

St Mary and All Saints Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Wensley Road, Coley Park, Reading, Berkshire RG1 6DU

Inspection dates

17–18 October 2017

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	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Since the previous inspection, improvement has been too slow. Temporary and ever-shifting leadership and staffing arrangements mean that there is no compelling momentum for change. Standards remain low.
- Responsible stakeholders including the diocese, local authority, executive committee and governing body have had insufficient impact. Consequently, the school has floundered and school effectiveness continues to wane.
- Leaders' actions to improve the school have not had the desired impact. Since the last inspection, standards have continued to slide, particularly in key stage 1.
- Some parents are dissatisfied with the school's effectiveness.
- Too few pupils in key stages 1 and 2, including those from vulnerable groups, achieve the standards expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Approximately 50% of staff are temporary and few stay long enough to make a real difference to pupils' learning. The quality of teaching and learning over time is inadequate.
- Pupils' attendance is declining. Absence for some vulnerable groups is gradually increasing and is above that seen nationally.
- The curriculum does not meet pupils' needs. Pupils do not study a range of subjects with any regularity. Pupils are uninspired and lack motivation to give of their best in learning activities. Standards are too low, particularly in science.

The school has the following strengths

- Last year's Year 6 pupils benefited from high-quality teaching and learning experiences. By the time pupils left the school, they had caught up in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils achieve well in some subjects, including physical education and music.
- The quality of teaching, learning and leadership within the early years is a strength in the school.
- Safeguarding is effective. Parents are rightly confident that their children are safe in 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?

- Rapidly improve the quality of leadership and management and governance by making sure that:
 - a sustainable leadership, governance and teaching structure is in place
 - staff performance, including that of leaders, is regularly monitored and reviewed, so staff are held more firmly to account
 - school performance information is gathered across all subjects and used to inform school improvement planning more sharply
 - the school's finances are kept under watchful review and evaluated for value for money
 - pupils have access to and benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum
 - pupils attend school regularly and arrive on time
 - the school's website meets statutory requirements.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, make good progress in all aspects of learning by ensuring that:
 - teachers have higher expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving in reading, writing and mathematics
 - teaching deepens pupils' understanding, including for the most able pupils, so that they achieve the standards of which they are capable
 - pupils' homework tasks support their learning experience well
 - pupils have regular, high-quality opportunities to read widely and often
 - activities in lessons cater well for pupils of all abilities and are pitched to take account of pupils' needs, including for those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language
 - pupils' engagement and pride in their work improve.

External reviews of governance and the school's use of the pupil premium 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

- Leaders talk candidly about how the school has floundered in times of uncertainty. Responsible stakeholders have failed to orchestrate a sustainable leadership structure that has the capacity to make a positive difference. Recent efforts to find an appropriate partner, including two fruitless attempts to join a multi-academy trust, have all but run out of steam. As a result, the school is unable to access suitable support that could make a difference.
- The interim headteacher and deputy headteacher recognise that pupils' achievement should be better. Teachers are keen to improve and proud to work at the school. However, this energy is not harnessed, managed or led effectively.
- The school's raising attainment plan is not shared widely enough. The senior leadership team does not meet in order to evaluate the school's progress towards achieving the targets set. Leaders do not track pupils' progress in subjects other than reading, writing or mathematics. Consequently, leaders at the highest level lack the strong ambition, drive and aspiration necessary to raise attainment and improve the school's overall effectiveness.
- Staffing arrangements continually fluctuate. At the end of the previous academic year, seven teachers left, including the mathematics and English leaders. Previous effort, reported at the last Ofsted monitoring visit, was beginning to lift some aspects of middle leadership but this has now faded away. Leaders have not yet established a middle leadership tier for this year, including for the leadership of English, mathematics and science. Therefore, there are too few subject or phase leaders in post to inspire the rapid improvement required and harness the potential of new staff. The school does not have the required capacity to improve.
- Leaders describe the quality of some teaching in the school as inadequate. Despite this, and while facing ongoing recruitment and financial challenges, staff performance issues are not tackled with sufficient rigour. Leaders concede that trying to establish some consistency in teaching arrangements is prioritised over its quality.
- The deputy headteacher oversees the performance management of staff and the gathering and collation of assessment information. Recently, the deputy headteacher has begun to hold helpful meetings with teaching staff to review pupils' progress. Those supporting the development of teaching, including the diocese and local authority, are continually reinforcing expectations to get new staff up to speed with school processes, such as the school's approach to marking. This leaves too little time to focus on improving teachers' skills. In the absence of other subject and phase leaders, the deputy headteacher's leadership capacity is stretched too thinly and, as a consequence, is not having the desired impact on raising standards.
- The curriculum does not meet pupils' needs well enough. Pupils do not study a full range of subjects regularly, or in sufficient depth. Furthermore, homework does not support learning well enough. For example, Year 6 routinely complete test revision books in English and mathematics, both in and out of lessons, without sufficient feedback from staff. Pupils' books in other subjects show limited coverage of some

topics, including in science. Standards in many subjects are low and do not mirror the curriculum overview published on the school's website. Pupils are not receiving their full entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum.

- There are other weaknesses in the curriculum, including the development of pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural understanding. Leaders acknowledge that, with shifting staffing arrangements, this aspect of pupils' development is highly variable.
- Additional funding, including the pupil premium grant and funding for SEN, is not well spent. There are no firm plans in place for this academic year and leaders have not gauged what difference last year's funding made. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, are all underachieving.
- The efforts of local authority officers and other professional partners have not paved the way for necessary change. Although local authority officers and diocese representatives have provided regular support, this has not had the desired impact nor reversed the legacy of underachievement.
- Some parents expressed displeasure to inspectors about a host of issues, including the school's level of communication, the amount of homework, unstable teaching arrangements and the slow rate of improvement in the school. Parents are frustrated that their children's education is being compromised.
- The school's website does not meet requirements. Some key information is not publicised to parents, including how the school plans to spend additional funding this year. In addition, some information is misrepresentative, including that relating to the curriculum. Other information is out of date. For example, the school's most recent version of its safeguarding policy is not available via the website.
- The school's physical education (PE) and sport provision is well led. The additional funds of the primary PE and sport grant are spent effectively. Many pupils benefit from a range of extra-curricular opportunities in this subject. For example, during an after-school girls' football training session, pupils made good progress in becoming skilled at dribbling.
- The school should not appoint newly qualified teachers.

Governance of the school

- Arrangements for ensuring stability across governance have suffered from ongoing delay and uncertainty. Until very recently, a governing body and an executive committee ran alongside one another, each with different roles and responsibilities. Governors have not adhered to some statutory functions, such as the regular performance management of the headteacher. Consequently, leaders at the highest level have not been held to account with sufficient rigour for the school's effectiveness.
- Governors have not monitored all aspects of school performance closely enough. For example, fixed-term exclusion, over the last academic year, remains high, including for disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- In the past, the school's finances have not been managed well. For example, considerable funding has been invested into refurbishing the library that pupils rarely

visit. Leaders, including governors, have not ensured that the additional funds for disadvantaged pupils are spent effectively. As a result, the school finds itself in a challenging deficit financial position. Governors have not reviewed the school's spending with sufficient rigour.

- From July 2017, a new, single governing body has replaced both the executive committee and the previous governing body. This group is made up of experienced governors (many whom were members of the executive committee) with a high level of expertise. These governors have a clear view of the school's weaknesses.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff know that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and have a clear understanding of what to do if they are concerned about a pupil. Up-to-date training at the beginning of term, supported by additional e-learning modules, means that staff are clear what their responsibilities are.
- The school works effectively with outside agencies, and with parents, to support pupils and their families. However, leaders' record-keeping lacks precision.
- Leaders and governors have completed training in safer recruitment. Pre-employment checks, including those relating to working in the early years, meet requirements.
- The school's e-safety guidelines are clear. Pupils say they know how to use the internet safely and are clear on how to report anything that is troubling.
- Pupils feel safe in school. They have confidence that staff will help if they are in need.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- Inadequate teaching over a number of years has led to underachievement for most groups of pupils, including those from minority ethnic groups, disadvantaged pupils, those who speak English as an additional language and those who have SEN and/or disabilities. Too much teaching is still not good enough to ensure that pupils make the progress they should in order to catch up.
- The quality of teaching has not improved since the previous inspection. Many classes repetitively encounter fluctuating and unsettling teaching arrangements. For example, in the autumn term last year, pupils in Year 1 had eight different teachers.
- Where arrangements are more established for the term ahead, new teachers are still getting to know pupils' learning needs. The school's marking and assessment procedures are not always fully understood or implemented effectively, particularly by new staff. As a result, pupils' misconceptions are not addressed adequately.
- Senior leaders know that it is the lack of consistency in pupils' learning that leads to low achievement. With many new and temporary teachers and very few subject leaders, there is very limited scope for good learning to be the norm as this academic year gets underway. Parents are rightly concerned about the quality of their children's learning experiences.
- Not enough teaching is sufficiently motivating and appropriately challenging. Teachers

too seldom use information about what pupils already know in order to meet their differing needs effectively. Teachers do not cater sufficiently well for the most able pupils, including in mathematics. For example, although the most able pupils work with greater independence, they rarely complete more-demanding tasks.

- Teachers do not make regular checks of pupils' understanding in lessons. Pupils often work self-reliantly. While some pupils make repeated errors, others struggle to get going and many work sluggishly. Adults are not quick enough to respond and, consequently, pupils do not make the progress they are capable of.
- The curriculum does not help pupils to develop their basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics well enough. Pupils have too few opportunities to write at length in order to improve their grammar and punctuation skills. Furthermore, tasks in mathematics give little opportunity for pupils to apply their skills to problem-solving.
- Lessons rarely build on previous learning and teaching does not encourage pupils to develop their skills and understanding in sufficient depth. Although pupils are happy to complete activities, few are inspired to give of their best. This is evident in the weak presentation of pupils' work. In many classes, pupils' handwriting, spelling and presentation skills show little improvement over the term.
- The teaching of reading is not effective. Pupils, particularly in lower key stage 2, have underdeveloped skills and often struggle to read because they are given texts that are too difficult. Pupils told inspectors they would like to read more widely but they have limited choice, as they do not visit the school's library on a regular basis. Some pupils do not read aloud regularly to adults.
- Many parents comment that they do not receive information about how well their children are progressing. Frequent staff changes also hinder the sharing of information between home and school. Furthermore, homework tasks do not support pupils' learning well enough.
- There are some pockets of good teaching in the school, although inconsistency prevails. Teaching is good in the early years. Where teaching is stronger, teachers and teaching assistants have higher expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- The quality of teaching in Year 6 last year was stronger, although these teachers have now left the school. In 2017, unvalidated information shows that the proportion of these pupils achieving age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics was in line with that seen nationally.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Teachers expect too little of pupils and this dampens pupils' enthusiasm. Pupils speak openly of the impact that some new teachers have on their learning. One commented, 'My teacher doesn't always give me enough to do as they don't know me well enough.'

Some pupils say that they feel uncomfortable as their teacher is 'always changing'.

- Some parents report that continual ambiguity about teaching arrangements has affected their children's well-being and mental health. Many parents are understandably concerned about the high degree of uncertainty that surrounds the school.
- There are times when pupils do not routinely demonstrate perseverance and determination. Some are too dependent on adult attention to keep them motivated: when an adult moves away, they stop what they are doing. This is because tasks are not well matched to their needs.
- The school reports that there are some bullying incidents. When reported, these are investigated thoroughly and parents are kept informed. Pupils talk frankly about these episodes and feel staff are effective at sorting out problems. Some parents are not as confident that issues are dealt with effectively.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. When tasks are not well-matched to pupils' abilities, they display a lack of interest and general inattentiveness. Equally, too much weak teaching and a narrow curriculum fail to spark pupils' interest and pupils complete tasks slowly, showing little motivation to do their very best.
- However, although individuals sometimes switch off, which slows their progress, this seldom causes disruption for others. They try hard and most listen well to their teachers. Pupils, however, note that class behaviour can become silly when there is a change of teacher. Pupils commented to inspectors that the ongoing staff turnover 'does not help our learning'.
- Work in books is untidy and much is incomplete. Pupils' basic skills are underdeveloped and they make slow progress, such as when applying spelling rules to writing tasks. In the wider curriculum, pupils complete tasks intermittently and some classes do not cover the full range of curriculum subjects. This is because leaders have not established a culture of high expectations.
- The school's behaviour policy is not applied consistently. There is variability from class to class, particularly as so many teachers are new to the school. In smaller groups where the adults, such as teaching assistants, are well known to pupils behaviour is generally better. Some parents expressed concern about the standard of behaviour in lessons.
- Attendance is declining and pupils' absence, including that of disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities, is rising. Leaders' strategies, including the closer monitoring of pupils' attendance patterns, have not halted the decline. Persistent absence is above that seen nationally and steadily increasing.
- Some pupils arrive late. Although leaders record lateness, strategies to encourage all pupils to attend school on time are ineffectual.
- Pupils behave well around the school. They come into lessons calmly and there is a sense of order throughout. Pupils dress smartly and some commented they are particularly proud to wear the school's uniform when representing the school at

sporting events.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Pupils do not achieve the standards of which they are capable. Unvalidated information in 2017 shows that only about one third of pupils reached the expected standard for their age in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 1. Very few pupils were able to work at greater depth in reading, writing or mathematics. This represents a decline from the previous year.
- Pupils do not make the progress they should from one key stage to the next. Children leave Reception at a typical level for their age. However, by the end of key stage 1, their achievements are below those seen nationally.
- In key stage 2, pupils do not make sufficient progress to allow them to catch up in reading, writing or mathematics. Most pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and the most able disadvantaged pupils, are not attaining the standards expected for their age.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make inconsistent progress. Some find it hard to tackle their work because it is not well matched to their needs.
- Pupils' basic skills are underdeveloped. Pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language, struggle to access what is expected as they do not have the reading skills for success. For example, pupils in Year 2 struggled to sort sentences into commands, statements or questions as they could not read the material provided. Teachers' planning does not account for pupils' starting points strongly enough.
- In other subjects too, standards are low. This is particularly the case in science. Pupils do not cover key scientific concepts in any depth. Opportunities to explore and learn through first-hand experiences are very limited. For example, Year 6 have written about the history of electricity but not explored other aspects of this topic practically, or in any complexity. This greatly limits their understanding.
- In 2017, unvalidated information shows that standards at the end of Year 6 were in line with those seen nationally. This cohort of pupils benefited from stronger teaching and made good progress as a result. However, this upsurge, when compared to outcomes in previous years, is not replicated in other year groups.
- The proportion of pupils who met the standard required in the Year 1 phonics check was in line with that seen nationally. However, too few pupils meet the standard when undertaking the recheck in Year 2. Pupils expressed their frustration at not reading aloud often enough.
- In the early years, the proportion of children who reach a good level of development by the end of their Reception Year is in line with the national average.
- Pupils achieve well in music. Pupils learn to play a musical instrument and many participate in the school's choir. During the inspection, the choir was rehearsing, singing confidently in two-part harmony.

Early years provision

Good

- Leadership, management and teaching are consistently better in early years than in the rest of the school. As a result, children achieve well.
- Children enter the early years with skills and attributes below those typical for their age. At the end of Reception, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development is in line with the national average. The start they receive in their Reception Year means that most children are well prepared for the learning they will meet in Year 1.
- Adults interact well with children, including in the school's Nursery, modelling their expectations effectively and displaying positive and engaging attitudes. As a result, children, including those who have SEN and/or disabilities, make good progress. They benefit from high-quality adult interaction that supports their learning well.
- Routines are well established. Children behave well and respond enthusiastically to the range of activities on offer. They are able to persevere with tasks, maintaining a high level of focus and concentration.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. Adults seize on opportunities to promote children's rapid acquisition of language skills. Children receive ample opportunities to practise key sounds when engaging in a variety of appealing activities. Children respond positively, such as when using their emerging phonic skills to label animals.
- Children benefit from high-quality teaching. For example, during a session about 'Goldilocks and the three bears', children were able to listen attentively, join in with the actions and create a story map. Ample opportunities to develop and nurture children's growing vocabulary and mastery of language are taken eagerly. Children make good progress in the acquisition of language skills, including those who speak English as an additional language.
- Classroom routines are understood by children and reinforced regularly by adults. Transition between activities is highly effective. The positive behaviour of children and their strong relationships with the adults around them demonstrate the confidence and safety they feel at school. Consequently, children respond well and skills, such as carrying scissors safely, are understood by all. Their parents agree, feeling confident that their children are safe at school. Safeguarding is effective.
- Assessment records are detailed and cover all areas of learning. These are used well to inform parents of their children's development and also to shape and scaffold new learning opportunities. Parents told inspectors that they are highly satisfied with the provision for their children in the early years.
- The leadership of early years is effective. The leader demonstrates vision and ambition, ensuring that new staff are well versed in what is expected. As a result, staff know the children well and meet their learning needs effectively. The leader sets ambitious targets for improvement that are well supported by insightful action planning. However, the school's senior leadership team has not met with the early years leader this term. This department is not fully involved with setting and evaluating the strategic direction of the school.

School details

Unique reference number	110002
Local authority	Reading
Inspection number	10019831

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	410
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lorraine Doyle
Interim headteacher	Margaret Bainbridge
Telephone number	0118 9015545
Website	www.st-maryallsaints.reading.sch.uk
Email address	head@st-maryallsaints.reading.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21–22 October 2014

Information about this school

- St Mary and All Saints is a larger-than-average-sized primary school with a Nursery. Children attend the Nursery part-time.
- The interim headteacher joined the school in September 2015.
- About three quarters of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. Approximately one third of pupils speak English as an additional language. Both these figures are above average.
- A third of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care or known to be eligible for free school meals. This is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities being supported is below the national average. The proportion of pupils supported with an education, health and care plan, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is below the national average.

- In 2016, the school met the government's floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information because the school's pupil premium strategy for the current academic year, the most recent key stage 2 results and the school's special educational needs information report are not available on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors met with the interim headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other leaders with significant responsibilities. The lead inspector also met with three governors, including the chair, a representative of Oxford Diocese and with two representatives from the local authority, including the interim head of education.
- Inspectors visited 33 lessons or part lessons, including some with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors listened to four pupils read from Years 3 and 4, looked at work in pupils' books and discussed pupils' progress and attainment with leaders.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils informally and also met with seven pupils in Years 5 and 6.
- Parents' views were taken into account through face-to-face informal discussions and the 16 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including eight free-text comments. One parent submitted comments via email.
- Inspectors took account of 18 survey responses submitted by staff.
- Inspectors checked records and documentation relating to safeguarding, behaviour, attendance, staff appraisals and monitoring and improvement.
- Inspectors reviewed the checks made on staff about their suitability to work with children.

Inspection team

Elizabeth Farr, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Steph Fawdry	Ofsted Inspector
Graham Marshall	Ofsted Inspector

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