

St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Amphill Road, Ryde, Isle of Wight PO33 1LJ

Inspection dates

2–3 April 2019

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

- Since the previous inspection, the changes in leadership and staffing have led to inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. As a result, too few pupils, particularly boys, disadvantaged pupils and the most able, are making the progress they are capable of.
- Teaching has recently strengthened but remains too inconsistent. Improvements in reading and mathematics teaching have not been mirrored in other subjects. The quality of teaching of the foundation curriculum is inconsistent.
- While inadequate teaching has been eradicated, staff performance is not tracked or monitored as systematically as it needs to be. This prevents improvements from embedding more rapidly.
- Many governors are new to the role. Despite their ambition, they are not yet sufficiently skilled to challenge leaders effectively to improve pupils' outcomes.

The school has the following strengths

- Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good. Pupils learn to be healthy, happy and productive citizens and behave well in school.
- The new headteacher, ably supported by her senior team, has revitalised key aspects of the school. She has secured the right improvements and is well placed to continue to develop the school.
- Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is strong. Skilled leaders and staff plan careful adaptations to help these pupils thrive.
- Staff are willing, and capable of improvement. Morale is high.
- The early years provision is good. The Nursery and Reception classes prepare children well for their formal education. Children make good progress in the early years.
- The collaboration between the governors, leaders and local authority is working well. Local authority officers provide governors with an unbiased view of the school and help leaders to refine their systems. The school has the capacity to improve.
- Improvements in reading and mathematics have ensured that pupils across the school make strong progress in these subjects.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - targets set for teachers are followed up rapidly to secure stronger teaching across the school
 - governors strengthen their knowledge and skills so that they can hold leaders more firmly to account for the progress pupils make.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - ensuring that the quality of teaching in the foundation subjects matches that seen in reading and mathematics
 - teaching routinely challenges the most able pupils to attain at a high standard.
- Improve pupils' outcomes by:
 - strengthening the progress made by disadvantaged pupils, so that higher proportions attain at the standard they are capable of
 - improving the progress boys make in writing.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- After a period of staffing turbulence, the effectiveness of the school declined. The recently appointed headteacher has acted with urgency and ambition. She has stemmed a deterioration in performance to get the school back on track. This is an improving school.
- Leaders possess an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are under no illusion that the school needs to improve and have put together the right plans to achieve this. While the impact of these improvements needs to be more widely felt, leaders are doing the right things.
- Leaders possess a clear and accurate understanding of the quality of teaching. They use this to challenge weak teaching and to help staff to improve their work. However, targets are not always followed up as quickly as they might be. This prevents staff from improving at a greater pace.
- Middle leaders have secured improvements, particularly in the core subjects. Their work to improve the mathematics and reading curriculum has helped staff to sequence lessons more carefully and to raise their expectations of what pupils can achieve. However, these improvements have not been extended to the wider curriculum. Consequently, planning and curriculum design in the foundation subjects are of variable quality.
- Leaders' actions to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils have not been fully effective to date. These pupils do not make the progress they are capable of.
- Staff receive useful professional development opportunities to help them improve their teaching. They work with a range of local schools, subject experts and guest speakers to develop their understanding and skills. For example, teaching assistants recently gained qualifications in understanding and supporting pupils with autism. Staff are enthused by, and invested in, their own development. Staff morale is buoyant.
- The SEND coordinator is extremely experienced and has used her knowledge to make meaningful improvements in a short time. She has worked closely with staff and parents to ensure that pupils' needs are accurately identified and collaborates with additional agencies to deliver the support that pupils need.
- The local authority recognises that leaders need support to improve the school and have allocated the right resources to achieve this. They have prioritised the correct things, helping leaders to strengthen safeguarding arrangements and securing improvements in the core subjects. Officers' experience, guidance and unbiased view are appreciated by leaders, who have acted upon their advice accordingly.

Governance of the school

- Governors do not hold leaders to account effectively for pupils' performance. Leaders check the progress of pupils regularly and accurately, identifying individuals and groups who are falling behind. However, governors do not possess a secure understanding of

leaders' assessment information to help them confidently challenge leaders to do better.

- The governing body has improved in recent months, recruiting skilled new members and undertaking appropriate training. Governors recognise that the school needs to improve and are increasingly capable of delivering the changes that children deserve.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school completes statutory checks on all staff well before they commence employment. Staff receive useful safeguarding training which helps them to identify and quickly report any concerns they may have. Weekly quizzes are used to keep safeguarding at the forefront of adults' thinking. When concerns do arise, leaders take the appropriate action, working efficiently with additional agencies to get families the help they need.
- Safeguarding records are well maintained and organised. Leaders analyse these carefully to ensure pupils' well-being. For example, leaders consider the attendance and behaviour of pupils to identify any changes or patterns that could indicate that a child needs help.
- Pupils know how to manage risk and address common dangers that they may encounter. For example, pupils in Year 6 learned about the risks posed by social media and know how to report their concerns to a trusted adult or the police. Pupils are well prepared for the challenges they may face in the future.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- When consistent messages have been shared and effective training provided, staff have made clear improvements. While teaching does still need to improve, staff are motivated and up for the challenge.
- Pupils are taught to write at length and, increasingly, write with a strong grasp of spelling, punctuation and grammar. Teachers are trialling different ways to improve boys' writing, as they are aware that their progress lags behind that of girls. Nevertheless, this work is in its early stages and it is too early to assess the impact of these changes.
- While there is coverage of the national curriculum, there are variations in the quality of teaching in different subjects. Teachers do not consistently sequence lessons in a way which helps pupils to build on their prior understanding. As a result, pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged, make variable progress across the foundation subjects.
- Teachers question pupils well, encouraging pupils to think and reflect on their learning. Nevertheless, staff do not consistently use their assessments to adapt tasks to meet the needs of pupils, particularly the most able. As a result, the most able pupils are not routinely challenged and supported to attain at a high standard.
- Pupils with SEND have benefited from support from staff who help them to organise their work and understand their tasks. In most lessons, the adaptations made help them to make strong progress. For example, pupils are supported to develop their

concentration and clarity of speech during intervention classes. Pupils with SEND make strong progress from their starting points.

- Reading is taught well throughout the school. Staff select rich and interesting texts which inspire and interest pupils. Pupils enjoy reading stories and having stories read to them. Older pupils are encouraged to consider the structure of texts and can identify and annotate features that authors have included. Pupils make strong progress in reading.
- Parents and carers are supported to help their child read. Regular training for parents has been effective, helping them to enjoy a story and question their child to improve their understanding. This has also led to an increase in parent volunteer readers, which has been particularly useful in helping pupils who have fallen behind to catch up.
- Pupils and staff enjoy positive relationships. Typically, pupils are engaged in their tasks and enthusiastic about their learning. As a result, classrooms are busy and purposeful environments.
- Mathematics teaching has improved, and mathematics is taught consistently well throughout the school. Staff help pupils to learn the basics well and then use these skills to solve increasingly challenging problems. Pupils' progress in mathematics has strengthened.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils consider the impact of their actions on the world and listen carefully to the contributions of others. For example, Year 5 wrote prayers about repentance and shared these with the class. Pupils show great sensitivity and respect towards each other, their Catholic faith and the beliefs of others.
- Pupils enjoy their assemblies and come together to share their achievements and celebrate their successes. Pupils in all year groups sing with passion and enjoy the opportunity to perform collectively. There is a sense of community and belonging which helps pupils to take pride and feel welcome in their school.
- Pupils learn to keep themselves healthy and the importance of a balanced diet. For example, pupils in Year 6 studied the impact of exercise on their heart rate. Pupils make healthy choices about the food they eat and talk confidently about the importance of a balanced diet. They are well prepared to make sensible choices in the future.
- Pupils learn to look after their well-being. For example, Year 3 pupils enjoyed a yoga lesson and learned about the breathing techniques used to help maintain balance, flexibility and calm. Opportunities such as this promote pupils' understanding of relaxation and rest to promote physical and mental health.
- Pupils learn about democracy and vote on key aspects of school life. Pupils are well prepared to become responsible, kind and productive global citizens.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils conduct themselves well in the lunch hall and take direction from adults. They feel settled and safe in the school. For example, older pupils wait their turn in the lunch hall, letting younger pupils gather their food and eat before taking their own seats.
- Leaders have secured improvements in the attendance of pupils. All groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, attend regularly, and levels of absence are below the national average. Rewards such as the 'attendance cup' have been welcomed by pupils and parents alike.
- Leaders track the behaviour of pupils carefully and are quick to react when pupils do not follow the rules. Close liaison between parents and staff ensures that pupils' needs are quickly identified. Meaningful changes are put in place to help pupils get back on track. As a result, incidents of repeated poor behaviour are rare.
- Teachers and pupils enjoy positive relationships in class and show considerable respect for each other. Pupils readily answer questions and discuss their ideas. As a result, classrooms are typically calm and purposeful environments where pupils can learn in peace.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- In recent years, too few pupils have left the school in Year 6 having achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics. This has left these pupils without the necessary skills to thrive in their secondary education.
- Teaching does not typically challenge pupils to stretch themselves academically. As a result, lower-than-average proportions of pupils attain at a high standard.
- Disadvantaged pupils do not make consistently strong progress. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who attain at the expected standard is below that of other pupils nationally and in the school.
- In some foundation subjects, pupils make strong progress. For example, pupils wrote interesting opinion pieces in religious education lessons to explain their views on forgiveness. Nevertheless, subjects such as science, geography and history are taught too inconsistently. As a result, pupils make variable progress in these subjects.
- Many pupils throughout the school write extensively, using their strong understanding of punctuation, spelling and grammar to produce interesting and considered texts. Most girls are on track to attain the age-related standard. However, a small but significant proportion of boys lag behind and are not on track to attain well.
- The improvements in identification and support for pupils with SEND are helping to improve these pupils' outcomes. In most classes staff are, increasingly, able to adapt work appropriately so that pupils with SEND can access and undertake the same tasks as their peers. While these changes still need to embed fully, the progress of these pupils has strengthened.
- Changes in the approach to teaching reading are helping to strengthen pupils' progress. Pupils read aloud often and develop strong decoding and pronunciation skills.

Older pupils are able to access, understand and analyse the texts they read, considering carefully what an author has stated both explicitly and implicitly. Pupils' progress in reading has strengthened.

- Pupils use their strong calculation skills to interpret and tackle challenging problems. For example, in Year 2, pupils discussed the most efficient way to find a fraction of a number and sketched out their ideas using well-practised methods to organise their thinking. Pupils typically make strong progress in mathematics.

Early years provision

Good

- Children make a happy and successful start to school. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development is in line with the national average. As a result, children are well prepared for their next move to Year 1.
- Children are safe and secure in their learning. Adults support children effectively, ensuring that they flourish in a nurturing and imaginative environment. Children play purposefully with each other and show real excitement about their learning. They revel in the opportunities for creative play, particularly in the newly refurbished outdoor play area.
- As a result of the staff's high expectations, children behave well, understand routines and, mostly, listen well to adults and each other. When, on occasion, children's concentration drifts, staff are quick to pick up on this.
- Leaders have made rapid improvements to the early years provision. The early years leader works closely with her able team to adapt teaching to match the developing needs of each child. She has forged strong links with the pre-school provision on site. This partnership has further strengthened the quality of transition arrangements.
- Children successfully develop their mathematics skills through the carefully planned provision. They improve their reading and writing skills through learning that is driven by what has captured their imagination. For instance, children have thoroughly enjoyed the text 'Wonky Donkey' and have explored rich opportunities for rhymes of their own. By exploring the theme of 'The Greatest Showman on Earth', children have been able to develop their own imaginative stories. Children's enjoyment and interest contribute greatly to their learning.
- Children are introduced to the wider world through a range of activities that promote diversity and understanding of difference effectively. The early years team devises events such as the celebration of the Chinese New Year that welcome the participation of parents. Through a rich range of such opportunities, pupils learn mutual respect and kindness.
- Parents are well informed through electronic journals and appreciate the school's open and welcoming approach. The dedicated early years team works hard to create a stimulating learning environment that provides the children with all they need to flourish.

School details

Unique reference number	118195
Local authority	Isle of Wight
Inspection number	10079432

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	183
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Katrina Rigby
Headteacher	Alison Langridge
Telephone number	01983 562 000
Website	www.stmaryspri.co.uk
Email address	admin@stmaryspri.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	6–7 November 2014

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND and/or an education, health and care plan is slightly above the national average.
- The quality of Catholic education was inspected by the Diocese of Portsmouth under section 48 of the 2005 Education Act between 8 and 16 November 2016.
- Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher, senior teacher and SEND coordinator have joined the school.
- The number of pupils on roll at the school has fallen since the previous inspection.
- The local authority identifies the school as a high priority for additional support.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 12 parts of lessons, some with senior leaders.
- In addition to discussions with parents, 41 responses to the online questionnaire Parent View were considered.
- A range of the school's documentation was scrutinised to gather information on: leaders' evaluation of the school's performance; systems for managing the performance of teachers; behaviour and safety of pupils; safeguarding; the progress and attainment of pupils; and curriculum leadership.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's website to evaluate the quality of information for parents and whether the school meets statutory publishing requirements.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils to gather their views and heard pupils read.
- Inspectors met with school leaders, representatives from the governing body, including the chair of governors, and two officers from the local authority.

Inspection team

Dan Lambert, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Yasmin Maskatiya

Her Majesty's Inspector

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