

St John's Church of England Primary School

Boreham Road, Warminster, BA12 9JY

Inspection dates 9–10 July 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- The quality of teaching in school has been too inconsistent since the last inspection. As a result, the progress pupils have made has not been good enough, especially in mathematics in Key Stage 2.
- Pupils' achievement in mathematics lags behind that seen in reading and writing.
- Teachers do not consistently provide pupils with clear guidance that would help them improve their work.
- Teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to respond to the feedback they do receive to make their work better or to make the corrections when they have things wrong.
- Activities planned by teachers do not always challenge the most able, especially in mathematics.
- Pupils do not develop their basic arithmetic skills sufficiently. They do not have sufficient opportunities to apply their skills in a range of situations and different subject areas.
- The recent period of staff turbulence has stalled the headteacher's determined efforts to improve the quality of teaching across the school. This has blunted the impact of her work and standards have not improved quickly enough.
- The governing body has not held the school sufficiently to account and ensured that the quality of teaching across the school is consistently good.

The school has the following strengths

- Children make good progress in the Reception class because the teaching that they receive is effective.
- The achievement of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 improved in 2015 and reversed the decline seen in the previous year.
- The behaviour of the pupils in lessons and around school is good. They say acts of unkindness between pupils are very rare.
- Pupils feel safe and well looked after in school. Pupils are happy and enjoy school.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. They are well prepared for life in modern democratic Britain and the next stage of education.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in seven lessons and a whole-school assembly.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils and senior leaders. The inspector met with the Chair of the Governing Body and two other members of the governing body. He also held a telephone conversation with the senior school improvement advisor.
- The inspector listened to pupils from Year 2 and Year 6 read and scrutinised a sample of workbooks from a range of year groups.
- The inspector examined a wide range of documents, including the school's information on pupils' recent progress. He also looked at planning and documentation about checks on teaching, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- There were 58 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- Inspector analysed questionnaires from 16 members of staff.

Inspection team

David Hogg, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The proportions of boys and girls vary in each year group.
- In Reception and Year 1, children and pupils work in single-aged classes. The other classes are mixed-aged groups with pupils from Years 2 and 3, Years 4 and 5, and Years 5 and 6 working together. All pupils attend on a full-time basis, including children in the early years provision.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is in line with the national average. This additional government funding is used to support those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- Most pupils are from a White British background. Only a small proportion of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and the proportion of pupils who do not speak English as their first language is low.
- The school met the government's current floor standards in 2014. These set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club.
- Over the last 18 months, the school has experienced a significant period of staff absence in the senior leadership team and among the class teachers.
- The headteacher retires at the end of the summer term. Her part-time assistant headteacher also moves on to a new school. The governors have appointed a new headteacher to start in September 2015 and have appointed two members of staff to form the senior leadership team.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the overall quality of teaching and raise achievement to good by making sure that:
 - the guidance pupils receive on their work is of a consistently high standard that clearly lets them know how they can improve their work further
 - teachers give the pupils time to act promptly on the feedback and guidance they receive
 - pupils have more opportunities to use and apply their mathematical skills, particularly in arithmetic and in other subject areas, to develop their skills and accelerate their progress
 - teachers ensure the most-able pupils are sufficiently challenged to achieve more highly in reading, writing and especially mathematics.
- Improve the effectiveness of governors to hold the school to greater account to ensure the quality of teaching across the school is consistently good or better.

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

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

require improvement

- The headteacher has made determined efforts to improve the quality of teaching and raise the achievement of the pupils. However, her efforts have been hampered by a high level of staff absence over the last 18 months in both the senior leadership team and with class teachers. As a result, the progress of all groups of pupils in all year groups, and particularly in mathematics, is not yet good.
- The members of the senior leadership team have worked alongside class teachers to develop their skills. This support, along with that provided by the headteacher, has not always been effective and inconsistencies in the quality of teaching remain.
- The opportunities for teachers to receive increases in their salary or gain promotion are linked to how well pupils in their classes achieve. This has been successful in helping improve the quality of teaching for most staff, but not all.
- The middle leaders have been given greater responsibility by the headteacher over the last few months. They have supported the headteacher in the absence of the other senior leaders in checking the progress pupils make. They have taken an active role in supporting the headteacher and they are increasingly effective in their role, but their work has yet to fully secure improvements in teaching across the school.
- The school curriculum is increasingly effective. It is broad and engages the pupils. The pupils say they enjoy their lessons. They highlight examples of when the school has brought in speakers and visitors to raise their awareness of issues surrounding personal safety and how they have developed a good understanding of e-safety. The school looks to widen the pupils' own experiences to develop their literacy skills and understanding of the wider world. The pupils visit places of interest locally and take part in exciting community events, such as the West Wiltshire Dance Festival in Bath. However, opportunities to develop pupils' mathematical ability in other subject areas are less well developed.
- The school's own values and beliefs are strong. Visitors from the local church community explore moral issues with the pupils in assemblies. The school works hard to widen the pupils' understanding of their roles and rights within a modern society. A recent visit to the Houses of Parliament by Years 5 and 6 pupils enabled pupils to explore what democracy means and understand the importance of debating issues. The school develops pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding very well. This helps develop and foster understanding and tolerance. Good relationships are a feature within the school and pupils develop a good understanding of others who may be different to them. Discrimination is very rare. Should it arise, it is challenged immediately and is not tolerated. The work of the school prepares pupils well for life in modern democratic Britain and the next stage in their education.
- The primary sports premium funding the school receives is used to good effect. Training provided by specialist coaches develops the skills of teachers and helps improve the quality of physical education teaching in school. Professional coaches support additional clubs and sporting activities. For example, golf has appealed to many pupils who have not enjoyed team sports in the past. The school has reviewed the impact of its work and has found that over 60% of the pupils have taken part in an after-school sports club. Over half of the pupils have represented the school in a competitive fixture over this year. The school has tried to be as inclusive as possible; the children from the Reception class have been able to enjoy gymnastics sessions and an after-school athletics club.
- The school works to keep all of its pupils safe when in school and works hard with other outside agencies to offer families additional help, if needed. The school and the governing body review the safeguarding policies and procedures carefully to ensure they meet statutory requirements. Governors ensure that all of the necessary checks have been carried out before new staff join the school.
- The school checks how effectively the additional support provided helps disadvantaged pupils as well as disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Improvements in the progress they have made over this year indicate that the school uses the additional resources well. The school works hard to ensure all pupils have an equal opportunity to achieve and succeed.
- The parents who expressed a view through Parent View said their children were well looked after and kept safe. They felt the school made sure their children's learning was well supported.
- The local authority has reviewed the work of the school carefully. They have provided good support to the headteacher in identifying key aspects in teaching to improve upon and develop further. Governors have accessed useful training from the local authority to help develop their skills in analysis of progress information so they can check how well the school is performing.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governors are aware of the strengths of the school and the areas that require further improvement. The level of challenge they have provided has not sufficiently held the school to account for the

progress pupils make. They are very active in school and have detailed knowledge of how the school has tried to tackle underperformance through training and mentoring, and improve the quality of teaching. However, the level of scrutiny they have provided has not secured the necessary improvements to ensure teaching is consistently good in all year groups. Governors understand how salary improvement and promotion opportunities link to the achievement of the pupils.

- Governors visit the school regularly, meet with key members of staff and drop into lessons. The school provides them with information about the progress made by different groups of pupils, including those in receipt of additional resources such as the pupil premium funding. This they then compare against national averages.
- The governing body checks the financial position of the school carefully and the way additional sources of revenue, such as the primary sport premium funding, are used. They also check the effectiveness of the child protection and safeguarding procedures in school to make sure they meet the required standards.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils try hard in lessons and are interested in what they are learning. In class, pupils work well in small groups and cooperate with each other during group activities. Pupils say that, on occasions, a small number of pupils can be slow to start their work but this was not a feature of the observations during the inspection.
- Pupils say that bullying is rare and although they may fall out, they quickly make friends and more often than not sort problems out for themselves.
- Pupils' attendance is in line with the national average. The school works hard to support families and to ensure that pupils' absence is minimised.
- Pupils enjoy roles and responsibilities within the school. Pupils help as servers at the breaktime tuck shop. Older pupils take a lot of pride in how they help younger children settle in to school.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- At breaks and lunchtimes, adult supervision of the playground is good and this gives the pupils a sense of security and safety in school. If pupils do have problems, they are confident the adults around them will listen and help them if they need support.
- The school's values and beliefs foster good relationships across the school.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and why, for example, they need to be careful when using the internet or playing games online. Older pupils undertake cycling proficiency training while 'scootability' training is available to younger pupils.
- The school's links with the nearby secondary school are good. Pupils from Year 6 feel confident about the move on to their new school in September.
- The breakfast club is popular and provides a safe and friendly start to the day.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is inconsistent across the school. It is not as effective in some classes and in some subjects as others, particularly in mathematics. Consequently, pupils do not make sufficient progress to achieve well.
- Activities are not consistently matched to the abilities of different groups of pupils in the combined Years 4 and 5 class. In this class, they are too easy for some pupils. As a result, the progress made by different groups of pupils, especially the most able, is not good.
- Pupils' books are marked regularly but the feedback that teachers provide does not give sufficient guidance as how pupils can make their work better in line with the school's own policy. Teachers do not enable pupils to make the necessary improvements to their work promptly. Pupils then go on to repeat mistakes and errors remain uncorrected. This slows the progress that pupils make.
- The school recently has focused on improving the effectiveness of mathematics teaching across the school. While there have been some improvements in the progress made by pupils in Key Stage 1 this has not been seen in Key Stage 2. Activities have not developed the basic skills, especially in arithmetic,

sufficiently. Pupils do not have opportunities to apply their knowledge of mathematics in other subject areas so they can practise and develop their skills.

- Teaching assistants work effectively with disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and disadvantaged pupils. Help for individuals and small groups, in the classroom or in support sessions, ensures they make progress similar to or better than other pupils.
- Pupils read regularly in school and enjoy reading. Younger pupils learn the sounds that link to groups of letters (phonics) in well-organised groups. Weaker readers are helped to develop their basic skills and the most able are supported to progress more rapidly. Teachers provide older pupils with range of resources and reading materials, including magazines and newspapers designed for younger readers, to nurture their enjoyment of reading.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils have not made sufficient progress over time in all classes to achieve well. Pupils in the past have generally made expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics. In the unvalidated 2015 national assessments, the proportions of Year 6 pupils who made expected progress in reading and writing were again in line with national averages, but in mathematics progress it was well below that expected.
- The unvalidated results for 2015 indicate that the attainment of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 has improved and reversed the decline from the previous year.
- The attainment of pupils at the end of Year 6 reading, writing and mathematics was below national averages. Results in reading in 2015 at the end of Key Stage 2 improved over the previous year but declined in mathematics. Results in writing were in line with the previous year.
- The proportions of pupils achieving Level 5 in reading and writing improved this year and were broadly in line with national averages from 2014. However, in mathematics the proportion was significantly below the national average. Although the school entered a small number of pupils, none achieved the highest Level 6 in any subject area.
- The progress for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is generally expected or a little better than that of other pupils in each year group. The school has sharpened up the support it provides to pupils with additional needs. Classroom teachers now have greater responsibility to ensure pupils with additional needs make more rapid progress.
- The school uses its additional pupil premium funding for disadvantaged pupils effectively. The school's own information for this year shows that disadvantaged pupils are generally making greater progress than other pupils in the school. As a result, gaps in attainment between these pupils and other pupils in school and nationally are now closing. Compared with other pupils in the school in 2014, disadvantaged pupils were over nine terms behind in reading, four terms behind in writing and three-and-a-half-terms behind in mathematics. When compared with other pupils nationally, they were nearly nine terms behind in reading, five-and-a-half terms behind in writing and nearly six terms behind in mathematics. These gaps were wide due some of the disadvantaged pupils with very specific and significant additional needs.
- Pupils are enthusiastic readers. Pupils in Year 2 can apply their understanding of phonics when they come across unfamiliar words. They can recount the story they have read and suggest what may happen next. Older pupils from Year 6 read confidently and fluently, with good pace.

The early years provision

is good

- Children join the school with skills that are below those seen typically for their age. Literacy and communication skills and social skills are often weaker. Through good teaching, nearly two thirds of the children in 2014 achieved a good level of development that is in line with the national average. Most of the children are well prepared for the move into Year 1. Those who need additional support to secure their literacy skills and mathematical understanding receive the help they needed.
- The children have the opportunity to explore and learn from a range of exciting resources. The outdoor area has seen significant improvement since the last inspection. It is now inviting and supports a range of good activities. The children enjoyed building a bus from lots of upturned milk crates and six car tyres. A teaching assistant supervised them carefully and encouraged them to think why they needed to be careful when moving the tyres. Some of the work stations do not have signs or images that would helpful to the children when exploring the activities by themselves.
- Teaching in the Reception class is good. In the classroom, children have access to a range of creative and

imaginative resources to help build their social and communication skills. Children can choose their own learning tasks. One higher ability child worked diligently on a challenging mathematics problem that involved adding halves and quarters to whole numbers. She could explain to the class teacher what she was doing and how the resources of paper cups helped her with her addition.

- The class teacher checks the progress the children make carefully. Records are made of what the children achieve and the teacher records this information in their learning journals. Adults use these assessments to plan the next learning tasks for the children. The journals are also available for parents to view and show what their child is learning. The school has worked hard to encourage parents to take an active part in their child's learning by providing literacy and numeracy workshops.
- The leadership of the early years is good. The class teacher monitors the work of her team carefully. Staff plan activities together and discuss the progress the children make. The school has provided training for all early years team members, for example in delivering phonics, the teaching of which is good.
- Children with additional needs receive good support from all members of staff. Their writing books clearly show the progress they make in developing their handwriting skills.
- Children's behaviour is good. They work and play well together. They talk about what they are doing and share ideas. They take part in whole-school assemblies where they begin to learn about making good choices. Adults foster good relationships with the children and the children are confident to go to adults if they hurt themselves or are a little worried about something.
- Safeguarding procedures have a high priority, as they do elsewhere in the school. All the safeguarding policies and procedures that link to the early years are in place and meet requirements.

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	126367
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	456258

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	140
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ashley Wain
Headteacher	Lyn Taylor
Date of previous school inspection	13–14 June 2012
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