

All Saints Academy Darfield

School Street, Darfield, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S73 9EU

Inspection dates

12–13 December 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Under the headteacher's leadership, and supported by trustees, the staff team has worked successfully to create a welcoming and happy school.
- Outcomes are good. From starting points that are below typical, pupils make good progress.
- Pupils' attainment and progress in writing are a particular strength and this, along with sound mathematics skills, ensures that pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education.
- Although improving, pupils' progress and attainment in reading are inconsistent because some of the school's chosen policies for the teaching of reading are not implemented consistently.
- On some occasions pupils who are not making as much progress in reading as they could be are not identified early enough to help them to improve.
- Improvements in mathematics have helped pupils to improve their confidence. Consequently, pupils say they particularly like problem-solving.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good but there is a little variability. The teaching of writing is a strength, particularly in upper key stage 2, where pupils are given effective guidance that helps them to improve their writing.
- The most effective teaching challenges pupils of all abilities and captures their interest.
- Safeguarding is effective because of a strong culture of care. Staff work well to support families and any vulnerable pupils. This has helped to improve attendance and punctuality. Pupils say that they feel safe and well cared for.
- Pupils' personal development and behaviour are good. Pupils present as happy and say fall-outs and disagreements are rare and pupils are confident that staff will deal with any concerns.
- The exciting curriculum offers pupils many opportunities to develop a range of subject-specific skills well. Trips, residential visits and sporting activities engage pupils' interest.
- Although there are some strengths in the provision within the early years, children do not make enough progress in their early reading and writing skills. As a consequence, they are not well prepared for their move into Year 1.
- Middle leaders are keen to make a difference but their skills at judging and influencing the work of others are underdeveloped.
- Self-evaluation and improvement planning are sound. However, the arrangements for checking on improvements to teaching and learning are not precise.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve teaching, learning and progress in reading across the school and early years, by:
 - encouraging pupils to read more often and widely, including making better use of the school library
 - better identifying and supporting pupils who are not making enough progress in reading
 - developing all pupils' fluency as readers.
- Further improve leadership and management, by:
 - ensuring that there is a systematic approach to checking on planned improvements and the impact on pupils' learning
 - developing middle leaders' skills at judging and influencing the work of others.
- Use the well-established routines and systems to improve children's reading and writing skills, by:
 - encouraging positive reading habits, including more opportunities for reading at home
 - ensuring that there are more opportunities for all children to read and write within the setting
 - ensuring a more consistent approach to the teaching of reading and writing by implementing the school's chosen approaches.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher and staff have ensured that pupils are happy and feel safe. Pupils enjoy their time at the school and this has helped to improve attendance rates and reduce persistent absence.
- The broad and balanced curriculum places appropriate emphasis on reading, writing and mathematics. This contributes to pupils' good development and progress. Pupils are taught about world religions and topics are used to teach a range of subjects such as history, geography and art.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Leaders effectively promote fundamental British values through assemblies and classroom discussions. For example, in upper key stage 2 pupils studied photographs of the past and sensitively considered how explicit racism was in the past.
- School self-evaluation is largely accurate. Senior staff know the school's strengths and areas for development well. Training and development with other trust schools are used well to develop the skills of all staff. However, on some occasions precise checks are not always undertaken to evaluate the impact of training and development on pupils' learning and progress.
- Resources to support the learning and progress of disadvantaged pupils are used soundly. The positive impact of the pupil premium funding can be seen in the reduction of persistent absence and progress for disadvantaged pupils is rising at a slightly faster rate than for other pupils within the school and nationally. The school rightly recognises the importance of further improving the performance of disadvantaged pupils.
- The primary schools sport funding has been effectively used to increase pupils' participation in competitive sport with other schools. Pupils say that they enjoy taking part in sports.
- Subject leaders and middle leaders are keen to develop the curriculum and further improve the school. However, some leaders do not have the skills to evaluate or improve the work of others.

Governance of the school

- A progress and standards committee of the board of trustees holds responsibility for the governance of the school. Members of this committee are kept up to date through regular reports from the headteacher in relation to standards in the school. As a consequence, they are very knowledgeable about the school and its strengths and weaknesses. They understand the school's data and can pinpoint where progress has been accelerated and where more work is needed.
- The trustees have challenged the headteacher and leadership team to improve the quality and detail of reports and the school's work to improve the progress of disadvantaged pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All of the required checks are completed on staff before they are allowed to work in the school. Staff are appropriately trained in how to identify the signs and symptoms of abuse. Staff are clear about the steps to take if they have any concerns about pupils. All of this reflects the culture of vigilance which helps to keep pupils safe.
- Members of staff are clear in their safeguarding responsibilities. Safeguarding concerns are recorded centrally. School leaders work with a range of partner agencies, including children's social care, to safeguard pupils.
- The site is well kept and safe. Appropriate risk assessments are undertaken to identify potential risks and actions to keep pupils and staff safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Relationships between pupils and staff are strong and contribute to pupils' good attitudes and behaviour. Teachers and other adults know pupils and their learning needs well.
- Teachers and other adults use their strong subject knowledge well to provide clear and precise explanations. Questioning is used well to check on pupils' learning or to deepen understanding.
- The teaching of mathematics is effective. In the lessons observed, pupils' mathematical skills were developed well because teachers allowed pupils to practise computations and explain their answers. Teachers use questioning to check on pupils' understanding and to add challenge. The approach of using concrete materials, followed by pictorial representation and then abstract recording is effective at helping pupils to get to grips with new mathematical concepts.
- The teaching of writing is effective. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' writing, in terms of both the quality and quantity of work produced. Teachers use their subject knowledge well so that pupils can talk about the features of different styles of writing. Pupils develop confidence at writing for various purposes. Pupils use ambitious vocabulary and a wide range of punctuation to produce work that is interesting and lively. For example, they can write descriptions, recounts and factual reports to a good standard. Their skills at grammar, punctuation and spelling are well developed.
- Reading is taught soundly and builds on pupils' developing knowledge of letters and sounds. However, there are inconsistencies in the application of the school's approach to teaching reading. For example, the approach to encourage pupils to read often and widely by rewarding them for reading at home three times each week is understood by pupils. However, pupils are not encouraged to read a wide range of texts and not enough is done to encourage good reading habits across the school. In a small number of cases school leaders have identified barriers to pupils making better progress in reading but these barriers have not always been addressed.
- The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) has improved and this has led to more pupils being successful in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Improvements are in part due to the introduction of a new commercially produced

scheme. Following the scheme provides the daily teaching of letters and sounds. However, although recommended by the scheme's publisher, pupils do not have daily opportunities to practise their reading skills.

- The school has an attractive library with a suitable range of fiction and non-fiction books. Pupils are able to borrow books to take home to read. Similarly, the Nursery has a lending library for parents to borrow books to share with their children. However, both the school library and the early years library are underused and do not contribute enough to pupils' enjoyment and progress in reading.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is good. Pupils are taught about a range of world religions and, as a consequence, older pupils are knowledgeable about a wide range of world religions. They respect the beliefs of others.
- Pupils are very polite and welcoming to visitors and make new pupils quickly feel part of the school community.
- Pupils have an understanding of different types of bullying. For example, older pupils explained to inspectors that people could be bullied because of their race or religion. They state categorically that racism is not commonplace and if there any problems the staff sort them out.
- The school curriculum enables the pupils to learn about their place in modern Britain. Pupils have a good understanding of the effects of bullying and how to deal with negative behaviours. A large part of their personal, social, health and economic education explores how to stay mentally and physically resilient.
- Pupils know how to stay safe while online and while away from school. They have a good awareness of internet safety. The buildings and grounds are well kept and pupils value the interesting activities they are able to do at break and lunchtimes.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' behaviour in classrooms and their attitudes to learning are good. This makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning and progress. Pupils say that classroom learning is only rarely disturbed by poor behaviour.
- Pupils' behaviour in the playground and dining hall is good. They know the school rules and understand that the rules are there to keep everyone safe.
- Pupils' attendance has improved over the last two years and is broadly average. Persistent absenteeism is reducing. The school correctly identified that the attendance of some disadvantaged pupils is not as good as that of their peers. Their work to address this is has led to improvement.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils' work, as observed in books and lessons, shows that pupils are making good progress from different starting points in a range of subjects including English and mathematics. Pupils' progress and attainment in writing are particularly strong across key stages 1 and 2. As a consequence, by the time they leave the school in Year 6 they have acquired effective skills in the application of grammar, punctuation and spelling and produce good-quality pieces of writing.
- Although attainment across the school is below average, there is a trend of improvement. Attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 improved markedly in 2017 so that pupils reached average and above-average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Results of statutory assessments in 2018 were more modest, with below-average results in reading and mathematics. The strong performance in writing, however, was maintained and Year 6 pupils performed well in the spelling, grammar and punctuation test.
- Improvements in mathematics since the last inspection are evident in pupils' work and growing confidence in calculations and problem-solving.
- The curriculum ensures that pupils develop skills in a wide range of subjects such as history, geography, science and religious education. Pupils were able to talk with confidence about how historical artefacts allow them to find out about the past.
- Children usually enter the Nursery with skills and knowledge that are below what is typical for their age. Although they make good gains in their speaking and listening, along with good gains in their personal and social development, their progress in reading and writing requires improvement.
- Improvements to the teaching of letters and sounds has led to improved proportions of pupils reaching the expected standard in the national phonics screening check.
- Good identification and provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) ensures that such pupils are well supported within classes and make good progress.
- Although disadvantaged pupils do not always do as well as other pupils in reading and mathematics their attainment and progress are improving. Disadvantaged pupils make good progress in writing and do better than similar pupils nationally.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Children are not well prepared for their move into Year 1. Although leaders have identified that more needs to be done to improve children's early reading and writing skills, progress has been slow. As a consequence, children's underdeveloped reading and writing skills mean they are not well prepared for the move into Year 1.
- Parents are very positive about their children's experience and care from staff. Children settle quickly when they start and their behaviour is good. Although there is a policy to encourage the development of reading habits, including a well-stocked lending library, not enough is done to develop regular home reading.

- The early years leader has an accurate understanding of the strengths and areas which need to improve further. For example, although phonics is taught daily she correctly identifies that children need more opportunities to practise their emerging reading skills so they can apply their developing phonic skills.
- The attractive early years environment offers a wide range of well-planned activities to interest children and there are many opportunities for children to engage in learning of their own choice. Adults have good relationships with the children and children are kept safe.
- Children join the school with skills and abilities that are below those typical for their age. Some aspects of speech and language are particularly low. In the Nursery, effective support helps to develop children's physical development and their moving and handling skills. For example, children enthusiastically manipulated dough to music during their daily 'dough disco' session. This is having a positive impact on children's coordination and fine motor skills.
- While some opportunities are available for emergent writing and reading not all children are encouraged to develop these skills regularly. Teachers and support staff do not address gaps in learning with the urgency that is seen elsewhere in the school.
- The proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year is below that seen nationally. Although there have been some signs of improvement, progress is weaker than is seen in other parts of the school.

School details

Unique reference number	138234
Local authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	10042231

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	216
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Sharon Cook
Headteacher	Courtenay Walls
Telephone number	01226 752293
Website	http://allsaints.stmarysacademytrust.co.uk
Email address	c.walls@smat.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	4–5 June 2014

Information about this school

- In this smaller-than-average-sized primary school, the large majority of pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language, although a few pupils join the school at very early stages of learning English.
- An above-average proportion of pupils are supported by the pupil premium. The proportion of pupils with SEND is average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all classes and in the early years. Several of these were visited jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including the school improvement plan and records of pupils' behaviour, safety and attendance. They also scrutinised the work in pupils' current books and books from the previous year.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's information on pupils' progress and records of meetings of the progress and standards committee of trustees, which has responsibility for governance. A meeting was held with three trustees from the progress and standards committee.
- The inspectors met with pupils and teachers and three representatives of the multi-academy trust.
- Inspectors took account of 36 parent responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, and spoke to parents at the end of the day when they collected their children.

Inspection team

Amraz Ali, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Beverley Riddle

Ofsted Inspector

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