

St John's Church of England School

Green Lane, Stanmore, HA7 3AD

Inspection dates 24–25 June 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher and other leaders, including governors, have a clear vision for the school. Their strong leadership has been effective in bringing about improvements since the previous inspection. As a result, the quality of teaching and achievement of pupils have improved, and are now good.
- Leaders check the progress of pupils closely and frequently to ensure they make good progress from their starting points.
- Leaders have been highly effective in raising the achievement of the disadvantaged pupils, and ensuring that the disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress.
- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. By the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, standards are above average.
- The provision in the early years is good, and is a key strength of the school. The strong teaching ensures that children make good progress from their different starting points.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work effectively as a team to ensure pupils make good progress.
- Pupils are courteous, polite and friendly. Their good behaviour and attitudes contribute strongly to the good progress they make with their learning. Staff and governors ensure that pupils are kept safe.
- The school is effective in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. British values are promoted effectively and pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- Governors are highly skilled and know the school well. They are effective in their role, and are committed to the school's continuous development and improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' achievement in writing is not as strong as in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils are not always given time to extend their thinking and reasoning skills to deepen their understanding, particularly in mathematics.
- Sometimes, the most able pupils are not challenged sufficiently, and do not always make the progress of which they are capable.
- Occasionally, some pupils make mistakes with their work in lessons and these are not always picked up quickly enough to move their learning on.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in 29 lessons, 10 of them jointly with the headteacher or the deputy headteacher. Inspectors also observed pupils' behaviour and attitudes in classrooms, and at breaks and lunchtimes. They also observed other aspects of the school's work, including two assemblies.
- A meeting was held with different groups of pupils, and inspectors listened to pupils read in Years 1, 2 and 6 and discussed their reading with them.
- The inspectors held discussions with senior and middle leaders, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors. A discussion was also held with two local authority representatives and a representative of the Diocese of London.
- The inspectors examined a range of documents, including information on pupils' progress across the school, improvement plans and checks on the quality of teaching. They also examined the school records relating to behaviour, safety and attendance.
- The inspectors scrutinised pupils' books and written work to see what progress pupils make and the quality of teachers' marking and feedback to pupils.
- The inspectors took account of 84 responses received from parents to the online questionnaire, Parent View. In addition, inspectors spoke to parents in the playground at the start of the school day.
- The inspectors also considered 56 questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

Avtar Sherri, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Gill Walley	Additional Inspector
Calvin Henry	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St John's Church of England School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school has two full-time Reception classes.
- Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic groups, with the largest group being from a White British background.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic heritages is well above average, the largest being from a Black or Black British African background.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is below average. This is additional government funding provided to give extra support to disadvantaged pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and to those who are looked after.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding so that pupils make rapid and sustained progress by ensuring that:
 - pupils are given time to extend their thinking and reasoning skills to deepen their understanding, particularly in mathematics
 - the most able pupils are always challenged, and moved on briskly to more demanding tasks to help them achieve more
 - pupils' understanding is always checked closely and teaching is adapted accordingly to ensure their learning is secure.
- Raise pupils' achievement in writing further by ensuring that:
 - pupils write as often as possible in English and other subjects and topics to improve their writing skills
 - pupils routinely use their writing targets to check their progress towards achieving them.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides a strong and clear direction and vision for the school. Her ambition for pupils is shared by leaders, including governors, and staff. Leaders and managers have worked effectively as a team to bring about improvements. As a result, the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement has improved since the previous inspection, and is now good.
- The leadership of teaching has improved and is now good. Leaders have a very robust and effective system to manage and improve the performance of teachers, and have taken decisive action when necessary to bring about improvements. Leaders and managers frequently check the quality of teaching and provide teachers with effective support and training to improve their practice. There are clear links between the quality of teaching and teachers' pay awards.
- Middle leaders are effective in their roles. They have opportunities to observe the quality of teaching in their subjects, and carry out learning walks and book scrutinies to check the progress pupils make. They are involved in providing support to teachers to improve the quality of teaching, and in holding them responsible for the progress their pupils make.
- The rigour, including the frequency, with which pupils' progress is checked to ensure pupils make the best progress possible has improved since the previous inspection, and is now good. Leaders, managers and staff work effectively to identify pupils who are not making the expected progress. These pupils are targeted for timely support. In this way, leaders ensure that weaker learners, including the disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, make good progress. This is a reflection of how leaders ensure there is equality of opportunity for pupils, and no discrimination.
- Leaders have been successful in raising the achievement of disadvantaged pupils through using the government's additional funding more effectively. They have ensured that disadvantaged pupils make good progress, and that the attainment gap between them and their classmates is eliminated in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the school's main strengths and areas for improvement. The school development plan pinpoints the main areas for action to improve the quality of teaching and raise pupils' achievement. It quite rightly identifies the role of governors in assessing the impact of actions, so that they can check for themselves the effectiveness of senior leaders in bringing about improvements.
- Senior leaders work effectively with early years staff to ensure that the early years provision is at least good, and that children make good progress from the different starting points.
- The primary sport premium is used effectively to provide a wider range of sports activities, including after-school sports clubs, and has increased the amount of competitive sports with other schools. This is increasing the participation rates of pupils in sports. Pupils who can benefit through further physical activity are identified and targeted accordingly to increase their physical fitness. The quality of teaching of physical education has improved through the effective support and training that the staff receive.
- The subjects taught in school are broad and balanced. There is a thematic approach to learning, and the links between subjects are strong. The school is implementing the requirements of the primary National Curriculum effectively, including assessment systems to monitor how well pupils are learning. The curriculum ensures that pupils are able to develop and apply their skills in reading, writing, communication and mathematics. Pupils particularly enjoy learning French. The curriculum, however, is yet to ensure that pupils' achievement in writing is as strong as in reading and mathematics, and that the most able pupils are always challenged in lessons to help them make the progress they are capable of.
- Pupils enjoy a wide range of activities to widen their experiences through, for example, visits, after-school clubs, sports and music events. British values are effectively promoted through pupils learning about elections and rights and responsibilities. The respect for diversity is promoted well through pupils learning about other cultures and faiths, and parents and children are involved in international days to celebrate cultural diversity. Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effectively promoted. The opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in music are particularly strong through playing musical instruments, singing in the choir and performing at orchestral events. Assemblies are used effectively for pupils to develop a sense of togetherness and to reflect on their achievements and the needs of others.
- Leaders, including governors, ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements. As a result, all the safeguarding arrangements are secure and effective.
- Parents are kept informed through the school's website, weekly newsletter and parents' workshops. There is also a parents' forum to improve the communication with parents, and enable them to raise any concerns.

- A majority of parents responding to Parent View agree that the school is well led and managed.
- The local authority has worked effectively with leaders to bring about improvements in systems to monitor pupils' progress more closely, and to raise achievement. The Diocese of London works closely with the school and has provided effective support in the recruitment of senior and middle leaders.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is effective. Governors bring a wide range of skills, experience and expertise to their roles, which they use effectively to provide support and challenge to the school. They are committed to continuous school improvement, and are ambitious to be even more successful in securing the best possible achievement of pupils.
 - Governors know the school very well through regular visits to the school, and receiving high quality information from the headteacher, including reports on the quality of teaching and pupil progress. They are involved in the school improvement priorities, and know the school's main strengths and areas for development.
 - Governors are keen to attend all the appropriate training, including training on safeguarding and understanding pupils' performance data. They have a secure understanding of how well pupils are doing at school, and how they are performing compared to pupils in similar schools and schools nationally. Their work keeps pupils safe at school.
 - Governors know about the quality of teaching across the school. They have a secure understanding of the performance management system for teachers, and know how pay is used to reward the best teachers and how underperformance is tackled. They manage the performance of the headteacher and set challenging targets on improving the quality of teaching and raising the achievement of pupils.
 - Governors ensure that financial management is effective, and know how additional funds are spent and their impact on pupils' outcomes, including achievement.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are courteous, polite and friendly. Relationships are strong, and pupils show respect for each other and to adults who work with them. Pupils are proud of their school and they look after their surroundings.
- Pupils have good attitudes to their learning, and this helps them to achieve well. Pupils are proud of their work, and are keen to share what they have achieved with adults. Pupils know the behaviour policy well, including its rewards and sanctions. Teachers occasionally, however, have to remind some pupils to focus on their work. Pupils themselves say that while behaviour is good overall, there are a few occasions when behaviour could be better both in the playground and in lessons.
- Lunchtimes and breaktimes are orderly and staff provide good supervision. Pupils from all backgrounds get on, play and socialise well together in the playground.
- Attendance is average, and improving.
- A large majority of parents responding to the Parent View agreed that the school makes sure its pupils are well behaved.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that staff keep them safe, and they feel safe in all areas of the school. They say that if they have any concerns about their safety they can easily approach a member of staff, or use the 'worry box' to post their concerns, and matters are quickly dealt with.
- Pupils are taught well on how to keep themselves safe. Pupils know, for example, how to keep themselves safe in case of fire, when crossing roads and using the internet.
- Pupils know about different types of bullying, including cyber bullying. They say that bullying is not an issue for the school. They say that they get on well with each other, and racism and homophobic situations are rare. They state that any incidents of poor behaviour are swiftly and effectively dealt with by staff. This is reflected in the school's records on monitoring unacceptable behaviour, which show that bullying is rare. There have been no recent exclusions in the school.
- Most parents responding to the Parent View agree that their children feel safe at school.

The quality of teaching is good

- Leaders, including governors, and managers have been successful in improving the quality of teaching since the previous inspection. The quality of teaching is now good and ensures that pupils make good progress and achieve well in mathematics, reading and writing.
- Teachers are involved in pupils' progress meetings more frequently since the previous inspection, and use the assessment information effectively to check pupils' progress. Those who are not making good progress are quickly identified for additional support to help them overcome any barriers to their learning. The school has fully implemented the assessment system for the primary National Curriculum and teachers are using this effectively to track pupils' progress.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work closely to ensure that there are good working relationships with their pupils and to support their learning. Pupils say that 'teaching is fun and enjoyable' and teachers and teaching assistants 'help you when you are struggling'.
- Teaching assistants are effective in their roles and are used well to support individuals and groups of pupils with particular needs, including the disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, pupils who speak English as an additional language and the disadvantaged pupils. As a result, they make the same good progress as their classmates.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is good, and helps pupils to read unfamiliar and difficult words. Overall, reading is taught well throughout the school. Pupils observed in guided reading sessions had opportunities to read to the staff, develop their understanding of the text and improve their reading and research skills. This is helping pupils to develop a real enjoyment of reading.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' work has improved since the previous inspection. Work books are marked regularly and their marking increasingly provides pupils with helpful feedback on how they can improve their work, with pupils usually responding to their comments. This is helping pupils to make further progress with their learning.
- Teachers have a secure knowledge in mathematics. Pupils make good use of their mathematical knowledge, including their mental calculation skills, when solving mathematical problems. However, pupils are not always given time to extend their thinking and reasoning skills to deepen their understanding. For these pupils, learning sometimes moves on too quickly before they have fully consolidated their understanding of mathematical concepts. This slows their progress.
- Opportunities are sometimes missed for pupils to improve and develop their writing skills by writing more, both in English and in a range of subjects and topics. Although pupils have their writing targets in their books, they are not routinely referred to in lessons for pupils to check for themselves their own progress towards achieving them. This slows their progress.
- Sometimes, the most able pupils are not challenged sufficiently to help them achieve more. Occasionally, they have to wait for more demanding tasks. This slows their progress.
- Occasionally, teachers do not always monitor pupils' work closely enough in lessons to pick up any misconceptions. As a result, some pupils make mistakes and their learning slows.
- A large majority of parents responding to Parent View agree that their children are taught well at school.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Leaders and managers have been successful in raising standards in Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils now make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics and achieve well.
- In 2014, standards in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stages 1 and 2 were well above average; standards were particularly strong at the end of Key Stage 2. The school's own information shows that the predictions for the attainment at end of Key Stages 1 and 2 tests results in 2015 are similar to the test results achieved by pupils in 2014.
- At the end of Year 6 national tests in 2014, the proportion of pupils making the expected and more than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics was above average. Overall, the progress pupils make in reading and writing is stronger than in writing. The school information confirms that pupils make good progress across the year groups in reading, writing and mathematics, and that the progress in writing occasionally lags behind that in reading and mathematics.
- In 2014, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 standard of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 was above average in mathematics and writing, and well above average in reading and English grammar, punctuation and spelling. The school's current information predicts that standards at Level 5 will be maintained at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2015, with a higher proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 6 in mathematics, reading, English grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- The most able pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. All pupils who reached the high Level 3 standard in assessments in writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2010 went

on to gain Level 5 in national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2014; almost all pupils did so in reading.

- The results of the Year 1 phonic screening check were above average in 2014. Children's understanding of phonics is helping children to gain greater confidence in their reading. As a result, children enjoy reading, as demonstrated by those who read to inspectors.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is good in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders, managers and teachers check the progress of these pupils closely and frequently, and are given effective support to ensure they make good progress.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language are supported effectively, and have good opportunities to develop their proficiency in English through the rich opportunities they are given in lessons to enhance their speaking and listening skills. Leaders ensure that there are no significant differences in the achievement of different ethnic groups of pupils in the school.
- At the end of Year 6 tests in 2014, the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their classmates narrowed in reading, writing and mathematics. In writing, the disadvantaged pupils did as well as their classmates and other pupils nationally. In reading, the disadvantaged pupils were just over one term behind their classmates and they did as well as other pupils nationally. In mathematics, the disadvantaged pupils were just over three terms behind their classmates and two terms behind other pupils nationally. The current school information shows that leaders have been successful in narrowing the attainment gaps for disadvantaged pupils further. Disadvantaged pupils now make better progress than their classmates from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics, and the attainment gaps between them are negligible.

The early years provision

is good

- The leadership and management of early years are good. Leaders and early years staff work well as a team and use assessments effectively to check the progress of children, and identify children's next steps in their learning.
- Teaching in the early years is consistently good, expectations are high, and staff provide children with high quality care and support. As a result, all groups of children, including disabled children and those with special educational needs and the disadvantaged, make good progress from their different starting points. However, occasionally opportunities are missed to challenge the more able children to ensure their learning is always rapid.
- There are effective links and relationships with parents to make sure children have a good start to school. Staff ensure that parents are kept informed about their children's progress. They are encouraged to capture and share their children's development and new learning at home, the 'Magic Moments', with staff to inform the assessment records on children's progress.
- Children behave extremely well and have good attitudes to their learning. They are kind, and engage and collaborate well with each other. Their good level of concentration and engagement was demonstrated in a highly effective indoor session on number, where they were involved in adding two and three single-digit numbers and writing number sentences and made strong progress with their learning.
- Children follow routines well, and are able to make choices about their learning, both indoor and outdoor. The indoor learning is of high quality, and occasionally opportunities are missed to extend this to the outdoor learning areas.
- In 2014, a higher than average proportion of children achieved the good level of development. The school's current information shows that a much higher proportion of children than average is on track to achieve a good level of development by the end of Reception in 2015 compared to 2014. In literacy, children's good level of development is weaker in writing than in reading. Leaders are fully aware of this and are providing children with greater opportunities to develop their early writing skills. Children are prepared well for their next stage in education in Year 1.
- Children are kept safe by staff, and all the safeguarding requirements are met and are effective.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	134929
Local authority	Harrow
Inspection number	462157

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	417
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Judith Kennedy
Headteacher	Jo Hester
Date of previous school inspection	4–5 June 2013
Telephone number	02089543978
Fax number	02084207375
Email address	office@stjohns.harrow.sch.uk

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