

St John's CofE Primary School

Clarence Road, Longsight, Manchester M13 0YE

Inspection dates

3–4 October 2017

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

- Leadership and staffing changes over the last year have contributed to a lack of progress within key stages and across year groups. Until recently, expectations have not been high enough.
- Changes to leadership have failed to sustain the strengths identified at the previous inspection.
- Results of tests and teacher assessments at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics are below the national average.
- Some teachers do not use their questioning skills well enough to make pupils think harder and make faster progress.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough. Work does not always challenge the most able.
- Subject leadership and the development of subjects across the curriculum are at an early stage.
- Governors have not been fully effective in carrying out their duties.

The school has the following strengths

- New senior leaders have brought stability to the school. They are astute and have clearly focused on improving teaching and raising standards. This is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' outcomes and behaviour.
- Senior leaders and governors have an accurate view of the strengths of the school and how to accelerate improvements.
- Safeguarding arrangements are effective.
- The quality of education in the early years is good. Provision and outcomes have improved steadily in recent years, allowing children to make a good start.
- Pupils have a mature, well developed understanding of British values. Pupils are kind, respectful and tolerant, which leads to a harmonious school community.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the impact of leadership and management to raise standards by ensuring that:
 - newly developed partnerships within the federation lead to effective improvement
 - subject leaders are supported through increased team and collaborative work
 - leaders set consistently high expectations and frequently check on the quality of pupils' work across a range of subjects
 - leaders track pupils' progress accurately and reliably and use this information to address any dips in pupils' progress
 - governors carry out all duties rigorously and follow the advice presented in the recent governance review.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to accelerate the progress of pupils and raise their attainment by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve, so that pupils' work is matched to their ability, to ensure that the range of diverse abilities are met
 - addressing inconsistencies in teaching and learning and improving all teaching to be good or better throughout key stage 1 and key stage 2
 - identifying basic grammar construction errors at an early stage and correcting them
 - ensuring challenging reading tasks for pupils, particularly in key stage 2, to develop the pupils' inference skills
 - focusing on effective questioning by teachers to address pupils' misconceptions.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, changes in leadership and staffing have resulted in a period of instability for the school. There has been considerable staff turnover, including at senior leadership level, with a previous acting headteacher in post for a substantial amount of time. This has affected stability in teaching and has prevented the school from implementing actions to keep abreast of national changes. Throughout this period, outcomes and provision for pupils have not remained consistently good.
- The newly appointed head of school and the recently appointed executive headteacher demonstrate strong determination to navigate the school through this period of change. New leaders recognise that outcomes and provision for pupils have not remained consistently good and are resolute to ensure that this improves for pupils.
- Senior leaders and governors are not afraid to make difficult decisions and have recently undergone a staffing restructure. This has secured stronger leadership and ensured that the staffing provision in school is best placed to have a positive impact on pupils' outcomes.
- The executive headteacher and school governors have worked closely with the local authority to federate St John's CofE with another local primary school. This has provided opportunities for staff development across the two schools.
- Senior leaders have a broadly accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. However, the strategic plans for the school do not translate the weaker aspects into sharply focused actions. Leaders do not currently have a sufficiently clear focus on evaluating the progress and outcomes of different groups of pupils.
- Subject leaders are beginning to lead their subjects more effectively. Currently, their action plans do not identify measurable outcomes to improve learning for pupils. The quality of subject leadership is variable and is at an early stage of development, particularly in the wider curriculum aspects throughout school. Subject leaders' action plans need to focus on improving pupils' outcomes.
- Leaders use sports premium funding effectively to secure external coaches for lunchtime provision. Pupils enjoy this as it enables them to benefit from structured activities which promote active engagement, leading to a healthier lifestyle.
- The pupil premium funding is spent appropriately. Leaders spend pupil premium funding on specific interventions and support for disadvantaged pupils. Focused actions generally identify the correct barriers to learning. At times, the provision does not match pupils' needs and this can reduce the impact on pupils' outcomes.
- Leaders have used the funding for special educational needs and/or disabilities appropriately. The special educational needs coordinator has conducted a clear audit of pupils' needs. He has established new procedures to identify pupils requiring additional support. Now that these pupils' needs are being addressed, they are starting to catch up in their learning.
- The curriculum provides pupils in this ethnically diverse community with many opportunities to develop their social, moral, spiritual and cultural education. Therefore,

pupils are clear about equalities and fundamental British values. Pupils' attitudes reflect a Christian ethos that runs across the school.

- Parents are generally positive about the school's work. One parent said, 'This is a wonderful school with fantastic staff.' A small but significant number of parents do not feel that communication between home and school is as strong as it could be. Inspectors saw evidence that home-to-school communication was good.

Governance of the school

- The reconstituted governing body is very committed to the school and the newly formed federation. Governors have spent much of their time on federating with a local primary school while trying to secure an executive headteacher and recruit a suitable permanent headteacher. This has been at the expense of keeping up with the wider duties and responsibilities such as holding leaders to account for pupils' outcomes and the regular ratification of school policies.
- The governing body has recently undertaken a governance review and skills audit. This rigorous approach to self-reflection and evaluation on effectiveness has identified a strong skill set within the governing body. New members to the governing body, with the experience of successful school leadership, have strengthened the expertise of the governors. The governing body has acknowledged and actioned the recommendations from the governance review and a timely evaluation date has been set.
- Governors are acutely aware of the areas they need to address. Now that the senior leadership of the school is secure, they have further capacity to focus on improved effectiveness.
- Governors take seriously their responsibility to ensure effective safeguarding. They have undertaken recent child protection and 'Prevent' training. Governors are knowledgeable about internet filtering to secure pupils' access to safe internet content.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Records of recruitment procedures meet statutory requirements. Induction arrangements are secure and thorough. The culture of safeguarding is embedded throughout the school.
- Pupils are safe in school. Pupils know how to stay safe in a wide range of situations. Pupils can explain how to keep themselves safe when using the internet.
- Leaders have created a culture in which the well-being of each pupil is at the heart of the school's safeguarding work. All adults in the school are regularly trained so that all staff are vigilant and recognise the signs that a child may be at risk.
- Staff understand their roles in relation to child protection procedures and keeping pupils safe. They receive regular training to help them be alert to any signs of risk. They are fully aware of whom they should report concerns to.
- The safety and well-being of children in the early years are well managed and the early years welfare requirements are fully met.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching and learning requires improvement because is not consistently good. In some year groups teachers use effective strategies to enable pupils to learn well but in others teaching is less effective. This leads to pupils' progress, particularly in reading at key stage 2, also requiring improvement.
- Teachers do not always demonstrate consistently high expectations of pupils' work. Work does not always stretch or offer enough challenge to pupils of all abilities, particularly the most able.
- Assessment information is not used reliably to ensure that it clearly identifies the starting point of pupils' learning. This results in teachers not setting work to match pupils' ability. Pupils find work set too easy, or on occasion too difficult, and this therefore reduces the rate of learning in some classes.
- Pupils' knowledge and understanding are not consistently checked during the lesson and misconceptions are occasionally left unchallenged. Teachers do not use questions effectively to extend pupils' learning.
- Work seen in pupils' books is of a variable quality. Sometimes, pupils produce work that is well presented, neat and accurate. On other occasions, pupils' work lacks a sense of pride and is untidy and careless. Teachers do not consistently hold pupils to account for work of poor quality.
- Pupils in Year 6 produced some quality artwork around the theme of animals in their environment. This was of a high standard. However, this high expectation of outcomes is not consistent in all subjects.
- The teaching of mathematics is effective in providing pupils with basic skills in mathematics. These are more advanced than the pupils' skills in English. Teachers' and subject leaders' knowledge is stronger in mathematics than in other subjects.
- Pupils reason well in mathematics. This was evident through lesson observations, book scrutiny and discussions with pupils. Pupils are more confident in mathematics and therefore more enthusiastic about their work in this subject.
- The teaching of writing is improving, with a focus on developing pupils' vocabulary. This is generally taught well. However, pupils' basic grammatical inaccuracies are often uncorrected, leading to repeated errors in basic sentence construction, particularly within key stage 2.
- Teachers ensure that older pupils enjoy reading. An author of the month engages readers and there is excitement about the impending visit of Michael Rosen among all pupils. However, reading activities occasionally lack purpose and rigour, meaning that time is not maximised to prioritise effective outcomes for learners. Pupils' inference skills are not taught effectively.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. Recent assessment of pupils' early skills are being used more effectively to match work to pupils' knowledge of letters and their sounds. Younger children receive good support in reading and this leads to effective outcomes.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The Christian ethos of the school is woven through many aspects of school life and encourages pupils to show caring and responsible attitudes to adults and to one another. The school prayer is thoughtfully represented around the hall through images as well as words.
- Pupils cooperate and work happily together in lessons. Pupils provide feedback to each other thoughtfully with consideration. Older pupils look after younger pupils, as seen at break and lunchtime.
- Pupils speak enthusiastically about the positive relationships they enjoy in school. Pupils treat adults and their peers with respect. They trust adults to look after them. Bullying is therefore rare and on the few occasions that it happens, it is quickly dealt with.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development ensures that they are reflective about their role in school and that of future citizens. As a result, this encourages pupils to be responsible for their actions.
- Pupils show a good understanding of the potential dangers posed by electronic communication. They could clearly explain ways in which to keep themselves safe and could highlight effective safe practices when using social media.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils move around school calmly, remembering to step aside for adults and to greet adults they meet politely. The school is a calm and purposeful place in which to learn.
- At playtimes, pupils are active and demonstrate caring relationships with one another. There are appropriate levels of supervision by school staff and routines are well established.
- Attendance is in line with the national average and is closely managed by staff. Pupils enjoy coming to school, respect their teachers and enjoy learning. Punctuality is given high priority and, as a result, very few pupils are late to school.
- Leaders' efforts to improve behaviour are demonstrating positive impact. Detailed behaviour records identify pupils whose behaviour causes concern so that supportive action can address this. Several pupils spoke highly of gaining merit badges through bronze, silver and gold and how this motivates them to want to do the right thing.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- In the past two years, particularly in the provisional 2017 results, the number of pupils reaching the expected standards for their age has dipped in key stage 1 for reading, writing and mathematics. A dip can also be seen in key stage 2 for writing and

mathematics. Standards are below the national average. The school's own information for current pupils, however, shows an increase in the proportions of pupils in all cohorts who are reaching the standards expected for their age. This information shows that boys do not perform as well as girls.

- Pupils' outcomes in mathematics are stronger than those in reading or writing. In the 2017 provisional results for key stage 2, the percentage of pupils attaining high standards in mathematics was above the national average. This is due to effective subject leadership and teachers' improved subject knowledge in mathematics.
- Over the last three years, there has been an increase in the proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check. In 2017, pupils at the end of Year 1 achieved above the national average in the phonics screening check. Most pupils have a good knowledge of the sounds that letters make and know how to 'break words down' when they are unsure about new vocabulary.
- From their individual starting points, pupils' progress in key stage 1 is stronger than in key stage 2. The latest school performance information shows that pupils in key stage 1 are making good progress.
- Pupils in key stage 2 make progress in line with the national average in writing and mathematics. Pupils' progress in reading at the end of key stage 2 is not as good. Pupils' progress across key stage 2 has been too slow. However, as a result of rigour and urgency in the direction for improvement from the new senior leadership team, early indicators are that the decline has halted and the progress of current pupils is stronger.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar rates of progress to other pupils in reading and writing and better progress in mathematics. This is due to the specific support provided so that pupils can complete their work successfully and the appropriate use of funding.
- Disadvantaged pupils show that they are starting to catch up to other pupils as a result of closer work on identification of barriers to learning. Overall differences between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in school are diminishing because of the targeted use of the pupil premium to support their needs.
- Current pupils are beginning to make good progress and are closer to securing age-appropriate skills and knowledge in reading, writing and mathematics. This was evident in pupils' work in their books and in lessons.
- The most able pupils make better progress than other pupils in school, particularly at the end of key stage 2 in mathematics.

Early years provision

Good

- Children join the Nursery and Reception class with abilities which are sometimes low and often just below typical starting points. They make good progress so that the proportion of children reaching a good level of development has steadily increased over the previous three years. Despite this improvement, the number of children who currently reach a good level of development is just below the national average.

- Leadership in early years is good. The early years pupil premium is used effectively to support children's early language development as there is a diverse intake of language speakers. Disadvantaged pupils make good progress.
- Effective transition arrangements are in place, which include home visits and taster sessions to ensure that children have a smooth entry into both Nursery and Reception classes.
- Leadership is effective, and a broad and interesting curriculum is in place. At this early stage of the year the children have settled well in both Nursery and Reception classes. Assessment of children's learning and development is thorough so that activities meet the needs of the pupils.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. Children work well together and activities equally engage girls and boys so that they interact positively together with sustained interest. Outcomes for children are good and therefore they are well prepared for the transition into Year 1.
- The outdoor areas in both the Nursery and Reception classes offer a wealth of opportunity to engage learners and especially develop the physical aspects of learning.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. Activities match the needs of children and progress is good.
- Welfare requirements and safeguarding arrangements are robust. Clear procedures for first aid and medicine administration are in place and the setting is secure. External agency partnerships are effective in supporting children's needs.
- Parents and carers have many opportunities to contribute to the initial assessments of children's starting points. Those parents spoken to during the inspection expressed high levels of satisfaction with the provision their children receive in the early years.

School details

Unique reference number	105504
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10032262

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	408
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tayo Adebawale
Executive headteacher	Gareth Elswood
Head of school	Juliet Francis
Telephone number	0161 224 7752
Website	www.stjohnsprimarymanchester.co.uk
Email address	admin@sjcfederation.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	27–28 February 2013

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the equality policy. The lack of compliance at the start of the inspection was addressed during the inspection.
- The head of school had been in post for five weeks before the inspection. Prior to this, there was a long period of time when the school had an acting headteacher. The school has recently undergone a staffing restructure which has resulted in a number of staff changes at all levels.
- The school has recently federated with a local primary school. The executive headteacher has been in post for less than a year. The governing board was recently reconstituted.

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school. There is a 52-place full-time Nursery class funded by the local authority. The majority of pupils are from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above the national average.
- The proportion of current pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well above average.
- The school meets the current floor standards, which set the government's minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- The special educational needs resource unit for the hearing impaired was recently permanently closed during the summer break of 2017.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching in every class. Some observations were undertaken jointly with the head of school. Inspectors observed the teaching of phonics and listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors talked to pupils about their school and evaluated the quality of work in a sample of pupils' books.
- Inspectors held meetings with the executive headteacher, head of school and other senior leaders, a representative from the local authority and six representatives from the governing board. Inspectors also discussed the school's work with the leader responsible for the pupil premium, the early years leader and the leaders of English, mathematics, music and special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- A range of documentation was considered, including: the school's self-evaluation; records of the monitoring of teaching and learning; the school improvement plan; the school's performance data; information on the progress of specific pupil groups; attendance information; records of the behaviour of pupils; safeguarding and child protection records; and minutes from governing body meetings. Documents outlining the use of pupil premium funding and sports funding were also reviewed.
- Inspectors spoke to parents informally at the start of the school day in order to seek their views about the school. Inspectors took account of 10 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, 10 responses to Parent View and 12 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Gaynor Rennie, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Maureen Hints	Ofsted Inspector
Clare McGarey	Ofsted Inspector
Julie Peach	Ofsted Inspector
Steve Bentham	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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