

St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Baffam Lane, Selby, North Yorkshire, YO8 9AX

Inspection dates 23–24 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 make much better progress than at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils of all abilities achieve well.
- Because of good provision, children make a good start to their learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Reading is given high priority. The teaching of reading is much improved and reading attainment is above average throughout the school.
- Pupils behave well, enjoy school and are very well cared for. They feel safe in school and act with respect for the safety of others. Older pupils provide excellent support for the youngest pupils helping them at playtimes and, occasionally, with their learning.
- Leadership and management are much improved and the headteacher has ensured that teaching and pupils' achievement are now good. The vast majority of parents are fully supportive of the school and say they would recommend it to others.
- There are effective checks on teaching and pupils' progress and a good track record of improvement over the last year and a half. This indicates that the school has good capacity to continue to improve in the future.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Attainment and the quality of teaching in writing, although improving, are not as strong as in reading and mathematics.
- Marking does not give clear guidance on how to improve in all classes. Not all pupils understand what they are aiming to achieve because they are not aware of the targets set for their academic progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed all six teachers for full lessons including a joint observation with the headteacher. In addition, inspectors made a number of short visits to lessons to see particular aspects such as the teaching of letters and sounds. A range of other school activities including playtimes, lunchtimes and an assembly was observed.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' past and current work and heard pupils reading.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders and other staff, a member of the governing body and with a representative of the local authority.
- Documents, including school records of pupils' progress, school evaluation and development planning, safeguarding documents and policies and records relating to behaviour, safety and attendance were inspected. A range of information on the performance of the school in comparison with other schools nationally was also analysed.
- The views of 15 parents who completed the on-line 'Parent View' questionnaire were noted. Short discussions were held with approximately 40 parents at the beginning of the second day of the inspection. Results of a recent school survey of parents' views were analysed.
- Inspectors received the views of staff through discussions and also through analysing their responses to a questionnaire. They received the views of pupils through both informal and pre-arranged discussions.

Inspection team

Roger Sadler, Lead Inspector

Additional Inspector

Stefan Lord

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Mary's is a smaller than average sized primary school with most of its pupils from a White British background speaking English as their main language although there are a few pupils at early stages of learning English.
- An average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is a little above average but a slightly lower than average proportion of pupils are supported at school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attainment and the quality of teaching in writing by:
 - ensuring that marking is fully effective and that pupils are fully aware of their writing targets in all classes
 - providing opportunities to develop writing skills in subjects other than English
 - improving the deployment of teaching assistants so that they provide more help to targeted groups of pupils on more occasions
 - improve pupils' presentation of work and handwriting in some classes.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils **is good**

- Although attainment on entry varies, most children enter Reception with knowledge and skills typical for their ages. The Early Years Foundation Stage works closely with parents to ensure that children settle in quickly and make a good start to school life. Over the last few years children have left Reception with average attainment, but in 2012, due to much improved provision, many children made good progress to attain above average standards by the end of Reception, especially in their reading, their speaking and listening and in their personal development. Those currently in the Reception class are making equally good progress and are achieving well.
- Attainment over recent years, by the end of Year 2 has been broadly average. Standards rose well in 2012 to above average levels, reflecting improvements in the quality of teaching. These improvements are being maintained and pupils currently in Years 1 and 2 are making good progress and achieving well, especially in their reading.
- Pupils are making better progress in Years 3 to 6 than at the time of the previous inspection and attainment is continuing to improve. Many pupils in Years 5 and 6 are on track to attain above average standards by the end of Year 6. Pupils make particularly strong progress in Year 6 due to expert teaching. Attainment and achievement in reading and mathematics are stronger than in writing. Reading attainment is above average not only in Years 2 and Year 6, but throughout the school. Although achievement in writing is improving, chances are missed to develop writing skills in subjects other than English. Standards of presentation and handwriting require improvement in some classes.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress. These pupils benefit from the early identification of their needs and good quality support throughout the school. There are a few pupils at an early stage of learning English and they are quickly growing in confidence with their English. Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium are progressing in line with their peers.

The quality of teaching **is good**

- Many parents told inspectors of their high regard for the teachers and teaching assistants in the school. The headteacher has done much to help all staff improve their work and has been particularly successful in developing the skills and confidence of the three teachers who joined the school as newly qualified teachers at the beginning of the last school year. The result of this work is that the quality of teaching is now good and pupils are achieving well in all classes.
- The teaching of reading is much improved. Each day, pupils are organised into groups, dependant on their understanding of letters and sounds. This programme of teaching phonics, a well-organised home reading programme, daily guided reading throughout the school and a strong emphasis on independent reading and reading comprehension in older classes is helping all pupils enjoy and achieve very well in their reading.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage there is a good balance of activities across the different areas of learning and adults promote learning well. Their questioning is particularly good and provides effective guidance to children's learning.
- Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' progress in reading and on occasions provide good support to the learning of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. They also support the learning of those at early stages of English well. However, they are often under deployed, especially in whole class sessions. Chances are occasionally missed to withdraw groups of higher attaining pupils to provide them with additional challenge or support.
- Pupils are often helped to deepen their understanding by teachers' effective questioning and by discussing their answers with a partner. In some classes, chances are sometimes missed for

pupils to analyse their own and one another's work to see exactly where they need to improve.

- In some lessons, especially in Year 6, pupils show a clear understanding of exactly where and how to improve their work. Clear targets and high quality guidance help them make rapid progress. However, this practice is not fully consistent throughout the school, especially for writing. The quality of marking has improved over the last year, but senior leaders are aware that this is not yet fully consistent.
- Writing skills are developed well in some English lessons, but chances are missed to extend writing skills in other subjects such as history, geography and science.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They are polite to adults and to each other. The excellent relationships between all members of the school community make a strong contribution to the calm, happy and welcoming atmosphere that pervades the school. School records, parents' and pupils' views confirm that the good behaviour observed during the inspection is typical at other times.
- Because of strong safeguarding procedures which fully meet statutory requirements, pupils are kept safe, and are well looked after and cared for.
- Pupils express and demonstrate positive attitudes to school and to learning. They say that behaviour is good and that staff help and care for them. They confidently go to adults with any problems they may have and welcome the worry box.
- Pupils say that there is no bullying in their school. They show a sound understanding of different forms of bullying.
- Regular sessions to develop pupils' personal development including 'circle time', when pupils discuss their feelings and any issues of concern, do much to contribute to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The positive and religious ethos of the school and the strong emphasis on improving pupils' personal development are central to the schools aims which are achieved very successfully.
- Year 6 pupils show great maturity and a real sense of responsibility. They and Reception children benefit greatly from the buddy system where Year 6 pupils are paired with the youngest children. Recently, quite a few children have joined the school from other schools or other countries and many of their parents commented positively on how welcome their children are made at St Mary's.
- Rates of attendance are above average with an upward trend and the school has strong procedures, including rewards to encourage good attendance.

The leadership and management are good

- This is much improved since the previous inspection. The headteacher and acting deputy headteacher form an impressive team providing clear vision and direction for the school and give particularly strong support for improving the quality of teaching and learning.
- The headteacher is adept at forming effective partnerships to improve the quality of provision. For example, the local authority has given useful support to help improve the quality of monitoring and evaluation and the quality of teaching. Expert teachers from other schools have given support to help improve many aspects, such as Early Years Foundation Stage provision, the teaching of letters and sounds, and the use of assessment for learning. Each of these partnerships, along with good quality guidance from the headteacher have been well received by staff and have had good effect on improving many aspects of provision and account for the improvements in pupils' achievement.
- Following checks on teaching and learning, the headteacher feeds back what has been found to individuals and the staff as a whole so that it is clear what needs to be improved. This is

helping to improve the quality of teaching throughout the school.

- The school improvement plan provides an effective steer and concentrates on improving appropriate aspects. The actions in the plan are well judged to bring about the planned improvement. Criteria to judge the success of the plan are not fully effective and do not specify the intended effect on the attainment of each year-group of pupils.
- The performance of each teacher is effectively managed and has made a positive contribution to improving the quality of teaching. The headteacher is currently working effectively with recently qualified teachers to extend their role to include the leadership of a subject. Good quality training is helping them adapt well to these new responsibilities.
- All pupils, irrespective of their background and ability are well cared for and valued. The ethos of the school is strongly committed to promoting equal opportunities and discrimination is not tolerated. The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is central to the school's work.
- Pupils' progress is accurately assessed and monitored. The headteacher's termly meetings with each teacher help ensure that leaders and teachers are aware of which pupils are at risk of underachieving. Individual targets are set and additional support is arranged which are then regularly reviewed.
- The school has not evaluated the effect of its spending of the pupil premium on the progress and attainment that eligible pupils are making. The school lacks evidence as to whether the gap between their attainment and the attainment of other pupils is narrowing.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has a good range of expertise that enables it to give school leaders the right level of challenge as well as support. There is a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and governors contribute effectively to the plans for improvement. Governors are fully involved in reviewing staff performance and ensuring appropriate training is available for all staff. The governing body is aware of its own development needs. For example, governors have recognised the need to improve the abilities of some governors to use data to compare the performance of the school with other similar schools and have arranged training to help them do this.

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 pupil's 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 pupil's 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	121639
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	406040

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	152
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Dugher
Headteacher	Fiona Robertson
Date of previous school inspection	18 January 2011
Telephone number	01757 706616
Fax number	01757 290793
Email address	headteacher@st-marys-selby.n-yorks.sch.uk

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