

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Lidgett Lane, Dinnington, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S25 2QD

Inspection dates

3–4 July 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders have accepted low standards and have failed to act decisively to improve teaching.
- There is not a strong culture of safeguarding. Record-keeping is poor and there is an unacceptable delay in taking action to prevent pupils from harm.
- The curriculum does not enable pupils to gain skills across different subjects. Consequently, it does not prepare them well for the next stage in their education.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is poor so they make slow progress.
- Weak teaching over time has led to unacceptably low standards, particularly in reading and writing in key stage 1.
- Phonics has not been taught well. This has led to many pupils being unable to read simple words by the end of key stage 1.
- Behaviour has improved, but poor teaching is still affecting pupils' behaviour in class. Pupils disengage because they are generally bored.
- In key stage 2, pupils make slow progress across all subjects. Their progress in reading and writing lags behind mathematics.
- Improvements are being made in the early years, but there is more to do to ensure that children are ready for the demands of Year 1.

The school has the following strengths

- The executive headteacher is providing stability. Routines are in place which have improved behaviour, especially at lunchtimes and playtimes.
- Pupils say they now feel safe from bullying and harassment.
- The newly formed governing body has an accurate picture of what is needed to improve the school.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, learning and assessment and so improve outcomes by ensuring that:
 - teachers use assessment information to plan work that is neither too easy nor too difficult for pupils, including for pupils with SEND
 - by the end of key stage 1, pupils are taught to write legibly, spell more accurately and use appropriate basic punctuation
 - teaching assistants do not over support pupils and allow them to become confident, independent learners
 - pupils improve their vocabulary systematically as they get older
 - pupils learn essential key knowledge in mathematics, such as their times tables.
- Improve the teaching of phonics and early reading by:
 - promoting reading for pleasure in classrooms
 - listening to pupils reading aloud, particularly those who need additional support
 - improving the reading records so that pupils' next steps in learning are clear
 - providing opportunities for pupils to practise the new phonics sounds they have learned through reading and writing during the school day.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that middle leaders thoroughly check the quality of teaching and support teachers to improve their skills
 - developing the curriculum so that pupils gain knowledge and skills beyond reading, writing and mathematics
 - ensuring that SEND documentation is clear and regularly updated, and that teachers have sufficient skills to address their needs in class.
- Urgently develop a strong culture of safeguarding by:
 - ensuring that when concerns are raised, actions immediately follow
 - following statutory government requirements when vetting new staff.
- Improve provision in the early years so children are fully prepared for the demands of Year 1 by:
 - providing children with opportunities to practise reading the new sounds they have learned in phonics

- improving the outdoor area so that it gives children varied, exciting activities for them to learn.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- The executive headteacher leads with energy and vision. The routines she has established have been instrumental in improving attendance and behaviour. However, she is only in the school for part of the week. There is very limited capacity in the school to sustain improvements. Consequently, the work she has done to improve teaching, learning and assessment has had limited impact.
- Over time, leaders have accepted low standards, weak teaching and poor behaviour. The training of staff has been irregular and of poor quality. Assessment systems have not been fit for purpose. Regular tracking of pupils' progress has not taken place. The recently introduced systems to assess pupils' work have not been in place long enough to have a positive impact.
- The curriculum is poorly planned and taught. Pupils do not gain enough knowledge and skills of subjects outside of reading, writing and mathematics. Together with pupils' inability to read well, this means that they are not well prepared for the next stage in their education. The executive headteacher has introduced more visits and visitors to the school, such as a travelling zoo that visited during the inspection. However, teachers do not have the necessary skills to use these experiences to improve pupils' learning.
- Middle leaders have started to check more frequently on the quality of teaching. However, these checks are still not thorough enough to tackle the weak teaching and help teachers to improve their skills quickly. A tracking system is now in place, having been introduced by the executive headteacher. Even so, leaders and teachers lack the skills to use this to identify pupils who fall behind.
- Provision for pupils with SEND is poor. Documentation lacks clarity. Teachers have not been well trained in how to get the best out of pupils with SEND. Interventions are not measured to see if they are having a positive effect on pupils. As a result, the additional funding for pupils with SEND is not well used. A special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) from a nearby school visits once per week to provide support. However, this has so far been insufficient to improve provision for this group of pupils.
- A pupil premium review took place following the previous inspection. This resulted in pupils being placed in smaller classes. However, the continuing poor quality of teaching means that the pupil premium funding is having too little impact.
- Additional funding for physical education (PE) and sport is used well to increase pupils' understanding of how to lead fit, healthy lifestyles. It has also helped teachers to gain a better understanding of how to teach PE.
- Staff who responded to Ofsted's staff questionnaire feel well supported and the improved behaviour has enabled them to work more effectively.
- The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers.

Governance of the school

- A new governing body is in place. A review of governance following the previous inspection sharpened governors' skills. Moreover, closer working with other governing bodies has supported their work.
- Governors are provided with regular, honest and straightforward information by the executive headteacher. They are aware of the improvements that have been made in behaviour and attendance so far. Equally, they are aware of what is still needed to ensure that the school provides an acceptable level of education for pupils.
- Despite the recent improvements made to governance, there continue to be lapses in statutory requirements being met. Safeguarding does not meet government requirements.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.
- Training is up to date for designated safeguarding leaders and for staff. However, there is not a strong culture of safeguarding. This situation has arisen from a lack of full-time leadership in the school.
- The school uses a computerised system to log safeguarding concerns. However, there is an unacceptably long delay between concerns being logged and actions being taken.
- Checks are made on staff on their appointment, but these checks do not fully comply with statutory government requirements.
- Staff and governors have had the necessary training to identify pupils at risk of radicalisation.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- The training provided to staff over time has often been of poor quality and irregular. The checks made on the quality of teaching have lacked sharpness. This means that any weaknesses persist and are not tackled quickly.
- Although improving, the teaching of phonics has been inadequate. Far too many pupils in key stage 1 still lack the basic skills required to read simple words. The weakest readers in key stage 1 require additional support to help them read as they progress into key stage 2. However, this additional support is weak, and these pupils fail to make up lost time as a result.
- There is not a strong culture of promoting reading for pleasure. Reading areas in classrooms are unappealing to pupils. Those pupils who require additional support with reading are not heard reading aloud often. The reading records of those pupils fail to identify their next steps in learning.
- A new scheme for teaching phonics has been introduced, which has added some consistency of practice. However, this has not been in place long enough to make sufficient impact. Moreover, there is a lack of opportunity for pupils to practise the new phonics sounds they have learned through reading and writing during the day.

- Assessment information is not used well to ensure that pupils receive work at the right level. Pupils in key stage 1 who cannot read are given written instructions that they cannot access. As a result, much learning time is wasted in lessons.
- The teaching of writing is poor. In key stage 1, pupils do not write legibly, and their spelling lacks accuracy. They use little or no punctuation and they are unable to write basic letters well. In key stage 2, pupils use a narrow range of vocabulary. Their writing lacks flair and imagination as a result. This is because teaching has not developed these skills as pupils get older.
- Teachers do not deploy teaching assistants in the classroom effectively. Too often they provide too much support for pupils, which prevents pupils from being independent.
- The teaching of mathematics is better than it is in reading or writing. Pupils generally improve their fluency as they get older and are able to reason mathematically and solve problems. However, by the time they get to Year 6, gaps remain in their knowledge. This means that it sometimes takes pupils longer than it should to solve mathematical problems.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Weaknesses in the curriculum mean that the personal, social and health education (PSHE) pupils receive does not equip them with the knowledge they need, for example in relationships and sex education. However, pupils are generally aware of how to lead fit, healthy lifestyles.
- Breakfast club provides a motivating and good start to the day for pupils who need extra support. Other than providing pupils with a nutritious breakfast, pupils play games together, supported by an adult. This develops their self-esteem and confidence well.
- Pupils say that bullying does occur occasionally, but they would feel comfortable talking to an adult, should the need arise.
- Qualified counsellors from the Diocese of Hallam provide good support to those pupils in need of additional help.
- Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe when using their mobile phones or the internet.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- In lessons, pupils often switch off, are bored and generally disengage with learning. This is because lessons are not particularly interesting, are repetitive, lack challenge or are inaccessible to pupils who cannot yet read. Pupils' attitudes to learning therefore are not good.

- The executive headteacher has introduced routines which are followed throughout the day. Staff supervise pupils well at lunchtime and breaktimes. Pupils are much more aware of the behaviour that is expected of them. Pupils were keen to tell inspectors how much behaviour had improved since the executive headteacher started working at the school. Records indicate that there has been a reduction in poor behaviour. Moreover, this also means that there has been a sharp decrease in the proportion of pupils receiving fixed-term exclusions.
- There is now a more rigorous approach to following up absence. The school works well with families and outside agencies using systems the executive headteacher has introduced. This has led to a significant increase in attendance, which is now close to the national average. Similarly, fewer pupils are now persistently absent.
- The inspectors spoke to several parents who were mostly happy with behaviour in the school. Those parents who responded to Parent View also expressed satisfaction with behaviour.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- The significant weaknesses in leadership have led to pupils making slow progress over time. Attainment has been too low, particularly in reading and writing. Too many pupils continue to work at standards that are below those expected for their age.
- In 2018, pupils in Year 6 made progress that was in the lowest 10% of schools nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND also made exceptionally slow progress.
- Inspection evidence indicates that significant gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills remain. Pupils' reading skills remain weak and their writing continues to be of a low standard.
- The slow start begins in Year 1, where many pupils do not progress well with their phonics and reading. In the current Year 1, only one pupil in five met the required standard in the phonics screening check.
- After Year 1, pupils' inability to read well has a significant impact on their education. They are unable to read instructions, write well or develop their vocabulary to an age-appropriate standard. In particular, pupils' vocabulary is not improved systematically as they get older.
- Pupils with SEND do not make the progress of which they are capable. Several parents who responded to Parent View expressed concern about support for their children with SEND.
- Across different subjects, such as history, geography and science, pupils do not develop sufficient skills and knowledge. In 2018, a well below average proportion of pupils reached the expected standard in science. This is because the curriculum is insufficiently broad, and teachers do not have the skills to deepen pupils' knowledge of different subjects.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Children begin in the Nursery with skills and abilities that are generally below those expected of their age, particularly in the areas of speaking and listening. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development is increasing, but remains below average by the end of Reception. In mathematics, pupils' skills and abilities are broadly average.
- There are not enough opportunities during the day for children to practise reading the new sounds they have learned in phonics. Few children choose to sit and read alone or with an adult because the reading area is not particularly attractive to them. As a result, while standards are rising in the early years, children are not yet prepared for the demands of Year 1.
- While the indoor area offers many varied activities for children to learn, the outdoor area does not. Equipment and toys are old and sometimes broken.
- Routines are well established in the early years. Children take turns when playing. They learn the importance of being polite and following instructions. They show good hygiene when using the bathroom.
- At the time of the inspection, a new early years leader had been in post for six months. In this time, she has made many changes. A new tracking system is giving staff a good overview of which children need to be supported more closely.
- Phonics is now taught daily. Expectations of children are high. Adults make sure that the opportunities for children to write are always fun. For example, children play shop and write shopping lists. As a result, children currently in Reception are making good progress with their writing.
- Parents and carers are involved well with their children's learning. Stay and play sessions help them to support their children at home. Good information is given to parents so that they can help their children develop a love of books and reading.

School details

Unique reference number	140590
Local authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	10089010

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	184
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Anne-Marie Brammer
Executive Headteacher	Rachel Colquhoun
Telephone number	01909 550 123
Website	www.stjosephs-dinnington.co.uk
Email address	stjosephsdinnington@rotherham.school
Date of previous inspection	1–2 February 2017

Information about this school

- This is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language or who are from minority ethnic groups is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium is below average. The proportion of pupils with SEND, who are supported by an education, health and care plan, is above average.
- Since January 2019, no permanent headteacher has been in post. The executive headteacher spends three and a half days at the school. The school also receives support from visiting national and senior leaders in education.
- At the time of the inspection, no SENCo was in post. Support for SEND is being provided by the SENCo from another primary school.
- A new early years leader took up her post in January 2019.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited lessons, some jointly with the executive headteacher. They visited an assembly, listened to pupils reading and looked at the work in pupils' books to evaluate their progress over time. They spoke to pupils, staff, a senior leader in education, the director of education for the Diocese of Hallam and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors scrutinised various documents, including the summary of self-evaluation, safeguarding information, various policies, governor documentation and information relating to pupils with SEND.
- The 16 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were considered by inspectors. An inspector spoke to parents as they were bringing their children into school.
- Inspectors considered the 12 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Robert Jones, lead inspector

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