

St Mary and St John Junior and Infant School

Beaufort Road, Erdington, Birmingham, B23 7NB

Inspection dates 11–12 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils do not make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. In the past, teachers have not been held to account for pupils' achievement.
- Activities are sometimes too easy for the most able pupils, which restricts their progress and too few reach the higher attainment levels.
- Teachers' marking does not always help pupils improve their work and the targets they give pupils in reading are not always appropriate.
- Teachers do not always make the best use of teaching assistants to improve pupils' learning.
- Teachers are not always accurate in pronouncing sounds in phonics (the sounds that letters make).
- Leaders, including governors, have not improved teaching and achievement quickly enough.
- Pupils do not achieve well, particularly in reading and writing. In 2014, Year 6 pupils' attainment and progress dipped to well below national standards.
- Leaders do not analyse data on pupils' achievement in sufficient detail to identify groups of pupils in danger of falling behind.
- Children in early years do not make good progress, especially in developing their communication skills.
- Some pupils, mostly boys, find the tasks they are given dull and so they lose interest and disengage from their learning.
- Subject leaders do not have the skills needed to drive their areas of responsibility forward and improve pupils' achievement.

The school has the following strengths

- Recent improvements in teaching are bringing about increased rates of progress and higher attainment.
- A more consistent approach to behaviour management has seen a marked improvement in pupils' behaviour.
- Appropriate and well considered actions show that leaders have the capacity to improve the school's performance and the quality of teaching.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe is good. Attendance has improved and is now broadly average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 20 lessons or part lessons, two of which were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders. Inspectors also met with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body, a representative from the local authority and lead practitioner from the Teaching Alliance.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and looked at their books. Pupils were spoken to during lesson observations, at lunch and break times and during a formal meeting with a small group.
- Discussions were held with parents at the start of day. Inspectors also took into account the 12 responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire (Parent View) and the 21 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspectors scrutinised the school’s achievement data, documents related to the school’s evaluation of its work, the development plan and the action plan produced by the Teaching Alliance. Inspectors also looked at records of behaviour and attendance and information relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Shahnaz Maqsood, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Malcolm Johnstone

Additional Inspector

Rowena Green

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and who speak English as an additional language are well above the national average. Pupils come from a very wide range of ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is well above the national average. This is additional government funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is broadly in line with the national average.
- Reception children attend full-time. Nursery offers part-time places to children aged three and over.
- The school provides a breakfast club.
- The school has experienced a high turnover of staff, including senior leaders. Several teachers are new to teaching or on temporary contracts.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in English and mathematics.
- The school is supported by three local schools: Colmore Infant and Nursery school, Colmore Junior school and Bishop Challoner Catholic College. The headteachers of these schools are national leaders in education.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and accelerate pupils' progress by making sure that:
 - teachers set suitably challenging tasks for the most-able pupils
 - marking in books identifies where errors have been made and helps pupils learn from their mistakes
 - teachers plan activities which interest, enthuse and engage pupils, especially boys
 - teachers are accurate in their pronunciation of the sounds that letters make
 - teaching assistants are always actively supporting pupils' learning
 - teachers set targets in reading that build upon what pupils have previously read.
- Improve leadership and accelerate improvements in teaching by:
 - training subject leaders so that they can take more responsibility for driving improvements and raising achievement in their subject areas
 - analyse data on pupils' achievement in greater depth and use the results to check the progress of different groups, identify individuals who are at risk of underachieving and hold teachers to account for the progress made by pupils in their class.
- Ensure teachers in early years focus on the development of children's communication skills.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The school's leaders do not analyse information about pupils' progress deeply enough. They are not clear about the progress of different groups in the school. Leaders do not identify quickly those individuals who are at risk of underachieving.
- Leaders do not use data on pupils' progress effectively to improve teaching. Teachers' targets are not measurable, making it difficult for leaders to hold teachers to account for the performance of the pupils in their care. The systems for checking the quality of teaching and for tracking pupils' progress are now more rigorous and starting to show signs of improvement.
- Subject leaders are not fully effective in raising achievement. They have not received the training they need to accurately evaluate teaching and achievement in their areas of responsibility.
- Assessment procedures used by the school have not been reliable in the past and have given a misleading picture of pupils' progress, particularly the most able. Moderation activities with other local schools have enabled the school to improve the accuracy of recent assessments.
- In seeking to engage pupils and raise their attainment, staff have worked together on a new curriculum which has been designed around pupils' interests and making lessons more fun. Evidence of this was seen during the inspection, when pupils enjoyed working with a local artist and reflected on their recent 'space course' during which they learnt about planets, stars and the universe. However, the revised curriculum has not yet made an impact on pupils' overall achievement and some lessons remain boring, especially for boys.
- The determined headteacher and the new governors are having a positive impact on school improvement. Although not yet good, teaching and achievement are improving.
- The pupil premium is now being used effectively through a range of support, in small group and one-to-one sessions to improve literacy and numeracy skills. As a result, this group of pupils is now making faster progress.
- The headteacher and the governors have sought the support of the local teaching alliance. Their action plan and the school's development document have clearly and accurately identified the improvements needed. The alliance has already provided invaluable guidance and training to staff, which is helping to accelerate the pace of change in the school.
- The headteacher and staff provide well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They are successful in fostering good relationships. Discrimination is not tolerated and equality is promoted well. Pupils from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds show consideration and respect for each other. Pupils are knowledgeable about different faiths, cultures and democratic processes, through activities such as voting in elections for the school council. These positive aspects of the school prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- The school has received a wide range of effective support from the local authority, particularly with training for teachers and leaders; however, some of the benefits of this have been lost because of the high turnover of staff, including senior and middle leaders.
- The school has used the primary school physical education and sport funding effectively to boost pupils' sporting experiences and their enjoyment of physical activity by employing sports coaches. The teaching of physical education has improved with the sports coaches acting as role models in their own teaching. The coaches organise a wide range of activities during the breakfast club and at lunchtime and teach pupils about healthy lifestyles.

■ Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are effective and meet statutory requirements.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governance has improved since the last inspection and is now effective. A new Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body have been appointed recently. They provide effective support and challenge. In the short period they have been in post they have developed a good awareness of the school's performance and how it compares to other schools nationally. They have worked closely with the headteacher to devise and implement an action plan for improvement, which is already making an impact.
- Governors know how well teachers are performing and ensure teachers only get a pay rise if pupils make progress. They have a good understanding of the quality of teaching, which they know needs to improve.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Boys in particular do not behave well when the teaching is boring and the tasks they are given are dull.
- Parents and pupils agree that behaviour has improved this year. Last year poor learning attitudes, particularly in Year 6, resulted in disruption to lessons which had a negative effect on pupils' progress.
- While incidents of low level disruption are now rare, a few pupils still lose concentration and do not actively participate in lessons, which limits their progress.
- The school has established a new rewards and sanctions scheme known as 'DOJO', which is already having a good effect on improving pupils' behaviour. It is consistently used by staff and pupils now have better awareness of what is expected of them.
- The vast majority of pupils show pride in their work and keep their books neat and tidy.
- Attendance has improved and is average. Only a very small number of pupils are late to school.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The two sites are securely locked during the day and only authorised adults have keys. All staff have been trained and know what to do if they have any concerns regarding the safety of pupils.
- There have been no reported cases of racism. Incidents of bullying are few and if any should occur pupils are confident that they would be dealt with quickly and effectively. They also know about the safety rules when using the internet.
- The school has strong links with the police and officers visit regularly. Pupils have learnt from them how to keep themselves safe from strangers and on the road, for example.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching has been too inconsistent over time so that pupils have not achieved as well as they could.
- Teaching in mathematics is not good enough. Teachers often set tasks that are too easy, especially for the most-able pupils.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' writing is not yet consistent. In some books, teachers give no advice and pupils are unclear as to how to improve their work. This is in contrast to the teachers who follow the school's policy and help pupils to raise the quality of their writing by telling pupils what they need to do to improve. Pupils' books show that they are now being asked to write more extensively in a range of styles

and genres and their progress is accelerating.

- Over time, the teaching of reading has not been effective because adults' articulation of sounds is not always accurate during phonics lessons. Pupils' learning targets for reading do not always build on what they can already read. Teachers make every effort to develop pupils' love of reading by introducing them to a range of authors, such as Jane Austen in Year 6.
- Teachers do not make good use of teaching assistants. They are not always sure of their roles and unclear as to how they can best help pupils learn.
- Occasionally, teachers' expectations of what pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language can do are too low and they set easy tasks which limits their learning.
- Improvements in teaching have resulted in a consistent approach to planning. This has enabled teachers to set more challenging tasks for all pupils in reading and writing, so accelerating their rates of progress.
- Questioning is used well by teachers to get pupils, including the most able, to think hard, develop their ideas and to check if they understand the work. For example, in Year 3 mathematics the teacher asked pupils where they start to measure using a ruler and why.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- In 2014, attainment at the end of Year 6 fell from broadly average to well below the national average. Pupils did not make good progress in writing and mathematics. Too few pupils made the progress expected of them in reading and too few made good progress in writing and mathematics. These results were affected by the numbers of pupils joining the school late, some at the very early stages of learning English and others with complex behaviour issues.
- Progress in phonics in Year 1 is not good; results were below average in 2014. However, it was a better picture in other years and subjects in Key Stage 1. Pupils in Year 2 last year made good progress to reach average standards. Progress across the school is now more rapid and standards are now higher and much closer to the national average in each year group.
- The most-able pupils make slower progress than others. However, the school's records and inspection evidence show that the most-able pupils are now making much better progress than previously and a greater proportion are set to reach the higher levels in the current Year 6 and Year 2.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs do not make good progress because their particular needs have not been identified accurately and teaching assistants are not always sure of the best ways to support such pupils. Recently, assessment procedures have improved and support is more precisely matched to the individual needs of these pupils.
- As other pupils, those in receipt of the pupil premium have not achieved well. In 2014, disadvantaged pupils' slow progress resulted in them being over four terms behind other pupils nationally in mathematics, and more than three terms in reading and writing. Disadvantaged pupils were nearly two terms behind their classmates in mathematics, but almost a term ahead in writing. There was little gap in performance in reading. Current data suggests that disadvantaged pupils are likely to do as well as others this year. Improved teaching and monitoring is helping them to keep up with their classmates.
- Pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language make similar progress as their classmates and have not achieved well in Key Stage 2.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- Children start the school with skills and knowledge which are below those typical for their age group in all areas of learning. Their progress is not sufficiently rapid to prepare them well for Year 1, especially in

communication skills. This is because the leader does not use assessment information effectively to determine what children can already do in order that activities can extend their knowledge and skills.

- Teaching requires improvement because staff do not always intervene to extend children's learning, particularly to develop their communication skills by getting them to explain their ideas in detail. Where teaching is most effective adults ask pertinent and challenging questions.
- Early years leaders' expectations have not been high enough of what pupils can achieve. However, there is a trend of improvement in children's achievement as teachers' expectations are rising.
- The outdoor environment is stimulating and well resourced. Children enjoy playing and learning in this attractive space.
- Children feel safe and adults do all they can to keep them safe. Relationships are positive between adults and children and the children work well together and behave well. As a result, social skills are good.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	103442
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	453759

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	434
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mary C Keelan
Headteacher	Veronica Fenlon
Date of previous school inspection	19-20 March 2013
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