and outdoor learning areas in the early years do not provide children with sufficient opportunities to develop their language skills.
- Early years children have limited opportunities to practise and develop their writing skills.
- Adults in the early years do not use assessment information effectively. This means that they do not have a full picture of the children's achievements.
- The governing body does not challenge leaders about pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching effectively enough.

The school has the following strengths

- Teaching is strong in Year 6; pupils make good progress and their attainment is rising.
- Pupils behave well. Mutual respect and care are evident across the school.
- The pupils' personal development and well-being and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are of high quality and strengths of the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Leaders and governors should ensure that:
 - inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are eradicated
 - they continue to develop the skills of governors to make sure that they challenge leaders effectively about pupils' achievements and the quality of teaching
 - middle leaders monitor and measure the effectiveness of initiatives they have introduced to improve teaching and outcomes for pupils.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - teachers across the school develop strong subject-specific knowledge
 - all staff, including those in the early years, have the necessary subject knowledge and skills to teach phonics effectively
 - teachers' accuracy and use of assessment information are improved to enable them to correct pupils' misconceptions in lessons
 - all teachers have high enough expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving, particularly the most able pupils.
- Improve pupils' attainment and progress, particularly across stage 1.
- Improve the quality of provision in the early years by ensuring that:
 - activities, both indoors and outdoors, support children to develop their use of language
 - children in Reception have more opportunities to write at length
 - teachers assess accurately the progress made by the children and use this information to plan activities to extend children's learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Since the last inspection in October 2018, leaders and managers have been distracted by unforeseen challenging circumstances and have not focused enough on improving the quality of teaching and learning across the school, particularly in the early years and key stage 1.
- Leaders have taken some effective steps to address the areas for improvement left from the last inspection. For example, leaders have now implemented an effective structure for teaching reading comprehension across the school. They have introduced focused comprehension questions to support teachers with their planning. In some year groups, this information is used well to challenge pupils about their understanding of a text. However, this practice is not consistent in all year groups across the school because leaders do not focus their monitoring enough on measuring the impact of their initiatives on improving the quality of teaching and outcomes for all pupils.
- Since November 2018, leaders and governors have reviewed the way the school plans to spend the pupil premium funding. The school's pupil premium report now considers the barriers to learning for disadvantaged pupils, which enables them to provide additional support for this group of pupils. They have not, however, had enough time to measure the effectiveness of this support to ensure that outcomes for these pupils are improving. Currently, by the end of key stage 2, these pupils make similar progress to that of others in the school. They do not attain as well as other pupils nationally because of wider weaknesses in the quality of teaching.
- Leaders use the physical education and sport premium funding well to enrich the curriculum and to increase pupils' participation in outdoor pursuits, including sporting competitions.
- All pupils experience a broad and balanced curriculum, which is linked to the requirements of the national curriculum. Music has a high profile across the school and all pupils learn a musical instrument in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. The curriculum is enhanced by a good range of trips, visitors and extra-curricular activities, including sports. Pupils benefit from these events and gain a deeper understanding of the importance of keeping healthy. Although there are some strengths in the curriculum, teaching of the wider curriculum subjects, such as history, geography and design and technology, is not good enough across the school.
- Leaders have received good training and support from Birmingham Education Partnership (BEP) in order to review and develop the school's development plan. Consequently, planning for improvement now focuses sharply on the main priorities for the school.
- Support for pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is increasingly effective. Pupils' needs are identified earlier and addressed in a variety of ways. The range of interventions that are used to help these pupils are now carefully checked so that their effectiveness can be measured. The SEND leader plans an appropriate programme of support for each pupil to enable them to learn alongside their peers.

- As a result of the school's work to teach fundamental British values, pupils have a well-developed understanding of respect, tolerance, individual liberty, the rule of law and the important part these values play in modern Britain.
- The diocese and BEP have provided effective support to the school since the previous inspection.

Governance of the school

- Governors are very supportive of the school. They have worked with external agencies and BEP to review and improve their practice. They have carried out a skills audit to identify their strengths and areas for development and have used this information to identify and complete relevant training, such as how to challenge leaders effectively. They now have a more realistic understanding of the school's current position and are beginning to play a greater role in holding the school to account. However, these recent changes have been over a short period of time and, therefore, they are not yet able to demonstrate that their actions are having a significant impact on challenging leaders to improve the quality of teaching and outcomes for the pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a strong culture of keeping pupils safe at the school. Staff receive regular training and are familiar with the procedures to follow should they have concerns about a pupil.
- Safer recruitment processes are secure, ensuring that only suitable people are employed to work with pupils.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and have someone to talk to if something is worrying them. Leaders have implemented clear programmes to teach pupils about personal and internet safety. Parents and carers agree with this view, with most saying that their children are well looked after in school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not effective enough. This is because teachers do not use assessment information well enough to identify and support pupils in overcoming the misconceptions they have in lessons. Some pupils struggle and become disengaged in their learning.
- Teachers do not have sufficiently high expectations of what pupils can and should achieve. At times, set work does not match the ability of the pupils or challenge them effectively. Not enough pupils across the school attain as well as they should.
- Teaching is not yet helping all pupils to make good progress. This is because teachers do not have the correct subject-specific knowledge. Too many pupils are taught incorrectly. For example, in a lesson observed by an inspector, children were taught that when writing a plural word, just add an 's'. In other lessons, teachers did not have a thorough enough understanding of the skills they should be teaching in their year group. Pupils do not learn the appropriate skills and knowledge they need and this

slows their progress.

- The teaching of phonics varies across the school. Some adults use the correct vocabulary and encourage pupils to do the same. However, not all staff have the subject-specific knowledge and skills they need to help pupils develop their phonics knowledge securely. Adults do not identify pupils' mistakes and some pupils are not moved on as quickly as they could be. This reduces the progress many pupils make with their reading.
- There has been an improvement in the teaching of mathematics over the past year. There is now a more consistent approach to the teaching of problem solving. Books looked at during the inspection demonstrated that there was increasing evidence that pupils are given more opportunities to apply and practise these skills.
- Handwriting skills are taught consistently by teachers. As a result, most pupils have a clear and legible handwriting style.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is a strength of the school. There are excellent relationships between adults and pupils and staff work hard to meet individual needs and they demonstrate a high regard for pupils' welfare.
- Pupils have good spiritual, moral and cultural understanding. The Christian values of the school, such as 'faithfulness and integrity, dignity and compassion, humility and gentleness, truth and justice, forgiveness and mercy', shine through all aspects of the school's work. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong and value each other equally.
- Pupils walk around school in an orderly manner and inspectors observed very courteous and friendly behaviour. Pupils take care of each other. They are extremely polite, well-mannered and work well together and treat each other with respect.
- Pupils trust the adults in school to keep them safe. They say that bullying is rare and talk confidently about what to do if they see it taking place and who to speak to if they have any concerns. Pupils are taught how to keep safe online, both in and out of school.
- Pupils who attend the school's breakfast and after-school clubs are well looked after and have access to a range of activities. They socialise exceptionally well with adults and each other.

Behaviour

- Behaviour in classrooms and around the school is good. Children settle down quickly and work hard in lessons most of the time. Occasionally, when teaching does not engage them fully, they concentrate less well.
- Pupils have a good understanding of what acceptable behaviour is. They clearly understand the consequences if their behaviour does not meet the school's expectations. They enjoy each other's company at breaktimes and understand the

importance of eating healthy snacks and drinking water.

- The school has made a concerted effort to improve pupils' attendance in the past year and attendance rates have improved significantly. Initiatives, such as first-day calling and constant communication with parents through letters home, have been effective in improving attendance and punctuality. Current attendance is broadly in line with the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- The inconsistencies in the quality of teaching across the school holds some pupils back from attaining as well as they should. For example, some pupils do not receive enough good teaching to help them make good progress. Not enough pupils achieve the higher standard at the end of Year 2.
- Inspectors' scrutiny of pupils' work shows that the expectations of the progress that pupils should make are not high enough. Attainment across the school is not rising and too many pupils are still not reaching the attainment expected for their age.
- Attainment at the end of key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics, at the expected and higher standard, has generally been below the national average for three years. Although the proportion reaching the expected standard and the higher standard has increased in reading and mathematics over this period, the proportion reaching the higher standard in writing has remained too low.
- As a result of stronger teaching in Year 6, current pupils are making better progress and, attainment in Year 6 this year looks stronger. These pupils are better prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Inconsistencies in the teaching of phonics have meant that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check, in 2019, is below the national average.
- Interventions are used effectively to support pupils with SEND and these pupils make strong rates of progress from their individual starting points.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- School assessment information shows that by the end of Reception in 2019, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development was just below that seen nationally. Although children are now being prepared more effectively for life in Year 1, too few children make strong enough progress.
- Teaching across the early years is not always effective. Adults do not have a clear enough understanding of how important knowledge and skills develop across the early years curriculum. Therefore, lessons become confusing and children do not make the progress they are capable of. This was particularly evident in the Reception class, where children were asked to estimate and measure objects using cubes, string and pencils. This was too difficult for the children and they did not have the prior understanding to support their learning.
- The teaching of phonics skills, which begins in Nursery, is not effective enough. Some adults do not have the subject knowledge to ensure that letters and the sounds that

they make are taught correctly. At times, children become confused between letter sounds and their names. This hinders their writing skills.

- Adults do not use assessment information well enough and do not identify the next steps the children need to take in their learning. As a result, children's progress slows.
- Children in the Reception class practise their handwriting regularly throughout the week and many of them can form their letters correctly. However, they do not get the opportunity to apply these skills often enough. The progress of some children is inhibited because the activities that they are asked to complete limit the amount they can write.
- Language skills are not developed well enough across the early years. The indoor and outdoor environments lack opportunities for children to engage in role play or imaginative or creative activities. Therefore, children have limited opportunities to practise their language skills.
- Current early years leaders have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses across the early years and effective plans are in place to address the weaknesses identified in teaching.
- Leaders have introduced reading journals for all children across the early years and information about children's learning and experiences of reading are now shared with parents.
- Children work and play in a safe, secure environment. They are well cared for, engage well with activities and work happily with adults. At times, when teaching does not meet their needs or engage them, their behaviour can become disruptive and boisterous.
- Additional funding is used to support disadvantaged children effectively and, in 2019, more of these children achieved a good level of development by the end of Reception.

School details

Unique reference number	103440
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10086942

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	245
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Maja Szeliga
Headteacher	Mary O’Friel (executive headteacher)
Telephone number	01215 237274
Website	www.stedmund.bham.sch.uk
Email address	enquiry@stedmund.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	17 October 2018

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average.
- The school runs a before- and after-school club for pupils each day.
- The school is federated with another local Catholic primary school. There is one executive headteacher for the two schools. In each school there is a head of school. The two schools share one governing body.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all year groups. Some of the observations were undertaken jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors looked at work in pupils' books alongside middle and senior leaders.
- An inspector met with four members of the governing body.
- An inspector met with the school improvement partner who was representing BEP and held a telephone conversation with a representative from the diocese.
- A range of documents were scrutinised, including the school's self-evaluation document, improvement plans, records of checks on teaching and learning, and attendance and safeguarding information.
- Inspectors met formally with a group of pupils, spoke informally to pupils in lessons and listened to pupils read. Inspectors also took account of the 69 responses to Ofsted's online pupil questionnaire.
- Inspectors also took account of the 24 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents by meeting informally at the start of the school day and through the 13 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, ParentView.

Inspection team

Kerry Rochester, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Gareth Morgan

Ofsted Inspector

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