

St Stephen's Church of England Primary School

Dorset Road, London SW8 1EJ

Inspection dates

24–25 January 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

- By the end of key stage 2, pupils are not making progress that is in line with national averages. Standards, particularly in mathematics, are too low.
- Disadvantaged and most-able pupils make significantly less progress than pupils nationally.
- Leaders and governors are overgenerous in their evaluation of the school's performance. They do not identify key priorities for improvement and planning is not precise enough.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inconsistent across the school. Consequently, pupils' outcomes vary between year groups.
- Teachers do not always consider the starting points of pupils and do not move them on quickly to tasks suitable for their ability.
- Teaching does not provide enough challenge for pupils, particularly the most able, to enable them to reach higher standards of attainment.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes. They make good or rapid progress from their starting points.
- All pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, make good progress by the end of key stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders have started to take action to secure improvements to teaching and learning, particularly in Years 5 and 6.
- Pupils behave well. They are friendly and courteous. Pupils are proud of their school and eager to learn.
- The school is a safe and happy environment. The school's Christian ethos promotes pupils' personal development effectively.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported. They make good progress, especially in reading.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that leaders at all levels take effective action to improve key stage 2 pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics
 - analysing historical and current assessment information in greater depth to identify where improvements need to be made
 - ensuring accuracy in self-assessment and the tracking of the progress and attainment of groups of pupils.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - raising expectations of what pupils can achieve so that all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, make at least expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics in key stage 2
 - ensuring that the needs of all pupils are met by providing challenging tasks, particularly for the most able pupils
 - supporting staff appropriately so that they feel confident in their roles.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders, managers and governors have not done enough to halt the decline in standards in key stage 2 since the last inspection. They have not acted quickly enough to address mediocre teaching which has had a negative impact on pupils' progress. Leaders at all levels now have high expectations for how well pupils learn and make progress.
- Leaders do not use information on pupils' performance effectively to openly analyse the decline in progress at key stage 2. As a result, progress and outcomes are not improving quickly enough.
- The school's assessment system gives an inaccurate picture of pupils' progress. Progress information does not always match up with the quality of work seen in lessons and in pupils' books. As a result, leaders are not accurately identifying next steps in learning.
- The leadership team was restructured in 2015. Some middle leaders are new in post. Although they are enthusiastic about and committed to their role, they do not accurately interpret information about pupils' progress in order to take effective action.
- Leaders demonstrate a strong commitment to improving the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good across the school. Monitoring of teaching is thorough and leaders have a detailed picture of the strengths and weaknesses in this area. However, evaluation is often directed at the teaching rather than the impact on pupils' learning. As a result, action plans do not pinpoint precisely what needs to improve.
- Recently the school has had many staffing changes which have led to instability in teaching. Parents and pupils have rightly expressed their concerns at the high turnover of staff.
- In September 2016, leaders appointed a number of new teaching staff who share the same vision for raising standards. There is a clear focus on holding teachers to account for the performance of pupils. Teachers are supported, but this support is not always appropriate to their needs. Some new teachers feel over-controlled by senior leaders.
- The newly developed curriculum is broad and balanced with a focus on creativity and links between subjects. Leaders ensure that there is a balance between academic subjects and those that promote pupils' artistic, musical and sporting skills.
- Pupil premium funding is used to provide targeted interventions for disadvantaged pupils, such as additional support in lessons, booster classes and provision to support social, emotional and behavioural development. Leaders recognised that interventions have not improved disadvantaged pupils' progress in key stage 2 and recently made necessary adjustments. With the funding, leaders appointed an additional mathematics specialist this year who now works with higher-ability Year 5 and Year 6 pupils. While it is too early to see any measurable impact on progress, pupils appreciate the more challenging nature of these lessons and say that their mathematical skills are improving.

- Leaders develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. The Christian character of the school promotes its core values, which pupils can talk about in depth. Displays around the school show leaders' strong commitment to developing these values and they are explored every day in collective worship. Pupils enjoy learning about other religions and the diverse ways of life of different heritages.
- The school uses primary school sport funding to good effect. The number of specialist staff who work with the pupils has increased, as has the range of lunchtime activities and sports clubs. More pupils represent the school in local sports competitions than previously.
- Leaders and governors have sharply evaluated the additional funding for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, it is making a difference in improving pupils' progress over time. Learning support assistants are trained and deployed effectively to ensure that pupils are well supported in lessons.

Governance of the school

- The governing body is committed to supporting the work of the school. Its members bring a range of useful skills and experience to the leadership team and have clearly defined roles. Governors visit the school often and play a full part in school life.
- Governors are increasingly effective in their role of holding the school to account for how well pupils are achieving. However, governors are not fully confident in understanding how pupils' progress compares to that of others nationally. They are too reliant on the information presented by the headteacher and lack incisive knowledge about pupil performance information, both historical and current.
- The governing body is aware of inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment but has faith in the ability of leaders to raise its overall quality. It is involved in assessing teachers' performance but does not receive consistently clear information about staffing issues.
- Governors meet their statutory duty to ensure that safeguarding arrangements in the school are effective. They are up to date in their training and take their responsibilities seriously.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Designated safeguarding leads are rigorous in ensuring that all staff know and follow the school's safeguarding policy and procedures. Staff receive regular safeguarding updates and appropriate training, including in the 'Prevent' duty and awareness of female genital mutilation and child sexual exploitation. Pre-recruitment checks for staff are carefully carried out.
- Systems and logs used to record actions taken are detailed and up to date. Leaders take swift and effective action if safeguarding issues arise. They are relentless in ensuring that pupils and families get the appropriate response from external agencies. The school works closely with the children's centre attached to the school which helps provide early intervention for families who need support.

- Pupils report that they feel safe at school. The great majority of the parents and carers who responded to Ofsted's survey or who spoke to inspectors believe that the school provides a safe and caring environment. Pupils have a good awareness of personal safety, including when online, because it is explained well in lessons.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment over time is not consistently good. This has an impact on pupils' progress, which is variable across the school.
- Current assessment information from the school does not present an accurate picture of how well pupils are progressing. Teachers and leaders are still getting to grips with the assessment system and are not confident about how to assess accurately pupils' progress.
- Where teaching is strong, pupils are engaged in their learning. They are focused and keen to do well. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, pupils produced interesting questions to ask 'the lonely beast' and showed resilience in their work. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils were confident about how to improve their writing and highly motivated to do well.
- Where teaching is weaker, pupils lose interest in their learning when they are unsure what to do or the task is not appropriate to their needs. Resources are not used effectively as they do not match the needs of the pupils.
- Split lessons in Year 5 and Year 6 literacy and mathematics are starting to address the needs of higher-ability pupils in particular. Teachers set tasks with a high level of challenge and question pupils effectively to deepen their thinking. However, in other learning, pupils are not moved on quickly to more difficult tasks. As a result, pupils are doing work that they can clearly do already and are not being stretched.
- Reading tasks are sometimes set at too high a level, especially in key stage 2. Pupils often work through comprehension booklets which they find too difficult. Guided reading is not well planned as it is not always clear what skill is being developed. As a result, progress in reading is not consistently good.
- The teaching of writing in the current Year 6 class is leading to strong progress. Pupils have opportunities for extended writing tasks in different genres, and clear guidance from the teacher develops their skills.
- The support staff are a strength of the school. Working with the teachers, they ensure that individuals receive additional support targeted to their needs so that they are motivated and enjoy their learning.
- A high proportion of the teaching staff are new in post. Following an effective induction process, they have been instrumental in recent improvements in the quality of teaching in some classes.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. The vast majority of parents who responded to Parent View said that their child felt safe and happy in school.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and speak with genuine pride about their school. They talk positively about the Christian values that they learn about each term.
- Staff know the pupils and families well. The school works very closely with the children's centre so that families get early help. Family inclusion meetings give staff the opportunity to share information and formulate plans about pupils who are cause for concern.
- The democratically elected student council and faith group have a high status in the school. Pupils celebrate each other's achievements and, as one pupil said, 'look out for each other'. Pupils learn about British values in personal, social, health and economic education and the curriculum leader is weaving these into the new curriculum gradually.
- Peer mediators help at lunchtime to resolve arguments or tensions between pupils. If there is any bullying, pupils report it to a teacher and it is resolved quickly.
- The school teaches pupils effectively how to stay safe, whether in school or outside. Pupils told inspectors that they are taught about safety and the risks of talking to strangers.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite, friendly and welcoming. Pupils of different backgrounds and faiths work and play well together.
- Attendance is in line with the national average and has been consistent since the last inspection.
- Pupils behave well in lessons, where there is generally a calm and purposeful atmosphere. They want to do well. There are times when they have to wait for the teacher to give them the next activity or a task does not stretch them. During this time pupils can lose concentration and occasionally there is disruptive behaviour.
- Pupils wear their uniform with pride and look after the school. They are well prepared for lessons and present their work neatly.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes for pupils require improvement because progress is not consistently strong across the school.
- In recent years, the progress that pupils made in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6 was below the national average. Disadvantaged pupils made less progress than that seen nationally by other pupils in reading and mathematics. In 2016, progress in key stage 2 mathematics was well below average, particularly for

boys. These pupils were not well enough prepared for the next stage in their education.

- In contrast, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 1 in 2016 was above national figures. Pupils make stronger progress in these years because of teaching which challenges and interests them.
- Overall, the most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, do not fulfil their potential. Leaders are starting to identify more quickly where there are differences in progress between groups of pupils and are putting measures in place. In the current Year 6 class, more pupils are on track to achieve higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics than last year.
- Pupils' work in books reflects the inconsistencies in progress across year groups. Pupils make good progress in some classes. There is no significant difference between the progress that disadvantaged pupils and other pupils are making.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have the same expectations of progress as their peers. Teaching assistants and support staff are deployed well; inspectors observed effective teaching from support staff in lessons. Consequently, these pupils are making good progress from their various starting points and in 2016 made above average progress in reading. The school works closely with families and external agencies to address the specific needs of pupils.
- As a result of good teaching, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check is above the national average. This represents good progress, given their starting points.

Early years provision

Good

- Staff in the early years provision have created and maintained a welcoming, safe and happy learning environment. It is well led, and children make progress in a range of skills.
- Teaching in early years is good. Established routines mean that children settle quickly to their tasks and are confident learners. Activities are well planned, purposeful and foster independent learning. Adults routinely have conversations with the children, encouraging them to talk.
- Children behave well in the Nursery and Reception classes. They care about each other and show concern if someone is upset or hurt.
- The early years leader has analysed pupil performance information and has a solid understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in early years outcomes. Consequently, she has accurately identified areas to develop and there are good systems in place to track pupils' progress.
- From starting points which are generally below those typical for their age, children make good progress and leave early years ready for Year 1. The proportion of pupils achieving a good level of development has increased in recent years and is now above the national average.

- The majority of pupils currently in Reception are on track to reach a good level of development. Additional funding for disadvantaged pupils has been used effectively. The most able disadvantaged pupils are making rapid progress.
- Phonics teaching is strong. Teachers and support staff use a range of strategies to practise and reinforce sounds, enabling children to make good progress in reading. However, children are not always stretched sufficiently and given more challenging work to do.

School details

Unique reference number	100621
Local authority	Lambeth
Inspection number	10001057

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 aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	230
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rickard Jonsson
Headteacher	Linda Campbell
Telephone number	0207 735 1023
Website	www.st-stephens.lambeth.sch.uk/
Email address	admin@st-stephens.lambeth.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	7–8 November 2011

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- St Stephen’s Church of England Primary School is an average-sized primary school with its own Nursery.
- The headteacher took up her post in 2014, following a year of interim leadership.
- The proportion of pupils who come from minority ethnic backgrounds is higher than average. Pupils come from a wide range of heritages. The largest minority ethnic group is Black or Black British pupils from African backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is much higher than average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding is higher than average.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- The school runs a breakfast club and provides after-school care.
- The school manages St Stephen's Children's Centre which is inspected separately.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 17 lessons, most of which were jointly observed with the headteacher or the deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, including those who hold responsibility for specific subjects and phases. The lead inspector met with members of the governing body and had a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke to a number of pupils, listened to them read and looked at samples of their work. An inspector met a group of pupils to hear their views on the school. Pupils took the lead inspector on a tour of the school.
- Year 6 were not in school during the inspection. Inspectors carried out a book scrutiny to see what progress pupils were making and spoke to senior leaders about this year group.
- A wide range of documents were scrutinised, including information on pupils' progress, improvement plans, minutes of meetings of the governing body and checks on the quality of teaching. Inspectors also examined records relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors took account of 10 responses to Parent View and of information gathered from discussions with parents during the inspection. The views of staff were considered through the 10 staff questionnaires received.

Inspection team

Jude Wilson, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Michelle Bennett	Ofsted Inspector
Neil Harvey	Ofsted Inspector

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