

St Bede's Catholic Primary School

Green Lane, Stockton-on-Tees, County Durham, TS19 0DW

Inspection dates 17–18 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils' achievement is good and they make good progress from their low starting points on entry to the school.
- Teaching is good because teachers plan lessons that are interesting and sustain pupils' interest. This means that all pupils are fully involved in activities.
- Pupils who find learning difficult are well supported and also make good progress.
- Pupils are positive about the school. Behaviour is good in lessons and around school. Pupils feel safe and are confident adults will help them if they have a problem.
- The headteacher leads the school well. Changes have been effective in improving standards, pupils' progress and teaching.
- Staff, including teaching assistants, work very closely together as a team. They all promote the school's aims and their teamwork has contributed to good improvement since the last inspection.
- The governing body provides effective challenge and support for the school. Governors are fully involved in the continuous drive for improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough pupils, particularly in Key Stage 1, reach the highest levels because teachers do not ensure tasks are always hard enough and a few lessons do not move at a fast enough pace.
- Work across the school and in different subjects is not marked to the same standard. Written comments do not always tell pupils how to make their work better.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons or parts of lessons, of which two were joint observations with the headteacher. Teachers' planning and a range of books were scrutinised.
- Meetings took place with the headteacher, senior and subject leaders, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including the school's data on pupils' progress, and records relating to pupils' behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- They took account of the three responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) as well as the results of the school's own surveys. Responses from a questionnaire from staff were also considered.

Inspection team

Christine Millett, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Barbara Waugh

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Bede's is an average-sized primary school.
- The overwhelming majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The number of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is below average as is the proportion of pupils at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school meets the current floor standards which set the government's minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the previous inspection there have been a number of changes in staffing including the appointment of a new deputy headteacher.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that attainment rises and more pupils reach the highest levels in mathematics, reading and writing by:
 - sharing the outstanding practice seen in some lessons
 - providing more feedback during lessons and adding comments when marking pupils' work so that they know exactly what they need to do to improve in all subjects
 - ensuring that activities are more challenging for all pupils, especially those that are of a higher ability in Key Stage 1.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- On entry to the school children's knowledge and skills are often below those expected for their age, particularly in communication, language and literacy. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, with children reaching levels similar to those found nationally.
- As a result of new systems to teach phonics (letters and their sounds), there has been a strong improvement in communication and language development. Children are developing a love of reading and books as a result of excellent storytelling and opportunities to explore books for themselves.
- Progress is good in Key Stage 1 and attainment at the end of Year 2 is improving rapidly. Standards are now as expected and pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. However, few pupils reach the above-average level and the more able pupils do not always make good progress.
- Results of national tests at end of Key Stage 2 have improved year on year in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards are now higher than those expected. Progress is good and accelerating as more pupils are reaching above-average levels in all subjects.
- As a result of the effective use of assessment information, alongside consistently good teaching, pupils' achievement and progress is improving and is good in all classes. Many pupils have good literacy and numeracy skills.
- Reading is encouraged and well supported across the school. Pupils build up good skills which enable them to enjoy their reading. They apply what they have learnt to work out any new words they come across. By the end of Year 6 pupils read widely and confidently select their own books.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are well supported by other adults. Work is specifically planned to meet their needs and additional interventions have ensured these pupils make accelerated progress in closing the gaps with their classmates.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium also make good progress as the interventions put in place are successfully enabling them to overcome any difficulties, gain in self-confidence and raise their achievement.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is now consistently good with some examples of outstanding teaching seen during the inspection. Although a few weaker elements remain, the overall improvement has raised achievement for pupils.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage benefit from good teaching and a well-organised curriculum. Skilled teaching, by all staff, ensures learning flows between the indoor and outdoor areas. Consequently, children develop their basic skills well.
- Throughout the school teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour, which means lessons get off to a prompt start. There are clear, consistent routines in place such as the 'raffle ticket' system of rewards which encourage and motivate pupils to join in and do their best.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge which enables them to plan interesting lessons and use questioning well to support learning. This was seen to good effect in a mathematics lesson where the teacher's skilful questioning ensured pupils gave detailed answers and explained how they had reached their solutions. Teachers are on hand, as pupils work, to talk through any difficulties as they arise.
- Teaching assistants are deployed effectively to where pupils need extra help. This ensures they make a very positive contribution to the learning of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Pupil premium funding is used to provide extra support and specialised teaching to enable pupils to make the most of their time in school.
- In the best lessons teachers ensure that planning links different areas of the curriculum and

includes tasks which are intended to challenge pupils, particularly the more able. These lessons have a brisk pace and pupils enjoy these opportunities to push themselves to apply their reading, writing and mathematical skills to new situations.

- By comparison, some lessons do not go at a fast enough pace to sustain all pupils' interest. Tasks are not hard enough, especially for the higher-ability pupils, and these could be stretched more to make better progress, especially in Key Stage 1.
- Although some good marking of writing was seen that tells pupils how to make their work better, this is not the case across all classes and in other subjects
- Teaching provides opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through opportunities for pupils to work together, lesson content and a positive working environment.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They work well in groups and listen to what each has to say. They answer questions willingly in lessons.
- In lessons and around school pupils are polite and friendly, and respond positively to adults. Behaviour is good. Pupils report that lessons are hardly ever disrupted by poor behaviour. Good behaviour is celebrated regularly in assemblies.
- Incidents of bullying are rare. Pupils have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying and say that staff take quick and effective action to address any concerns that pupils may have. The school's 'reflection room' provides a safe and quiet place where pupils go to talk through issues or worries.
- This is a caring school. Relationships are respectful and the school promotes tolerance and understanding through discussions in lessons and collective worship. Pupils from different backgrounds get on well together.
- Attendance is average. Systems are in place to check attendance regularly and the importance of good attendance is promoted strongly.
- Pupils feel safe in school. They have a good awareness of how to look after themselves. They have a thorough understanding of the possible dangers of the internet.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to contribute to school life through the school council and environment group.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and senior staff share the responsibility to bring about improvements. All staff have a good understanding of the school's strengths and what is needed to bring about further improvement.
- The monitoring of teaching is thorough and observations clearly identify what is working well and agreed actions for improvement. Currently, the majority of weaknesses have been resolved. Changes in staffing mean the sharing of best practice is not yet fully established across the school.
- The school's tracking provides detailed information which is used to check the progress of individuals and groups of pupils. The analysis of assessment data shows that the pupil premium funding is being used well to accelerate learning and progress.
- Equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. Pupils at risk of underachieving are given additional support.
- The school has an accurate view of the areas that need attention and these feed into the school improvement plan. Priorities are based upon agreed areas for development and are monitored regularly by the governing body and staff. Training for all staff is in place and links closely to individual needs and school priorities. Staff performance management is effective because it focuses on achievement and improving teaching.
- The interesting curriculum provides an exciting and enjoyable base for learning. It has been developed to create links in learning in different subject areas. It also presents good

opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through visits and visitors. A wide range of enrichment activities is enjoyed by all.

- Parents are welcomed into school and are well informed through newsletters and the school website.
- The local authority recognises the school's many strengths. They have provided light-touch support when it is has been needed, as in forming the new leadership team.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is knowledgeable and provides good support and challenge by holding the school to account for its actions and outcomes. It is clear about the long-term vision for the school.
 - The governing body fulfils its statutory duties, particularly with regard to the safeguarding of pupils.
 - The governing body takes an active role in promoting regular attendance.

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	111688
Local authority	Stockton-on-Tees
Inspection number	405352

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	212
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Joan Edwards
Headteacher	Mrs Elizabeth O'Hehir
Date of previous school inspection	10 November 2010
Telephone number	01642 678071
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