

St Catherine's Catholic Primary School, Littlehampton

Highdown Drive, Littlehampton, West Sussex BN17 6HL

Inspection dates

11–12 December 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders and governors have not maintained the improvements identified at the previous inspection. Leaders have not checked the quality of teaching, learning and assessment robustly.
- Progress in mathematics in key stage 2 is weak. A new approach to teaching mathematics is not yet helping pupils who have fallen behind to catch up.
- Teaching is not consistently meeting the needs of all pupils, especially the most able, because assessment information is not used well.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is not effective. Too many pupils on the SEND register make poor progress.
- The planned curriculum is broad and balanced and is designed to improve pupils' skills and knowledge. However, leaders have not ensured that it is followed consistently and taught well in all year groups.
- Governors have not ensured that additional funding is spent well to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders have created a strong culture of care and respect. Staff, pupils and parents all value the school and its place in the community.
- Children make a positive start to school in the early years. They settle in to school quickly and make good progress.
- Leaders have recently identified some of the weaknesses in the school. They have sought suitable support and begun to take action to address them.
- Safeguarding is effective. Leaders work hard to keep the most vulnerable pupils safe from harm and to ensure that all pupils learn to stay safe.
- Pupils' personal development is strong. The school promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding very well.
- Pupils behave well in class and around the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leaders and governors by ensuring that:
 - checks on the quality of teaching take account of pupils' learning and progress
 - the curriculum is consistently implemented as planned
 - leaders responsible for reading, writing and mathematics have an impact on improving teaching and raising standards beyond their own classrooms
 - funding for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND is used effectively to help them catch up.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that it challenges all pupils to make stronger progress, especially in mathematics, by:
 - using assessment information accurately to plan tasks that are suitably challenging, particularly for the most able
 - adapting tasks in lessons when they are too easy or too hard
 - ensuring that pupils have opportunities to correct and learn from their mistakes in mathematics before moving on to the next topic
 - providing more precise guidance to help pupils edit and improve their work.
- Improve the provision for pupils with SEND by ensuring that:
 - special educational needs are quickly and correctly identified
 - teachers are appropriately trained and skilled in supporting pupils with SEND to make good progress
 - individual education plans are precisely focused on what additional and different support needs to be put in place to help pupils with SEND catch up.

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

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

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders have not sustained the pace of improvement to maintain good teaching or to ensure that all groups of pupils achieve the higher academic expectations of the current national curriculum.
- Checks on the quality of teaching are not rigorous enough to spot weaknesses early. When judging the quality of teaching, leaders do not consider the impact it has on pupils' learning and progress. There is not a strong enough focus on the progress of different groups of pupils from their starting points.
- The leadership of provision for pupils with SEND is weak. Senior leaders and governors have not checked that the register of pupils with SEND is accurate. Sometimes pupils are labelled as having SEND because they have fallen behind with their learning. Leaders have not ensured that teachers take responsibility for the progress of pupils with SEND in their classes.
- Teams of teachers have been formed to lead the key areas of reading, writing and mathematics. These teams are developing a strong knowledge of what works well and what doesn't. The team members truly champion their areas of responsibility throughout the school but have not all been successful at leading improvements beyond their own classrooms.
- Leaders have not ensured that the current broad and balanced curriculum is delivered consistently well. This means that some subjects are taught more regularly or effectively in some year groups than others. Leaders have not checked the quality of teaching and learning robustly in subjects other than English, mathematics and religious education.
- Plans to develop the curriculum further have considered relevant research and are well thought out. The clear intention is to make more effective use of the school's locality to promote learning. The proposed approach is being trialled successfully in Year 6 and is challenging pupils to think differently about a range of issues. Plans to spread this good work across the school are at an early stage.
- The calm and reflective Catholic culture of the school is a strength. Leaders promote equality and diversity very well, ensuring that pupils from different backgrounds get along harmoniously.
- Leaders have ensured that the sports premium has been used effectively. There is more physical education and competitive sport in the curriculum than in the past. Nearly all pupils in key stage 2 can represent the school in a sporting competition.
- Teachers receive a wide range of professional development to help them develop their expertise and work towards making the improvements necessary. Leaders work well with other locality and deanery schools, sharing best practice to help make the improvements necessary.
- The local authority has recently been helpful in brokering links with other schools and consultants to help make the improvements leaders have recognised are needed.

Governance of the school

- Governors are ambitious for the school and its pupils. They have arranged their work between four bespoke committees to meet their needs and to address their key responsibilities.
- There is clear evidence of governors challenging leaders and visiting the school to check things for themselves. For example, governors recently visited the school to investigate the teaching of mathematics and identified some weaknesses. However, they have not challenged leaders to make the necessary improvements quickly.
- Governors ask questions about the progress of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND. However, they have not ensured that leaders have used additional funding well enough to help these pupils to catch up.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff are all well trained in their responsibilities to safeguard pupils. They refer concerns to leaders appropriately and know that they are responsible for following up concerns.
- Leaders responsible for safeguarding understand the risks in the community and the needs of pupils and their families. They work well with other agencies to help keep pupils safe. Leaders are not afraid to challenge colleagues in other agencies when they believe they could do more to keep the most vulnerable pupils safe.
- Recruitment checks are all in place. Volunteers and visitors to the school are informed about their responsibilities to help keep pupils safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teachers are not all confident to use assessment information well. They do not consistently plan lessons that are appropriately challenging for pupils, especially the most able. Most teachers do not have the confidence to adapt tasks in lessons when they are too easy or too hard. This slows pupils' progress.
- There is sometimes a lack of precision in the guidance and prompts that teachers give to help pupils improve their work. In English, teachers correct errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling but do not give precise guidance to help pupils improve the flow, structure or content of their writing. Teachers do not have equally high expectations, for example when it comes to the quality of presentation and handwriting.
- Teachers do not all have the skills to manage the needs of pupils with SEND consistently well. Therefore, provision does not meet their additional and different needs well enough. Additional assessment information does not aid planning and teaching to help pupils with SEND to catch up.
- There is now a consistent approach to teaching mathematics. Pupils have opportunities to talk about mathematics and use practical apparatus and pictorial images to help with

their calculations. There are ample opportunities for pupils to solve problems and reason about mathematics. Some teachers use mistakes as teaching points to help pupils to have a deeper understanding and make progress. However, some teachers do not help pupils to correct or learn from their mistakes. They quickly move on to the next topic before pupils have gained a secure knowledge and understanding to build on.

- The teaching of phonics is effective in Reception and Year 1. Teachers help pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language, to develop their vocabulary successfully. This approach helps pupils to articulate their ideas well. Pupils have frequent opportunities to practise their reading and writing skills across the curriculum. Teachers have encouraged the most able pupils in Year 6 to develop a love for reading. They read widely, often recommending books to each other.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and behave well and allow teaching to proceed without disruption. There are pockets of highly effective teaching across a range of subjects such as science, technology and geography where teachers have more confidence and stronger subject knowledge.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Leaders and staff care for pupils very well. The new pastoral support worker is already having an impact on helping pupils and families to access any additional support they may need.
- Pupils have no concerns about bullying. They say that there is always an adult on hand to talk to if they are worried and that 'everyone looks out for each other'.
- The well-planned programme of personal, social and health education helps pupils to learn to be safe and healthy within a Catholic context. Pupils also learn separately to keep themselves safe online.
- Pupils understand diversity well. They are welcoming to anyone who is different in any way. The curriculum celebrates this well with many opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are encouraged to consider and be reflective about 'big' questions.
- Pupils take on responsibilities to help others in school, the community and the world. Older pupils act as 'guardian angels' to support younger children who have just joined the school, while the CAFOD (Catholic Agency for Overseas Development) committee recently decided how money raised for the charity could be spent purchasing a cow for an African community.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning in their lessons. They work hard and try their best.

- Behaviour around the school is good at break and lunchtimes. Pupils play safely and are well supervised. The physical education makes a strong contribution to healthy, active and safe play at lunchtime.
- A few pupils find it challenging to manage their behaviour. However, leaders are not doing enough to analyse their behaviour over time, to spot patterns or celebrate improvements.
- Leaders are taking appropriate actions to improve the attendance of the few pupils who do not attend school regularly. Overall attendance is improving slowly and steadily towards the national average.
- There is some variation in the pride that pupils take in presenting their work as not all teachers have equally high expectations.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- For current pupils there is inconsistency in progress between subjects, year groups and groups of pupils because of variation in the quality of teaching.
- In Year 1 the majority of pupils achieve the phonics screening standard. The proportion of pupils achieving age-related expectations at the end of key stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics is in line with national averages.
- Pupils make similar progress in reading and writing to other pupils nationally during key stage 2. However, the most able pupils do not make enough progress to achieve the higher standards. This is also the case in key stage 1.
- In recent years progress and attainment in mathematics at the end of key stage 2 have been weak.
- For the last three years, less than half of pupils leaving the school have been well prepared for secondary school. This is because they have not achieved age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Although published information suggests that disadvantaged pupils underachieve, this is not entirely the case. Disadvantaged pupils without SEND make similar progress to others in the school but do not catch up with other pupils nationally.
- However, pupils with SEND, including disadvantaged pupils, make the least progress because provision is not meeting their needs. Additional funding and support are not helping them to catch up.
- Pupils throughout the school are making good progress in physical education because of increased participation. There are also pockets of strong progress in other subjects in some year groups where teaching is stronger.

Early years provision

Good

- Children make good progress often from low starting points, especially in reading, writing and number. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development is broadly in line with national averages, meaning they are well prepared for Year 1.

- Provision is well planned and resourced inside and outside. Activities are provided by the teacher, both in the classroom and in the well-developed and attractive outside area. This allows children to develop and practise the skills they have been learning. For example, children could choose from a wide range of activities to deepen their knowledge of repeating patterns following some initial input from the teacher.
- Teaching is well adapted to the needs of children. Some children are pre-taught what the whole class will be learning so they have the vocabulary to access the whole-class session, while the most able children are sometimes given more challenging tasks to deepen their knowledge and understanding. Sometimes tasks are not adapted well enough to meet the needs of children with SEND.
- Children quickly become independent as they grown in confidence. They listen and concentrate well. They are friendly and polite to each other and visitors.
- Teachers and other adults have high expectations. Children are focused on joining their letters when they write and are soon challenged to write 'super sentences'.
- Interesting links are made across the curriculum. For example, children enjoyed their imaginary journey on an aeroplane, with some packing a suitcase and making their own passports.
- Safeguarding is effective in the early years and all welfare requirements, such as having qualified paediatric first aiders, are met.
- Effective leadership of early years means that there are strong systems to ensure a smooth start to school life and an effective transition to Year 1. There are effective links with parents, who are well informed about the progress that their children are making.
- Assessment is used well to identify what children need to do next. However, there are limited opportunities for children to plan and carry out their own totally independent activities. As a result, not enough pupils exceed the early learning goals.

School details

Unique reference number	126040
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10059281

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	242
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Elizabeth Bedford
Headteacher	Gillian Askham
Telephone number	01903 716039
Website	www.st-catherines.w-sussex.sch.uk
Email address	office@st-catherines.w-sussex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11–12 November 2014

Information about this school

- This is a one form entry Catholic primary school. There are currently two Year 2 classes due to a 'bulge' year where the school admitted an additional class at the request of the local authority. The school provides a breakfast club each morning.
- There has been a period of relative stability in leadership, staffing and governance since the previous inspection.
- The school is designated as having a religious character. The last section 48 inspection took place in November 2015, when the school was judged to be outstanding.
- The local authority has recently brokered support for the school in the teaching of mathematics and the impact of middle leaders.
- Around one third of pupils have English as an additional language. About one quarter of pupils are disadvantaged. The proportion of pupils with SEND varies by year group.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all classes; most observations were carried out with senior leaders. When visiting lessons, inspectors talked to pupils about their learning and looked at their work books. Additionally, inspectors scrutinised a wide range of pupils' work from across the curriculum with leaders.
- Inspectors met formally with senior leaders, the early years leader, the inclusion leader and pupil premium champion and teams responsible for reading, writing and mathematics. They also held informal discussions with other members of staff.
- The lead inspector met with four governors including the chair of the governing body. He also met with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors met formally with a group of key stage 2 pupils and talked informally to pupils around the school including at lunchtime. They heard some pupils from Year 2 and Year 6 read.
- A wide range of documentation relating to safeguarding, behaviour, attendance, provision for pupils with SEND, the quality of teaching, governance and the curriculum was scrutinised.
- Inspectors considered eight responses to the confidential staff questionnaire.
- To gain their views of the school, inspectors spoke to parents at the start of the inspection and considered the 34 responses to the online questionnaire Parent View.

Inspection team

Lee Selby, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Linda Jacobs

Ofsted Inspector

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