

# St John's CofE (C) Primary School

Wombourne Road, Swindon, Dudley, West Midlands DY3 4NB

<b>Inspection dates</b>	2–3 March 2016
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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

- From pupils' individual starting points, they make good progress in their learning in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Since the school was inspected previously, pupils' learning has improved strongly because of more effective teaching and assessment.
- The improved teaching and pupils' outcomes have been securely driven by determined leaders and governors. Together they successfully tackled previously weak teaching which was hampering pupils' learning.
- The school continues to improve under the high-quality and well-focused leadership of the headteacher and determined governors.
- A culture of high expectation permeates all aspects of school life, helping pupils to thrive in their learning.
- Governors regularly ask highly challenging questions of the headteacher and school staff to hold them to account robustly for the quality of pupils' achievement.
- Pupils are well cared for by the dedicated and diligent staff who effectively promote good achievement through their caring and nurturing approach.
- Behaviour of pupils is of a high standard which supports the strong progress they make in their learning.
- Effective, well-led early years provision and good personal development and welfare support help children to learn and develop well when they start school. Children behave well and are very confident and sociable learners.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching and assessment are not yet good enough to produce outstanding outcomes.
- There remain a few minor variations in the rates of progress pupils make in their learning in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Sometimes leaders do not ensure teachers apply the school's marking policy, which slows down pupils' learning.
- School leaders, including governors, lack a sufficiently robust system for regularly checking on pupils' progress to identify those falling behind in their learning. This reduces opportunities for these pupils to be well enough supported to help them catch up.
- Occasionally a few of the most-able pupils are insufficiently challenged in their learning.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Leaders should continue to improve the quality of teaching to accelerate improvements in pupils' achievement by:
  - ensuring that teachers apply the marking policy as diligently as possible
  - requiring teachers to give the most-able pupils more challenging learning tasks in lessons
  - introducing a system which checks more frequently on pupils' progress, so those who are falling behind can be helped to catch up
  - quickly eliminating variations in rates of progress made by pupils in their learning.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher, working effectively in collaboration with highly skilled governors, provides strong leadership of the school. Collectively, they have securely driven improvements in teaching, pupils' achievement and early years provision since the previous inspection.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher display a tenacious determination to ensure the school continues to improve. They have created a culture of high expectation which permeates all aspects of school life and in turn helps pupils to thrive in their education. All staff share this vision. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve in their learning.
- Leadership and management of literacy and numeracy teaching are strong. Senior and middle leaders have a very astute understanding of what is done well in the school and what needs to be improved further. They gain their understanding through the frequent opportunities they take to check on pupils' progress when scrutinising books and through regular visits to lessons.
- Staff avail themselves of the many opportunities offered to them to attend training events which help them to become better teachers and help pupils to achieve better outcomes.
- Pupils are well prepared by the school for living in modern Britain through the many opportunities they are given to learn about fundamental British values. They learn well about pupils from other cultures and could explain about the importance of being tolerant of those with other beliefs. Recently, a group of children from circus families visited the school to speak with pupils about how their culture influences their way of life.
- Social, moral and cultural development is at the heart of school life. Pupils are taught very clear values and speak clearly about learning from their mistakes and not repeating things they know to be wrong.
- The curriculum is rich and diverse, giving pupils many exciting opportunities to learn creatively. It is well designed. The curriculum is well supplemented by a wide range of visitors, trips to sites of educational interest and the many clubs which are offered to pupils. One pupil spoke about how guitar lessons in school were helping him to enjoy his hobby outside of school. The curriculum meets the needs of all groups of pupils, effectively enabling them to make good progress in their learning.
- Funding to provide additional support for pupils is used diligently by school leaders. When they previously identified that the pupil premium was not having enough impact on improving the achievement of disadvantaged pupils, they revised their approach and consequently achievement improved strongly. Additional primary sport funding is being used successfully to improve the teaching of sport within school. Teachers benefit from working closely with specialised coaches to learn how to improve their teaching. Pupils also participate in a wide range of sports which they report they could only have dreamed of previously.
- The local authority has provided good support for the school since the previous inspection. School leaders benefited from support provided by a local leader of education which has helped the school to improve well.
- Senior leaders and governors have a system in place to identify individual pupils who are falling behind in their learning. The system does not allow them to identify these pupils quickly enough. This means that they cannot always target additional support for pupils rapidly enough to help them catch up in their learning.
- Leaders need to ensure that the marking policy is fully applied by teachers in order to enhance pupils' progress.
- **The governance of the school**
  - Governors have benefited immensely from the review of governance undertaken following the previous inspection. Governors now have a very clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They regularly visit classrooms and scrutinise pupils' books to validate information they receive from the headteacher about how well pupils are learning. When they are unsure about how well particular groups of pupils are achieving, they ask the headteacher or other teachers to explain and continue asking probing questions until they are satisfied with the response.
  - Governors are not prepared to tolerate poor teaching. They previously acted decisively when they identified weak teaching which hampered pupils' learning. Consequently, they manage the performance of staff robustly.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. School leaders ensure all safeguarding training is up to date. The school complies with the latest safeguarding guidance. Governors and all school staff are very aware of their duty to keep pupils safe. Careful checks are made to ensure that only those who are suitable are offered appointments at the school. Highly trained and diligent staff work effectively with parents and a wide range of external agencies to ensure pupils' welfare needs are met.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- More effective teaching is ensuring pupils achieve much better outcomes than at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils enjoy their learning and look forward to their lessons. Learning proceeds at a fast pace and not a minute is wasted in lessons.
- Teachers are imaginative in their approach to learning and plan exciting learning tasks for pupils. One group of pupils sat transfixed on World Book Day while the teacher and teaching assistants animatedly acted out the story of *Little Red Riding Hood* to make a learning point. The woodcutter's axe, made from card and aluminium foil, added to the drama of the story.
- Classrooms are bright and pupils' work is displayed proudly around school. Pupils' books show that they take pride in their work. Presentation is of a high standard and teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve in their learning.
- Assessment is used well in lessons to make sure learning tasks for the majority of pupils are matched carefully to their learning needs.
- Teaching assistants are highly skilled in helping pupils to progress well in their learning. Working with small groups, they rapidly assess pupils' needs and provide them with the support they require to achieve well. This is a key element that has a strong impact on the good achievement of pupils who have special educational needs or disability.
- Homework is used well to support pupils' learning. Teachers regularly provide homework which builds upon what pupils have been taught in lessons in order to help them consolidate their learning.
- Teachers encourage pupils to read regularly both in school and at home. The colourful and well-stocked library is a regular haunt for many pupils who just want to explore books and read for enjoyment. The reward system displays for reading take pride of place in the school hall. Many pupils speak excitedly about the colour of their reading badge awarded for the number of books they read. Aspirations to get to gold are high.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils are well cared for and supported in school. This promotes pupils' personal development effectively and aids their learning. Lessons proceed in a very orderly manner because of pupils' attentive approach to learning.
- St John's is populated with pupils who are cheerful, pleasant, polite and well mannered. They respect each other and the adults in school. Pupils are exceptionally well turned out and wear their uniforms with pride.
- Pupils who attend the well-run before- and after-school clubs take advantage of the well-structured opportunities to socialise and really enjoy the company of their friends.
- Pupils cheerfully report that they feel safe in school and benefit from many lessons about how to stay safe. Visitors such as the police regularly provide additional specialised advice for pupils on how to stay safe when using the internet.
- School staff work diligently with a wide range of outside agencies to ensure everything possible is done to meet the physical and emotional well-being of pupils.
- The nurturing and caring approach of staff is spoken about by parents as being pivotal to the success of pupils attending the school.
- Occasionally a very small minority of pupils lack attentiveness in lessons.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Around school, pupils enjoy each other's company immensely and clearly understand the school rules as well as expectations of how they should behave. Even when outside in the

howling wind and rain, when the weather changes suddenly, pupils move around calmly without any pushing or shoving.

- Parents and teachers agree that pupils' behaviour is of a high standard. They talk, as do pupils, about how valuable it is that school staff help pupils to learn to be nice to each other at all times.
- Pupils speak about rare instances of bullying which took place a long time ago. They are adamant that if there are occasionally any minor squabbles they are resolved rapidly and to their satisfaction when reported to adults in school.
- Pupils enjoy school and attend regularly. The attendance of specific groups such as boys and the disadvantaged, who were previously absent regularly from school, is improving well. A close check is kept on the attendance of pupils by school staff. Each week a prize is awarded to the best-attending class. Children in the early years are proudly the regular winners of this accolade.

## Outcomes for pupils

are good

- From their individual starting points, which are often lower than typically expected for their age, pupils make good progress to the end of Year 6 in reading, writing, mathematics and other subjects.
- In their early years in school, children progress strongly. In 2015, a substantially greater proportion than the national average was well prepared to begin learning in Key Stage 1.
- In the 2015 national checks on how well pupils know the sounds which letters make (phonics), pupils attained outcomes which were above average in Year 1 and broadly in line with the national average in Year 2.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 are higher than when the school was previously inspected. Attainment is above average in mathematics and reading. Checks made by the inspector on the latest school performance information reveal that pupils across Key Stage 1 are progressing well and improvement is continuing.
- At the end of Year 6, standards attained by pupils in mathematics, reading, English grammar, punctuation and spelling have risen well since the previous inspection. In writing, standards have increased so strongly they are now well above average. Again, checks carried out by the inspector on work in pupils' books show that improvements are continuing.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 in 2015 was too small to make a meaningful comparison with other pupils in the school or nationally; it is, however, notable that in reading and mathematics the small number of disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 attained standards which were higher than other pupils in school.
- The improved standards at the end of Year 6 and the current accelerating progress demonstrate that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils' progress is accelerating strongly across a wide range of subjects. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs or disability progress well in their learning. The progress of the most-able pupils is hampered slightly when they are not always challenged enough in lessons, which results in them making slightly reduced progress in their learning.
- There remain some slight variations in how well groups of pupils achieve, such as the most able, the disadvantaged, and boys compared to girls.

## Early years provision

is good

- In early years, the provision for children is effective. From their individual starting points when joining Nursery, children make good progress in their learning and development.
- Early years is strongly led by a highly efficient teacher who works very closely with all members of the team to provide high-quality learning and development opportunities for children in the exceptionally colourful and stimulating classroom and outdoor learning environment. Children benefit immensely from attending the early years setting.
- Many children join Nursery with skill levels which are below those typical for their age, particularly in communication and their use of language, as well as in their personal, social and emotional development. Staff in the early years team rapidly identify what needs to be done to help the children get off to a flying start to their education and support them well.

- As children progress through the early years, they catch up rapidly and their weaknesses diminish because of highly effective teaching. Consequently, children are well prepared to leave Reception at a good level of development.
- Last year, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development was well above the national average and the latest robust school performance information shows that over 80% are on track to achieve this later in the year.
- The inspector heard two very confident and fluent Reception children read. They spoke animatedly with the inspector about their enjoyment of reading and their love of books. Clearly the early years team is highly successful in the teaching of reading.
- Children are very sociable and confident. They enjoy playing and learning together. They behave well, which makes a strong contribution to their learning.
- Additional funding provided to support disadvantaged children in early years is used well by the school to provide strong support for their learning and development. This enables these children to catch up in their learning, and gaps between them and other children are being reduced.
- Parents speak enthusiastically about how pleased they are to be involved with helping their children to settle into Nursery. They made many positive comments about how their children love attending this school.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	124278
<b>Local authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10002488

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	82
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Keith Pincher
<b>Headteacher</b>	Donna Calloway
<b>Telephone number</b>	01384 273865
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.st-johns-swindon.staffs.sch.uk">www.st-johns-swindon.staffs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:office@st-johns-swindon.staffs.sch.uk">office@st-johns-swindon.staffs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	5–6 November 2013

## Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is above the national average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium funding (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority) is slightly above the national average.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- Children attend Nursery sessions on a full-time basis.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school runs a club for pupils to attend before and after school which is managed by the governing body.
- The school received support, brokered by the local authority, from the headteacher of Perton First School, who is a local leader of education.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in lessons and part lessons. One part lesson was observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the school staff and six members of the governing body, including the Chair and Vice-Chair. The inspector also met with a representative from the local authority.
- Discussions were held with parents and groups of pupils. The inspector spoke informally to pupils in lessons, and during breaks and lunchtimes.
- The inspector scrutinised the work pupils produced during lessons and in a wide range of their books over time. He also listened to a small number of pupils, from Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, read.
- The most recent school performance information showing progress pupils are currently making in their learning was considered during the inspection.
- Other documentation scrutinised included safeguarding information, behaviour logs, attendance records, plans for school improvement, and minutes of the meetings of the governing body.
- The inspector took account of the 40 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View) and 15 responses from staff to the inspection questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Declan McCauley, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector



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