

St Modwen's Catholic Primary School

Belvoir Road, Burton-on-Trent, DE13 0RA

Inspection dates 20–21 November 2012

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Not enough teaching in the school is good or outstanding to promote good progress.
- The most capable pupils and those who find learning difficult do not always make as much progress as they should because their work is not always set at the correct level.
- Pupils do not make enough progress in Years 3 and 4 in literacy and numeracy.
- Leadership is too reliant upon the headteacher. Some teachers with additional responsibilities do not support the headteacher enough to improve the quality of teaching and raise standards.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher, with good support from the governing body, provides strong and decisive leadership. She has an accurate understanding of what needs to be done to improve the school.
- Pupils feel safe, behave well and are keen to do well in lessons. They are cared for well by all adults in the school.
- Teaching in Reception, Year 5 and Year 6 is good. Consequently, children and pupils in these classes make good progress.
- The school has worked successfully in partnership with parents and carers to improve attendance.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 lessons or parts of lessons taken by teachers and teaching assistants. The headteacher joined inspectors on a number of these visits.
- Inspectors took account of the views of 57 parents and carers expressed through the online questionnaire Parent View, as well as the questionnaires completed by staff.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other members of the leadership team, groups of pupils, governors and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' progress, planning and monitoring information, records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding, and minutes of meetings of the governing body.

Inspection team

David Carter, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Mark Mumby

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action level, and at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs, are below national averages.
- The majority of pupils are of White British background. A significant proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic groups, the largest being from Eastern Europe.
- Only a small proportion of the pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding to support those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, pupils in the care of the local authority and pupils from families with a parent in the armed forces.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- The school works closely with Lichfield Dyslexia Centre, a specialist unit which supports a few of the school's pupils in their learning.
- The school runs its own breakfast club.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that all pupils make good progress by:
 - making sure that all teachers use the information they have about pupils' learning and progress to plan activities that closely match their needs, especially for pupils who find learning difficult or are of higher ability
 - reducing the time that pupils spend in lessons listening to the teacher, so they have more time to work independently
 - enabling the more effective teachers in the school to work with other teachers to help them improve.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - making sure that all teachers who have a leadership responsibility support the headteacher more in improving teaching and raising standards
 - including measurable targets in all plans for improvement, so that senior leaders can easily and regularly check how well the school is improving.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because pupils do not make consistently good or better progress throughout the school. They make the most rapid progress in Reception and in Year 6.
- Children start school with skills and experience that are slightly below the levels typical for their age. They settle quickly in Reception and enjoy coming to school. They learn how to work and play together. Children grow in confidence and are willing to make choices for themselves. By the time they enter Year 1, their knowledge and skills are above average.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 enjoy looking at books and use what they know about the sounds letters make to help them read unfamiliar words and to tackle their writing tasks.
- The progress pupils make in Years 3 and 4 is slower than in other parts of the school as pupils are not benefiting from consistently good teaching. Although pupils make better progress in Years 5 and 6, standards are still only broadly average by the time they leave the school.
- The progress of pupils who have difficulty with their learning and receive additional help varies across the school. As a result they do not make as much progress as they could, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Good support for pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium helps them to make good progress, particularly in reading and mathematics. They reach similar standards in these subjects as other pupils.
- Pupils from minority ethnic groups make similar progress to other pupils, including many of Eastern European origin who speak English as an additional language. This is the result of appropriate help and guidance to meet their particular needs, and reflects the school's effective approach to tackling discrimination and breaking down barriers to learning.
- Higher-ability pupils do not always make as much progress as they could because the work teachers set for them is not consistently demanding.
- Pupils make better progress in reading than in writing, and by the time they leave the school most can read fluently and competently. Older pupils talk knowledgeably about different authors and can explain why they like particular styles of writing. Pupils' work shows that the vast majority develop a neat style of joined handwriting.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is too inconsistent to support good progress. Teaching in Reception and Year 6 is good, but in Years 1 to 4 it is less effective.
- When planning lessons, teachers do not always take enough account of what pupils already know and can do. As a result, work is not always pitched at the right level, particularly for pupils who need additional help and those of higher ability.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of are not consistently high enough. Although pupils are keen to learn, they are often given undemanding learning tasks. This limits the

progress they can make.

- Often, teachers spend too much time talking to pupils. As a result, some pupils lose concentration and too little time is left for pupils to work on tasks individually or in groups.
- Teachers set targets that help pupils improve their work. For example, in a Year 4 writing lesson, pupils reviewed their personal targets before undertaking their stories about Ancient Egypt. This helped them to focus on improving their punctuation and grammar.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly. They give clear guidance on how to improve it, and clear details of the next steps pupils need to take in their learning.
- In Reception, teachers observe children carefully and have a good understanding of their individual needs. Teachers plan purposeful learning activities for the children. They check carefully on children's learning and support them when required. As a result, they make good progress in all areas of learning.
- Older pupils, particularly in Year 6, are challenged appropriately in their lessons and encouraged to learn independently. In a typical mathematics lesson in Year 6, pupils were working together to solve complex mathematical problems which required them to use decimals.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Parents, carers, staff and pupils consider that behaviour in the school is good. Pupils are polite and courteous, and demonstrate good manners. Pupils have good relationships with adults. They get on well together in lessons and during play times. They support each other and show concern and care for others. Inspectors saw how well pupils of different ages cooperated with each other when attending the breakfast club.
- Pupils confirm that bullying of any kind is rare. They are aware of different forms of bullying such as racist bullying and cyber-bullying. They know how to deal with any that might occur.
- Pupils are rewarded for good behaviour and attitudes to their learning. During Wednesday assembly, awards are given to recognise achievements and good behaviour in lessons and at lunchtimes.
- Pupils say that they feel safe as they trust adults to deal with any incidents which might occur. They understand how to keep themselves safe within and outside school. They respond well to routines and move around the school safely, and show a good understanding of e-safety when using the internet.
- Attendance has improved and is now average. Pupils are punctual to school and to lessons because they enjoy learning. In most lessons they have positive attitudes towards learning.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Despite the strong leadership of the headteacher, leadership and management require improvement because other teachers who are responsible for aspects of leadership do not support the headteacher sufficiently well.

- The headteacher has a clear vision and high aspirations for the school. Parents and carers, governors, staff and pupils are very supportive of her determination to improve the school.
 - The headteacher has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and what need to be improved. She has made it very clear that improving the quality of teaching and learning is the highest priority. She has forged an effective working relationship with the governing body, and together they have made staff aware of the standards of performance expected.
 - Teachers are given performance targets that are directly linked to improving the progress made by the pupils they teach. Thorough lesson observations and careful checking of information pupils' progress are used to decide whether or not to give teachers pay rises. Where teaching has not met the standards required, the headteacher and governing body have taken decisive action to make sure it does.
 - The headteacher has drawn up clear plans to improve the school. These are reviewed on a termly basis. They set out clearly what needs to be done to improve teaching and accelerate pupils' progress. However, the plans do not include sufficiently detailed criteria by which to judge their success. Nevertheless, there are signs that teaching is improving.
 - The headteacher has worked closely with the teachers who are in charge of subjects to develop their skills in planning improvements. This is at an early stage of development, and their work has not yet had a marked improvement on the quality of teaching.
 - The school has built close links with other organisations such as St Mary and St Modwen Roman Catholic Church and the school sports partnership in order to improve the quality of learning and pupils' personal development. Pupils receive specialist teaching in music and religious education, and enjoy a wide range of sporting activities. Pupils have opportunities to practise and perform music and this has an important role in the life of the school. Pupils develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness well through visits as well as learning in different subjects.
 - The school has used its pupil premium funding appropriately to provide additional support for those pupils who need it through a range of small-group and one-to-one teaching. Consequently these pupils are making good progress, especially in reading and mathematics.
 - The local authority has judged that the school is not causing concern, and as a result has only provided a low level of support. This has been aimed at improving teaching in literacy.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and what it needs to do to improve. It is aware of the inconsistencies in teaching and how these affect pupils' progress and teachers' own pay. Governors recognise the difference the headteacher has made and have worked closely with her to develop a strategic plan, aimed at strengthening the quality of other senior leaders and teachers who lead subjects. Governors get detailed information about the school's performance, including how well pupils perform compared to those in similar schools nationally, and are now using this information to challenge and support the headteacher. Some governors come into school and check on progress in their area of responsibility, but this is not widespread. Governors ensure that the systems for keeping pupils safe meet national requirements, and keep themselves suitably trained. They have a good grasp of school finances and know about, for example, how effectively pupil premium funding is used to improve eligible pupils' achievement.
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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	124326
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	403554

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	235
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Bowen
Headteacher	Amanda Newbold
Date of previous school inspection	31 January 2008
Telephone number	01283 239050
Fax number	01283 239053
Email address	headteacher@st-modwens.staffs.sch.uk

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