

St Pius X RC Primary School

Gatehouse Avenue, Withywood, Bristol BS13 9AB

Inspection dates

14–15 June 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders, including governors, have failed to tackle the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. The school's performance has not improved quickly enough. Capacity for improvement is weak.
- A confusion over the roles and responsibilities of the senior leaders has had a negative impact on school improvement.
- Governors have an overgenerous view of the effectiveness of the school. They are failing to hold leaders to account to bring about the significant improvements required.
- Leaders have not secured an effective safeguarding culture through all aspects of school life.
- Subject leaders are receiving training but the impact of their actions to improve the quality of education are too slow to take effect.
- Attendance rates are well below the national average. Although reducing, too many pupils are persistently absent from school.
- The school's curriculum does not prepare pupils well enough for life in modern Britain.
- Weak teaching and learning over time has resulted in pupils failing to achieve as well as they should. Pupils do not make swift enough progress. Their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is too low. Their spelling is poor.
- Teachers do not have high enough expectations of their pupils. Inconsistent assessment practice means that not all teachers plan learning that meets pupils' needs.
- Although some learning support assistants are used well to support pupils' learning, this is not a consistent feature in every lesson.
- There is a lack of challenge for the most able pupils.
- Leaders are not using pupil premium effectively. As a result, too few disadvantaged pupils are making accelerated progress.
- Children do not make enough progress in the early years. Teaching does not prepare them adequately for Year 1.

The school has the following strengths

- Relationships between staff and pupils are positive. Consequently, pupils enjoy coming to school.
- Leaders have focused on improving pupils' handwriting and presentation has improved.

Full report

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

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - the roles and responsibilities of senior leaders are urgently clarified with the governors, the local authority and the diocese
 - governors develop an accurate understanding of the effectiveness of the school and hold all leaders, including subject leaders, to account for the quality of education provided
 - the knowledge of the subject leaders is improved so that they can provide support in all key stages
 - an effective safeguarding culture is established
 - there is a more strategic approach developed to eradicate persistent absenteeism and improve pupils' attendance
 - the curriculum prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain and the next stage of their education
 - the funds for disadvantaged pupils are used strategically to raise pupils' outcomes.
- Improve pupils' outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics through the improvement of teaching and learning in all key stages, including early years, by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - using assessment information accurately to provide pupils with tasks that challenge them and build on previous learning
 - ensuring that the most able pupils are challenged to deepen and extend their thinking
 - improving the learning support assistants' knowledge and understanding so that they provide more accurate support for pupils.

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

An external review of governance should be taken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- St Pius X RC Primary School does not provide an acceptable quality of education. The school has been in decline for too long because its weaknesses are not being dealt with quickly enough by leaders and governors. Improvement is too slow and pupils continue to underachieve.
- Over the past two years, there has not been a shared understanding of the role of the executive headteachers in the journey of school improvement. This has led to confusion over their responsibilities.
- Considerable investment in providing quality training for teaching staff has had minimal impact on school improvement, in part because the turnover of staff has been high.
- The current executive headteacher has taken time to develop the role of subject leaders. Following extensive training, she has made a positive start by introducing a number of initiatives to improve teaching and learning. However, these are at an early stage of development and have yet to have a significant impact.
- Some middle leaders have a limited understanding of their subject area outside the year group they teach. This means that the support and challenge they are able to provide is limited.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and within this the promotion of fundamental British values, are inadequate. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong and are proud to carry out their roles within the school council and chaplaincy. However, they are not able to talk confidently about the other faiths and cultures they learn about.
- Pupils do not understand the principles of living in Britain today. They are unable to talk about the key features of democracy and have a limited recognition of members of the royal family.
- The use of pupil premium funding to support vulnerable pupils is tracked by leaders. This funding is used to pay for additional teaching staff and provide personalised support for pupils experiencing social and emotional difficulties. However, it is not always used to provide effective support for pupils' academic needs. Consequently, pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding do not make fast enough progress. Outcomes are well below those of other pupils nationally.
- Leaders use the sport premium well to promote pupils' involvement in a wide range of physical activities, such as competitive games, archery and cycling. The employment of specialist coaches supports staff training needs appropriately.
- The eight parents who responded to the online inspection questionnaire were happy with the school. In particular, they felt that, as one parent summed up, staff are 'very friendly. If I ever have a problem the teachers will help me straight away.'
- The local authority has provided significant support by using the expertise available from a local teaching school. The school improvement officer has carried out regular reviews and his concerns are clearly highlighted in his notes of visits. The diocese has funded the part-time deployment of the executive headteacher to the school. The

notes of visits express concern that the rate of improvement of the school is not quick enough.

- The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers.

The governance of the school

- Governors are not ensuring that they follow the mandatory requirements for the recruitment of members to the governing body.
- Governors have failed to challenge the role of the executive headteacher in taking responsibility to develop the skills of the interim head of school with sufficient urgency to bring about swift improvement.
- Governors do not have an accurate understanding of the effectiveness of the school. They have not acted swiftly enough to ensure that senior leaders take account of the findings of the visits made by the school improvement officer. The clearly highlights the ongoing weaknesses in the school.
- Governors have failed to recognise that pupils' outcomes remain stubbornly low.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.
- Leaders and governors have not ensured that mandatory safeguarding checks have been carried out for all adults who are involved in the school.
- Leaders, including governors, do not ensure that pupils are consistently kept safe and secure within the school site.
- Safeguarding training is not given in a timely manner. At the time of the inspection staff, including those who had been at the school for over a year, were currently receiving or completing statutory safeguarding training.
- Leaders are not sufficiently rigorous about following up reasons for pupils' absence.
- All staff know that if they have a concern about a child, they must quickly inform the nominated safeguarding leads. Incidents or identified concerns are recorded electronically and the school works closely with external specialist agencies.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- Gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding, coupled with a legacy of weak teaching, mean that too many pupils are not developing into successful learners. Currently, the quality of teaching varies considerably across the school. It is not strong enough in too many classes. There is not enough effective teaching to help pupils to make up the progress they have lost by the time they leave Year 6.
- By the end of key stage 2, too many pupils cannot read, write or apply mathematics as well as they should. The lack of progress that pupils make in their learning means that they are not prepared sufficiently well for the next stage of their education when they start at secondary school.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough. When planning

learning, teachers fail to take into account what pupils know and can already do. There are too many pupils who are completing the same work as their peers. The most able pupils are not challenged and the least able struggle. As a result, pupils do not develop knowledge, understanding or skills in line with their capabilities.

- A number of initiatives have been introduced to improve the teaching of reading. The school has received specialist support in developing the teaching of phonics. While improvements can be seen in some pupils' reading, too many pupils, particularly in the younger years, do not read accurately or with fluency.
- There has been a recent focus on developing pupils' writing skills. A new approach to teaching handwriting is helping pupils to present their work much more neatly. This has led to some improvements and the work completed in books during this academic year is generally better than previously. However, not all teachers check that their pupils write in full sentences. Pupils' spelling skills remain weak and the inaccuracy of letter formation is not consistently identified by teaching staff.
- Teachers do not address quickly enough the gaps that pupils have in their knowledge and understanding of mathematical concepts. They do not embed core skills sufficiently well because their explanations are not always clear.
- The use of learning support assistants and their impact on pupils' learning varies considerably between classes. In some instances teaching assistants are used well to work with small groups of pupils. However, this is not a consistent feature in all classes. Learning support assistants do not pick up on errors or insist on high standards.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement. Pupils' attitudes are generally positive but diminish in sessions where they are underchallenged or do not understand the content.
- The social and emotional needs of vulnerable pupils and their families are of central importance to adults in school. Relationships with external agencies and experts are well developed. The majority of pupils have their social and emotional needs met in an increasingly effective manner. Pupil premium funding is used appropriately to help those pupils who are disadvantaged with the extra pastoral support that they need.
- Pupils eagerly enjoy the sporting opportunities offered to them and this helps them to keep physically active.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school. They know that their teachers or the pastoral care manager will listen to any problems or concerns that they might have.
- Pupils are knowledgeable about how to stay safe online when using computers and laptops. They report with pride the way in which they used the agreed drill to evacuate the school when there was a potential fire at breakfast club.
- Pupils told inspectors that incidents of anti-social behaviour, such as bullying, are rare. If there are any such incidents, they feel confident that they are swiftly dealt with.
- Pupils who arrive mid-way through their primary education explain that they settle in

quickly because the other pupils make them feel welcome.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate.
- Attendance is low across the school and too many pupils are persistently absent. Leaders know that the levels of absenteeism are too high and have implemented plans to improve attendance further. However, attendance figures remain well below average and, although reducing, persistent absenteeism in 2017/18 remains above the national average.
- Most pupils behave well when they are appropriately supervised by adults. They try hard in lessons and disruptions in class are rare. However, when supervision is not strong, pupils are boisterous and put their safety at risk. This was observed at the well-attended breakfast club.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school to 'see their friends and learn'. They are generally polite and courteous to staff and visitors. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities such as playing together well during breaktimes or being a fruit monitor, school councillor or a member of the chaplaincy team.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Children start school with skills and abilities which are generally well below those typical for their age. Their speaking and listening skills are poorly developed and they lack the ability to manage their feelings and cooperate with each other. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not strong enough to address previous weaknesses to help children make the progress required to catch up.
- By the time they leave the Reception class, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development remains well below the national average. Currently, less than half of Reception children are working at a standard which will ensure they reach a good level of development by the end of the academic year. Consequently, not all children are prepared sufficiently well for Year 1.
- In the 2017 Year 1 phonics screening check the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard was well below the national average. A higher proportion of the current Year 1 pupils have met the expected standard in the phonics screening check this year.
- In the 2017 national tests at the end of key stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics, standards were below national averages. Despite pupils making progress from their low starting points in the early years, only two thirds of pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education. Currently, the proportion of pupils working at the expected standard is lower than in 2017.
- In the 2017 national tests at the end of key stage 2, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was significantly below the national average. Currently, only half of the Year 6 pupils are working at the standards expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics.

- Information about pupils' progress presented by the school shows that, of the Year 6 pupils who have remained in the school since Year 2, 20% fewer are now working at the expected standard than when they were in Year 2.
- Pupils do not make sufficient progress across the school from their various starting points. The most able pupils are not supported to reach the higher standards in reading, writing or mathematics. Teachers' expectations of what these pupils can achieve are too low. The work that teachers set too often contains little in the way of challenge for the most able pupils.
- The attainment of disadvantaged pupils was well below other pupils nationally in 2017. Although there are some signs of improvement, disadvantaged pupils do not make the accelerated progress they need to make to catch up. Consequently, those pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding underachieve.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities do not achieve well. Too many pupils are making insufficient progress. For example, the gap between pupils' attainment and the expected standard for their age group has widened in reading and writing. Progress is slightly better in mathematics, with two thirds of pupils narrowing the gap between their attainment and that of the expected standard.

Early years provision

Inadequate

- There have been significant staffing changes in the Reception class over the past few years and this has been an ongoing challenge for leaders. They do not have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the teaching, learning and assessments in the early years.
- Although relationships in the Reception class are warm and caring, the learning activities provided are not carefully structured to meet the children's needs and move them on quickly in their learning. Expectations are not high enough. For example, when teaching staff ask children a question, they are too accepting of one word answers.
- There is a lack of precision in the assessments that are made of children's progress. At times, the evidence recorded does not exemplify accurately the progress that children make. For example, group photographs do not demonstrate the skills that individuals have successfully achieved.
- The curriculum does not provide a broad range of experiences to challenge the children. Activities that are provided often lack challenge or a clear purpose. Some children become disengaged because the tasks do not match the next steps in their learning. This is especially so for boys, who fail to settle to activities. At times the environment is chaotic and, consequently, hinders the children's learning.
- The most able children are not sufficiently challenged in their learning. Those children who have SEN and/or disabilities do not make sufficient progress because their needs are not met.
- Staff in the early years ensure that all statutory safeguarding requirements are met. Staff are appropriately trained to administer first aid to these young children. Teaching staff get to know the children and their families prior to starting school through home visits, meetings at the feeder nurseries and induction sessions in school. This helps the

children settle well when they start school.

School details

Unique reference number	109252
Local authority	City of Bristol
Inspection number	10054902

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	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	128
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Harper
Head of school	Denise Fannin
Telephone number	01173 772165
Website	www.st-piusx.bristol.sch.uk
Email address	stpiusp@bristol-schools.uk
Date of previous inspection	15–16 March 2016

Information about this school

- This school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The current part-time executive headteacher joined the school in September 2017. Previous to this, another part-time executive headteacher was in place for just under two years.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support funded by the pupil premium is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, and the proportion who speak English as an additional language, are average.
- In 2017, the school did not meet the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors, together with the executive headteacher and the interim headteacher, observed learning in all classes.
- The lead inspector met with three middle leaders. She also had a telephone conversation with another middle leader who was on school camp with Year 6 pupils.
- Inspectors looked at a range of English and mathematics books, some of which included topic work.
- The lead inspector met with three governors, including the chair of governors.
- The lead inspector met with the primary lead officer from the local authority, the school improvement officer and a director from the diocese.
- Inspectors took account of the eight responses to Parent View, the online questionnaire and the six written comments that were submitted.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documents, including the school's improvement plans. They examined information on pupils' current progress and scrutinised the school's safeguarding procedures.
- The inspectors listened to pupils read and talked to them about school life.

Inspection team

Lorna Brackstone, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Kathy Maddocks	Her Majesty's 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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Manchester
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