

# St Philip's Catholic Primary and Nursery School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	108033
<b>Local authority</b>	Leeds
<b>Inspection number</b>	377686
<b>Inspection dates</b>	25–26 June 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Kathryn Dodd

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	226
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Kirkwood
<b>Headteacher</b>	Elizabeth Taylor
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 July 2009
<b>School address</b>	St Philips Avenue Leeds LS10 3SL
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## Introduction

Inspection team

Kathryn Dodd  
Marian Thomas

Additional inspector  
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed 15 lessons led by nine teachers. The inspectors held discussions with staff, groups of pupils, with governors and with parents and carers. The inspectors observed the school's work and reviewed documentation, including improvement plans, the systems for tracking pupils' progress, the arrangements for safeguarding pupils and a sample of pupils' work. The inspection team analysed questionnaires completed by pupils and staff and analysed 50 questionnaires returned by parents and carers.

## Information about the school

The large majority of the pupils at this average-sized school is White British. The remainder comes from an increasingly wide range of ethnic backgrounds, although the largest group is Black or Black African. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion supported by School Action Plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average. The school meets the current floor standard which sets the government's minimum expectations for attainment and progress. The school has been accredited with the Stephen Lawrence Education Standard.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate**  
 Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key Findings

- This is a good school. It is not yet outstanding because the quality of the teaching of mathematics is not consistently good. As a result, pupils' progress, particularly for girls and lower-attaining pupils, is inconsistent.
- Achievement is good. From starting points that are below and sometimes well below those expected, attainment by the end of Year 6 is broadly average. This represents good progress. In English, pupils' attainment is on a rising trend, especially in writing. Attainment in mathematics is also improving, although it continues to lag behind English, especially for girls.
- The quality of teaching is good. In English, teachers consistently make good use of assessment information to provide tasks that meet pupils' varying needs. Pupils are clear about how to improve. In mathematics, progress is hampered because teachers do not consistently provide work that matches pupils' varying needs. Lower-attaining pupils sometimes find activities too challenging. Similarly, opportunities for pupils to develop quick mental calculation skills or a good understanding of key mathematical vocabulary are sometimes overlooked.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are consistently polite and courteous and extremely well-mannered. They are very respectful towards adults and of one another. Their knowledge of how to keep themselves safe is impressive.
- By working effectively as a team, leaders and managers manage performance and lead teaching effectively. They ensure that pupils' skills and abilities are assessed regularly and accurately. Between Years 1 and 6, this information is used skilfully to evaluate accurately the performance of varying groups of pupils, to pinpoint improvement priorities and to provide appropriate staff development. At present, the systems used to track, evaluate and pinpoint any variations in the performance of groups of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, are underdeveloped.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that pupils' progress in mathematics is consistently good, particularly for girls and lower-attaining pupils by:
  - making sure that assessment information is used consistently well to provide activities to meet pupils' varying needs
  - developing the questioning skills of staff so that pupils fully participate in all parts of lessons, particularly the quieter girls
  - making sure that pupils of all ages are provided with regular opportunities to discuss how well they are getting on and how to improve
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their mental calculation skills and strengthen their understanding of mathematical vocabulary.
  
- Develop the systems to track the performance of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage in order to pinpoint differences in the outcomes and progress of different groups of children more effectively.

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

Achievement is good. Pupils, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and pupils of varying ethnic backgrounds, make good progress. This view is endorsed by all parents and carers in questionnaires. The large majority of children starts in the nursery with skills that are below those expected for their age. A minority is well below those expected, especially in aspects of their communication skills. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress. They are very happy, feel totally safe and are cared for extremely well. They particularly enjoy practical activities linked to a topic, such as 'Journeys'. Nursery children, for example, showed their wonderful imagination and enjoyment as they dressed up as astronauts and constructed a space rocket for their journey into space.

By the end of Year 6, attainment is broadly average. In lessons, pupils are eager to learn. They particularly enjoy opportunities to discuss their learning together, to undertake practical activities and to work collaboratively. Older pupils are acutely aware of how well they are getting on. In an outstanding Year 6 English lesson for example, pupils continually reflected on whether they were successfully reaching their 'learning challenges'. They considered carefully how they could improve their own work and sensitively suggested improvements to their classmates. This contributes extremely well to pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral social and cultural development. Most pupils respond enthusiastically to teachers' questions. However, some quieter girls and lower-attaining pupils do not always fully participate in lessons, especially when teachers are questioning the class as a whole group. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well-supported in lessons because activities are tailored closely to their needs and they receive effective guidance from teachers and support staff.

In reading, pupils of all ages make consistently good progress. By the end of Year 2, attainment in reading is broadly average and by the end of Year 6 is above average. Older pupils demonstrate a real love of books. They say how much they enjoy being 'reading mentors' to younger pupils. They are excellent ambassadors, proudly wearing 'Ask me what I am reading today' badges and by writing book reviews and sharing their recommendations. Initiatives aimed at boosting achievement in writing are paying dividends and the previous gap between reading and writing is narrowing. The proportion of pupils in both Year 2 and Year 6 working at levels beyond those expected nationally is higher than last year. In mathematics, girls' attainment lags behind that of boys in most year groups. Although initiatives aimed at closing this gap are now under way, the progress of girls remains too inconsistent to do so effectively.

### **Quality of teaching**

The quality of teaching is good and parents and carers overwhelmingly agree. Teachers' enthusiasm, thoughtful organisation, very positive relationships and high expectations all make a strong contribution to pupils' good progress. The use of support staff contributes well to pupils' good progress, including that of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, staff regularly check on each child's small steps in progress. They use this information effectively to plan activities to reflect individual needs. This, along with a vibrant and stimulating learning environment, particularly in the nursery, ensures that learning gets off to a successful start.

A well-established, systematic programme to teach pupils to read, along with regular opportunities for pupils to practise their reading comprehension skills contribute well to their good achievement in reading. In writing, teachers provide stimulating, creative, challenging and motivating activities. As a result, attainment in writing has improved, especially for the boys. In mathematics, activities, although practical, active and purposeful, are sometimes too challenging for the lower-attaining pupils. Older pupils are provided with very regular opportunities to discuss how well they are getting on and how to improve, particularly by referring to their 'learning ladders'. These good practices are not yet used as effectively for younger pupils, especially in mathematics.

Outstanding teaching, as seen in Year 6, is characterised by very fast-paced, skilful, challenging and well-targeted individualised questioning that keeps pupils continually on their toes. These first-rate questioning techniques are not consistently applied across the classes, especially in mathematics. As a result, not all pupils are fully engaged in learning, especially the quieter girls and lower-attaining pupils.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils' outstanding behaviour and awareness of safety enable them to enjoy their education to the full. Analysis of school behavioural records indicates that incidents of poor behaviour are rare. Pupils are highly adept at managing their own behaviour. Their mature self-discipline and awareness of others creates a very happy environment in which pupils grow in confidence, self-esteem and self-belief. Pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development shows in their exemplary behaviour and in how pupils of varying backgrounds learn so harmoniously together.

Pupils say that 'there is no racism or name-calling'. Any hint of bullying or other unkindness is tackled swiftly and very effectively. Pupils are continually encouraged to share any issues, concerns or worries, and to resolve their own conflicts. Pupils say that they really love coming to school. This is reflected in their wonderful attitudes and thirst for learning and in their attendance, which is consistently above average. Parents and carers agree that good behaviour is the norm and overwhelmingly agree that their children feel safe. Pupils are extremely clear about how to keep themselves safe both within and beyond school. They relish opportunities to make their school a safer and happier place to learn such as by being part of the 'harmony group', or 'playground squad' and as 'safety rangers'. Year 6 pupils talk confidently about how they will keep themselves safe on their journey to secondary school next year.

### **Leadership and management**

This exceptionally caring, safe, warm and welcoming school reflects the commitment of everyone to pupils' achievement and welfare. The calm, compassionate yet firm leadership of the headteacher provides a clear vision of where and how to improve achievement. An accurate evaluation of the school's effectiveness, especially between Years 1 and 6, stems from a detailed and rigorous analysis of pupils' attainment and progress. This is why improving the achievement of pupils in mathematics, especially for girls, is already an improvement priority. Systems to track pupils' performance have improved since the previous inspection but are still developing in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Senior and subject leaders effectively manage performance by monitoring the quality of teaching and the curriculum regularly. They use the outcomes astutely in order to improve them, particularly by providing staff training and development and support to newly-qualified and less experienced teachers. Successes are reflected in pupils' improved attainment, especially in writing. This also demonstrates the commitment to promoting equality of opportunity and that the capacity to improve further is good. Recent initiatives aimed at improving pupils' achievement in mathematics, such as by ensuring that pupils know how to improve, are under way. The higher proportion of pupils working at the expected levels currently in Year 6 than in 2011 illustrates that their efforts are paying dividends. Nevertheless, leaders are well aware that initiatives are not yet consistently well applied and that the gap in attainment between the boys and girls is yet to be successfully narrowed.

Pupils' enjoyment is enhanced by a wonderful range of enriching activities beyond lessons. Close partnerships with other schools, particularly within the local family of Catholic schools and around the world, contribute extremely well to pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' knowledge and sensitivity towards cultural, religious and social diversity is impressive. Successful adaptations to the writing curriculum, for example, providing more exciting opportunities to write creatively and at length, including in other curriculum subjects are helping to raise attainment in writing. The mathematics curriculum is improving. Pupils are now given more opportunities to solve challenging mathematical problems and to use and apply their skills. Nevertheless, some weaknesses in pupils' quick mental calculations skills and understanding of mathematical vocabulary are yet to be tackled effectively.

The governing body offers effective support. Since the previous inspection its understanding of pupils' performance has strengthened. As a result, members are clear about where the school needs to improve most and provide on-going challenge to do so. They regularly consult with parents and carers and with the pupils, particularly to ensure that pupils are kept and feel very safe. The safeguarding procedures meet requirements.



## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add up exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



27 June 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of St Philip's Catholic Primary and Nursery School, Leeds, LS10 3SL**

Thank you so much for the extremely warm welcome you gave the team when we inspected your school. We thoroughly enjoyed our time with you and in finding out your views. We were amazed at how polite, well-mannered and courteous you all were, not only towards us but also to your teachers and one another. You go to a good school. By Year 6, your attainment is similar to that expected for your age and you make good progress. These are just a few of the other things that impressed us:

- finding out how much your attainment in writing has improved
- seeing how well you all get along together and how much you know about the similarities and differences of cultures and religions around the world
- seeing your excellent behaviour
- finding out that you feel totally safe and that so many of you help to make your school a safer place to learn
- seeing nursery children using their imagination when pretending to dress up as spaceman, building a rocket and taking a journey into space.

We have asked that some improvements be made. These are to make sure that:

- your teachers help you always to make good progress in mathematics, particularly the girls
- adults with special responsibilities find out more easily how well you are all learning in the nursery and reception classes.

You can help by making sure that you always check what you still have to do to reach the next step on your learning ladders and you should always tell your teacher if the work you are given is too hard (or too easy) for you. Of course, you should all continue to try your best in everything you do.

I wish you all the best for a very bright and successful future.

Yours sincerely,

Kathryn Dodd  
Lead Inspector

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