

St Mary and St John Junior and Infant School

Beaufort Road, Erdington, Birmingham, West Midlands B23 7NB

Inspection dates

4–5 April 2017

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
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

- Since the last inspection, leaders have not secured sufficient improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. Appropriate support is not provided quickly enough to help teachers improve their practice.
- The interim leadership structure has not had enough time to embed improvements in teaching.
- Outcomes remain too low. Different groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, do not make consistently good progress.
- Current information about the progress of pupils is unreliable. As a result, leaders and teachers are unable to evaluate how well groups of pupils are performing.
- Leaders have not used pupil premium funding effectively. This has led to disadvantaged pupils not achieving as well as they should.
- Expectations of pupils' handwriting in key stage 1 are not high enough. Pupils do not form their letters correctly. This affects the quality of their writing.
- Gaps in pupils' language and mathematical skills are not being addressed quickly enough.
- Children in the early years do not make enough progress to close gaps in their learning and achieve as well as other children nationally.
- Governors have not established a permanent leadership structure or ensured that the pupil premium and sports funding have been spent effectively.

The school has the following strengths

- The executive headteacher, supported by the acting headteacher, has already improved some aspects of school performance, most noticeably pupils' behaviour.
- Outcomes at the end of early years and in Year 1 phonics are rising. Disadvantaged children attain well in the early years.
- The dipping attendance trend has been halted. This year, pupils' attendance is improving.
- Staff follow robust safeguarding procedures, which ensures that pupils are kept safe.
- The school's work in developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is effective.
- Staff morale has improved this year. Senior leaders listen to the opinions of staff and value professional discussion.

Full report

In accordance with sections 44(1) and 13(3) 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 the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that all leaders have a secure understanding of the school's assessment system and how it can be used to inform teaching improvement
 - ensuring that leaders check that achievement information is reliable and analysed rigorously to identify which groups of pupils are not making sufficient progress
 - accelerating support for individual teachers to identify strengths and weaknesses and develop their practice quickly.
- Improve governance through:
 - securing a permanent school leadership structure
 - ensuring that leaders are held to account for the effective use of additional funding, including the pupil premium and sport premium.
- Improve teaching, learning and assessment so that it is consistently good by ensuring that:
 - teachers use assessment information rigorously to check that pupils' learning needs are met effectively
 - all adults develop and extend pupils' language and comprehension skills
 - pupils in key stage 1 form letters accurately
 - pupils have a secure understanding of basic mathematical skills before being challenged with activities which require complex reasoning
 - vulnerable groups in all year groups are challenged effectively, including those pupils who are disadvantaged
 - children in the early years are given activities which challenge them more effectively and help them catch up with other children nationally.

An external review of governance and of the school's use of pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how these aspects of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Leadership and management is inadequate because since the last inspection leaders and governors have not ensured that teaching has improved sufficiently. This has meant that pupils have left the school at the end of Year 6 with standards typically below those seen nationally.
- During this inspection, there was limited evidence of either teaching or outcomes being consistently good. This year, leaders have improved the quality of teaching. However, this has yet to lead to different groups of pupils making sufficient progress in order to attain the standards expected.
- Leaders have not developed effective systems to ensure that they can collect accurate information and analyse it to show how well pupils are progressing. The fragile nature of assessment information inhibits leaders' ability to evaluate pupils' achievement robustly. Current systems are not well understood by leaders and, as a result, there is a lack of certainty about how well particular groups are progressing. These groups include disadvantaged pupils, those from different ethnic groups, and pupils who arrive at the school at non-standard entry times.
- The current leadership structure is vulnerable, with acting and temporary roles in place. Governors have plans to ensure that a permanent leadership team will be achieved. The current leadership team has been swift to improve some aspects of school performance, most notably pupils' behaviour and attendance. However, sufficient improvement in teaching and pupils' outcomes has yet to be seen.
- Over the past two years, pupil premium funding has not been used appropriately. This has led to disadvantaged pupils across the school not making the progress of which they are capable. This year, improved use of funding has led to disadvantaged pupils making better progress, and progress similar to that of their peers. However, leaders are aware that this is not good enough, as some disadvantaged pupils need to make faster rates of progress in order to attain the standards required.
- School leaders have not made effective use of the primary physical education (PE) and sport premium. The funding has been used to employ sports coaches who deliver PE sessions. Leaders have not established a clear rationale and so are unable to evaluate the effectiveness of the provision.
- Despite pupils achieving low outcomes over time, the local authority has been slow to support the school. The input of current advisers is effective. Their work with teachers in raising expectations of what pupils can achieve has led to pupils being more positive about their learning.
- Pupils' behaviour has improved markedly this year. This is due to raised expectations by leaders. Senior leaders have ensured that pupils, parents and staff understand what is expected. Pupils adhere to these expectations. As a result, the school is an orderly place, where lessons are rarely disrupted by poor behaviour.
- The curriculum is effective in engaging pupils. Leaders have ensured that pupils' voices are listened to. Lessons and extra-curricular clubs are planned to interest and motivate pupils. Pupils say they now enjoy their school activities. As a result, pupils want to

attend school regularly. This, coupled with effective strategies designed to improve attendance, has led to a substantial increase in attendance this year.

- This year, subject leaders are more competent and confident in evaluating the effectiveness of teaching. They have a better understanding of how good teaching enables pupils to make faster progress in their subjects. They know the importance of checking on the progress of different groups of pupils but acknowledge the current unreliability of assessment information.
- Staff morale is better this year than in previous years. Staff value the support they receive from senior leaders. For example, systems for managing the performance of staff ensure that senior leaders listen to staff views and use such information to drive improvement. Classroom staff welcome the support they receive to improve their own teaching, although for some staff, areas for development are not targeted quickly enough or well enough.
- The school is effective in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils talk clearly about how they have benefited from challenges across a variety of subjects. For example, pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own beliefs in religious education lessons and consider the views of pupils from other faiths.
- Pupils are developing a good understanding of British values. In discussion with inspectors, pupils talked about democracy and the rule of law, referring to their school council and behaviour code respectively.
- Newly qualified teachers may be appointed.

Governance of the school

- Governance is not effective in holding school leaders to account.
- Governance has improved this academic year, but members recognise that changes made in teaching and assessment strategies are too recent to evaluate effectively.
- Since the time of the last inspection, weaknesses in school leadership and teaching have not been tackled quickly enough.
- Achievement information provided by leaders to governors lacks accuracy and reliability. This means that governors are not able to challenge leaders effectively. For example, the information does not enable governors to gain a clear picture about how well the most able pupils are performing.
- Minutes of meetings do not provide a succinct and clear record of how leaders are challenged. They do not demonstrate that governors have assured themselves that the pupil premium and sports funding have been consistently used effectively. This year, a strategic plan which incorporates monitoring and evaluation provides governors with a better insight into both the provision and its effectiveness.
- Governors are aware that leaders are eradicating weak teaching and have a better understanding of how well staff are performing.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Current leaders have worked hard to improve communication between pupils, parents and staff. All groups now talk more readily about any concerns they might have. This has meant that potential safeguarding issues are brought into the open more frequently. Up-to-date policies, together with timely training, ensure that staff know how to respond when they become concerned.
- Parents and pupils express positive views about how the school ensures that pupils are kept safe. This includes the school's work in improving behaviour. This was not the case prior to the start of this academic year.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Weak teaching in the past has led to pupils not securing key skills. While current teaching is better, it is not yet enabling pupils to catch up sufficiently. Variability remains between year groups and between classes.
- Information about pupils' progress does not enable staff to have a clear understanding of how well groups of pupils are performing, for example those pupils who speak English as an additional language. This uncertainty means that tasks set in lessons do not challenge pupils well or meet their respective needs. As a result, different groups of pupils do not make consistently good progress in each year group.
- Despite disadvantaged pupils making better progress this year, their progress is not as rapid as it needs to be to enable them to attain the standards expected. Teaching of the most able readers, including those who are disadvantaged, is more effective than that seen for other ability groups. However, these pupils are still not reading at the levels they are capable of in all year groups.
- Too few teachers develop pupils' comprehension and language skills. For example, children in Reception were talking about what they could see in an outdoor setting. While children were encouraged to talk, adults did not show the children how words and sentences could be used to express their ideas better.
- Expectations of what pupils can achieve in their writing have risen this year. The teaching of writing is stronger than that seen in other subjects. This is owing to teachers receiving a longer period of support in this subject. A specific weakness concerns pupils in key stage 1. Pupils do not form their letters correctly. This leads to them struggling to write fluently and develop a neat and cursive handwriting style.
- Teachers have ensured that mathematical activities require pupils to use reasoning and problem-solving skills. However, pupils' progress is restricted because teachers do not check that pupils have secured specific basic skills before asking pupils to use more complex skills.
- Adults' questioning of pupils' understanding is variable. Where skilful probing of pupils' responses is not used, pupils do not demonstrate deeper knowledge. However, pockets of some good practice were seen during the inspection. For example, in Year 6, pupils'

opinions were listened to by adults who then posed questions which required pupils to reconsider their ideas in light of other information.

- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are taught well. As a result, they are beginning to show signs of stronger progress than that seen in previous years. Teaching assistants are deployed well. They know what they need to do in order to support each pupil as they understand the barriers pupils face in their learning.
- The teaching of early reading is effective. Phonics skills are taught well. Classroom staff know what pupils are expected to do at each stage of learning. They demonstrate good subject knowledge which is used to support and challenge different ability groups well. The more able readers in key stage 1 are taught particularly well.
- This year, the school has worked hard to engage parents more in the life of the school and in their children's learning. Parents, including those new to this country, value and benefit from attending curriculum workshops. Homework, set weekly, consists of English and mathematics activities. Pupils say they enjoy this work. Around the school pupils' work is displayed. This raises the profile of homework. A club, run by the school, provides pupils with time to complete homework. This has led to high completion rates.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Prior to this year, pupils' welfare was not well provided for. Strategies to support pupils' welfare have only recently been introduced. It is difficult to evaluate if this work has had sustained impact.
- Leaders and staff have ensured that pupils feel valued at St Mary and St John's. Pupils trust staff and, as a result, are more willing to talk about any concerns they have. Examples of these trusting relationships were seen in the breakfast club.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different kinds of bullying. However, they are less clear about what this means in practice. For example, distinguishing between boisterous behaviour and bullying. Records show that there are few bullying incidents. Leaders have ensured that, this year, there is accurate and robust recording of any incidents. Staff resolve incidents more effectively than previously.
- Parents and pupils state that they are listened to and supported better this year. They are happier that staff see pupils' personal development as important and therefore are more willing to tackle any issues when they arise. Despite this, a small number of pupils expressed that they did not feel safe.
- Pupils have a good understanding of what it means to follow different faiths and belong to different cultures. They have developed a good understanding of tolerance and respect. No discriminatory behaviour was seen during the inspection. The school community ensures that families arriving from other countries are warmly welcomed and supported.

- Pupils enjoy the wide range of physical activities on offer at the school. Boys and girls attend after-school clubs in equal numbers. Their physical well-being is well developed through such participation.
- The school's provision for enabling pupils to be aware of the dangers of learning and playing online is effective. Pupils articulate their understanding of e-safety well.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils' conduct at play and lunchtimes is variable. Pupils say that occasional disputes between pupils are not always resolved. These issues are becoming less frequent as pupils understand the importance of behaving well with each other. Prior to this academic year, pupils and parents were far less positive about the standard of pupils' behaviour.
- Leaders have strengthened systems designed to improve pupils' behaviour. This has led to exclusion rates being above the national average as leaders are determined that poor behaviour will not be tolerated. Pupils, staff and parents acknowledge and support this approach. This year, pupils' behaviour around school has improved.
- Disruption in lessons is now rare. Overall, pupils' attitudes to learning have improved. However, some variability in behaviour remains in some classes where teaching is less effective.
- Attendance rates have declined over the past three years. This was because there was insufficient focus placed on improving attendance by leaders and strategies to work with families were ineffective. Current strategies are more effective. Attendance of different groups of pupils is much improved this academic year. However, overall attendance remains below the national average.
- High persistent absence for different groups has adversely affected achievement over time. The school's effective work in reducing persistent absence is enabling groups to make better progress this year.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- As a result of weak leadership and teaching, pupils' outcomes have been inconsistent over a period of time. At the end of key stage 2, significant improvements in pupils' attainment and progress in reading and mathematics in 2015 were not sustained in 2016.
- In 2016, outcomes at the end of key stage 2 were low in reading. Year 6 pupils left the school with below-average standards, having made weak progress through key stage 2. The low reading test results in 2016 came as a surprise to the school as their assessment information suggested that a far higher proportion of pupils would attain the expected standards. This was because assessment information was unreliable.
- Leaders' analysis of the current Year 6 pupils, confirmed by inspection evidence, is that pupils will attain similar standards in writing and mathematics to those seen last year. A higher proportion of pupils are likely to attain the expected standard in reading this

year. Although assessment has improved this year, it does not stand up well to rigorous examination. Current assessment information does not present a convincing picture that enough pupils are making good progress.

- Outcomes at the end of key stage 1 in 2016 showed improvements in reading, writing and mathematics compared to 2015. However, attainment in reading and writing remains below national averages. Attainment in mathematics was in line with national averages.
- Ineffective spending of pupil premium funding resulted in disadvantaged pupils making significantly weaker progress in reading in 2016. Their progress in writing and mathematics was broadly in line with national averages. Disadvantaged pupils, currently in the school, are not making sufficient progress to attain the required standards this year. However, as a result of better teaching, these pupils are now making at least similar progress to their classmates.
- The most able pupils do not make consistently good progress. Very few are currently demonstrating that they are exceeding age-related expectations across all subjects. However, the most able readers are suitably challenged. These pupils are provided with books which challenge their thinking and reading skills well. Year 6 pupils articulated this particularly well in their discussions with inspectors.
- A large proportion of pupils in each year group need to catch up in order to reach expected standards. Due to inconsistencies in the quality of teaching across the school, pupils' progress is currently variable. Pupils are not consistently well prepared for their next year groups and/or key stages.
- There is high mobility of pupils in and out of the school. Leaders ensure that newly arrived pupils are welcomed and settle quickly. However, assessment systems are not yet refined enough to capture and address any learning needs that pupils new to the school may have.
- Despite pupils making better progress in mathematics than previously, current progress remains variable. Significant gaps in pupils' understanding are still evident. Such gaps are not consistently addressed well, which means that pupils cannot tackle new tasks with competence or confidence.
- Pupils are making stronger progress this year in writing. However, standards for the current Year 6 pupils remain below average. Too few pupils in key stage 1 are making good progress in writing.
- The most able readers, most noticeably in Year 6 and key stage 1, show that they are rising to the demands of the current curriculum. However, in Years 3 and 4 pupils are not challenged sufficiently. Those who need to catch up are not doing so quickly enough.
- In 2016, pupils who speak English as an additional language made progress at least in line with national averages in writing and mathematics. However, their progress in reading was significantly below that expected by the end of Year 6. Leaders now track the progress of these pupils in more detail.
- Pupils' achievement in phonics continues to improve. Pupils build on their skills secured in the early years well. This has led to increased proportions of pupils attaining the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check over the past three years.

- Improved use of allocated special educational needs funding is enabling pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities to make better progress. However, improved teaching of this group of pupils is in its early stages. This means it is difficult to evaluate the impact on attainment. Different support strategies, including those designed to improve pupils' self-esteem and attitudes to learning, are resulting in pupils being more confident in lessons.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Children enter the early years with skills and knowledge that are below those typical for their age. Children's attainment by the end of Reception Year has increased over the past three years. However, the proportion of children attaining the expected standards remains below the national average. This is because children do not make rapid enough progress to catch up with other children nationally.
- When children enter Year 1, they have secured their phonics skills and are well prepared to tackle new reading challenges. Children are not so well prepared in other areas of learning. For example, any weaknesses in key letter formation techniques are not picked up in a timely way. As a result, children make slower progress from their starting points in writing.
- Leaders' current evaluation of how well the provision meets the needs of groups of children is too general. Information about children's progress is not used well enough to support staff in planning and delivering activities. Activities provided for children are not consistently well matched to meet the needs of different ability groups. As a result, children do not make the progress they are capable of making.
- The early years leader is developing her leadership skills. She works with other school leaders well. The leader has now identified the right priorities to further improve the early years, but implementation is still at an early stage. Rapid improvements leading to children making at least good progress are yet to be seen. The curriculum incorporates activities which cover all aspects of learning. It is effective in engaging all groups of children.
- The teaching of disadvantaged children in the early years is a strength. Teachers and teaching assistants make sure that they check how well these children have secured their understanding before moving them on to other activities. As a consequence, disadvantaged children attain well.
- Children who speak English as an additional language are supported well in the early years. An additional teacher works with individuals and groups to develop basic English language skills. This enables these children to improve their confidence and social interaction with their peers.
- Relationships between children, and between children and staff, are strong. Children listen to adults well and adhere to behavioural expectations. This results in orderly behaviour both indoors and outdoors.
- Early years staff ensure that children's welfare is well provided for. Engagement with parents is effective and parents value opportunities to talk with staff about their child's development. When staff require support from external services, they ensure that

advice is sought quickly and used to inform teaching plans. This includes support for children with complex needs.

- Safeguarding procedures are effective.

School details

Unique reference number	103442
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10032600

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	424
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mary Keelan
Executive headteacher	Matthew Emery
Telephone number	0121 382 3522
Website	www.stmryjon.bham.sch.uk
Email address	enquiry@stmryjon.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11–12 March 2015

Information about this school

- St Mary and St John Junior and Infant is larger than the average primary school.
- The executive headteacher began working at the school in October 2016. He works at the school for three days each week, spending the other two days as principal at St Nicholas Catholic Primary School.
- The senior leadership team is made up of the executive headteacher, the acting headteacher and acting deputy headteacher.
- There are six teachers on temporary contracts.
- Children are taught in one part-time Nursery class and two full-time Reception classes. In key stages 1 and 2, pupils are taught in single-age classes.
- A breakfast club for pupils and parents is provided by the governing body. It was observed as part of this inspection.

- Since the previous inspection, there have been a number of leadership and staffing changes.
- The mobility of pupils joining and leaving the school is high when compared with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well above average. A variety of ethnic groups are represented. Pupils from Any Other White Background, White British and African heritage make up the largest groups.
- Approximately 40% of pupils have a first language that is not English.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- The majority of Year 5 pupils were on a residential visit at the time of the inspection.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes, with the exception of Year 5, and visited a number of small group intervention sessions. They visited 17 lessons, five of which were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with pupils, staff, the chair of the governing body and one other governor and representatives from the local authority’s school improvement service.
- Inspectors talked to pupils about their reading and listened to both higher- and lower-ability pupils read.
- Inspectors examined work in pupils’ books.
- The school’s child protection and safeguarding procedures were scrutinised.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at a range of documentation written to support school improvement, including minutes from meetings of the governing body.
- Inspectors were unable to take account of Ofsted’s online Parent View questionnaire, owing to an insufficient number of responses. The school provided information from their own parental surveys and inspectors spoke with parents.
- Staff expressed their views in discussion with inspectors and via an online survey.
- The school had a section 48 inspection, which is carried out by the Diocese and focuses on the religious character of the school, on the first day of this inspection.
- Inspectors reviewed the school’s website.

Inspection team

Jeremy Bird, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Collette Higgins	Ofsted Inspector
Tracy Stone	Ofsted Inspector

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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.

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