

Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School

Ashmore Avenue, Ashmore Park, Wolverhampton, WV11 2LT

Inspection dates 5–6 December 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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

- Pupils make the progress they should overall, but progress is uneven across the school. Few pupils exceed the ordinarily expected progress to reach above-average levels. Pupils born in the summer months generally do less well than their older classmates.
- Improvements in writing have been too slow. Particularly in the younger classes, pupils have too little opportunity to write at length in English and other subjects.
- Targets set by leaders in the school's development plan and in teachers' performance management plans are not linked closely enough to the progress pupils are expected to make by the end of each year.
- Teachers do not use information on how well pupils are doing well enough to plan and adjust activities if necessary to ensure that they always meet every pupil's learning needs. More-able pupils, in particular, are not challenged enough.

The school has the following strengths

- Teaching is good in the Reception class and children make good progress. Teaching is improving in Key Stage 2 and an increasing proportion of older pupils now make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and behave well at all times. They feel safe at school and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and governing body know what the school does well and what needs to improve.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 literacy and mathematics lessons taught by eight teachers. In addition, inspectors made a number of short visits to lessons to observe learning in 'Read, Write Inc', history and science.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at past and current information about pupils' progress, pupils' work in books and on display, and documents relating to safeguarding, behaviour, staff training, monitoring and school improvement planning.
- Inspectors held meetings with small groups of pupils, staff and representatives of the governing body and the local authority.
- The inspectors talked to parents and carers informally at the start of the day and took into account 14 responses in the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the school's own survey.

Inspection team

Georgina Beasley, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Terry Mortimer

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School is an average-sized school.
- Nearly all pupils come from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who receive extra funding from the government (pupil premium) because of their eligibility for free school meals is average but is rising and varies in each year group.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average; those supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expected standard for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school runs a breakfast club.
- The deputy headteacher acted as headteacher for two terms before the current headteacher started in April 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the proportion of good and better teaching by ensuring that all teachers:
 - use the information they have about how well pupils are doing to plan activities that meet the needs of all pupils, especially the more-able
 - explain clearly to pupils why a piece of work is good and what needs to be improved, and then give pupils time to make the improvements
 - check on pupils' learning during lessons and make changes to tasks and activities when these are found to be too easy or too difficult.
- Speed up the learning and progress of all pupils so that more pupils reach above-average levels in reading, writing and mathematics and pupils born in the summer months close the gap with their older classmates.
- Give all pupils frequent and regular opportunities to write longer pieces independently in English and other subjects to raise attainment in writing.
- Monitor the school's performance more rigorously by:
 - ensuring that targets in the school's improvement plan link with teachers' performance management targets and are measured precisely against targets for pupils' progress
 - developing the leadership of special educational needs, English and mathematics so that leaders give more effective support to the headteacher and deputy headteacher in speeding up pupils' progress and improving the quality of teaching
 - ensuring that the governing body has all of the relevant information about pupils' progress so that it can ask challenging questions when progress dips and is able to target action and resources precisely.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Children settle quickly into Nursery due to the caring personal support they receive from adults. Progress in personal and physical development is good. Progress in communication requires improvement. Children do not have enough opportunities to talk about what they are learning when they are playing.
- Children currently make good progress in the Reception class and last year reached average levels in all areas of learning by the start of Year 1. Before this, attainment was below average, especially for children born in the summer months.
- Pupils' progress has been uneven since the previous inspection in Years 1 and 2, ranging from inadequate to good. Few pupils achieve above-average standards because more-able pupils are not challenged enough. Pupils born in the summer months have failed to close the gap with their older classmates in Nursery, Reception and Year 1 in the past because teaching has not been strong enough.
- Progress in reading to the end of Year 2 requires improvement. More pupils than nationally achieved the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics test last year because girls did well. They did much better than the boys. Many boys still find it difficult to use their knowledge of letters and the sounds that they make to work out unfamiliar words.
- A number of pupils in Years 1 to 4 take part in 'Read, Write Inc' sessions aimed at improving their reading and writing. However, they do not have enough regular opportunity to write at length. Despite the strong focus on literacy skills, the writing that they do is significantly below their reading levels and below that of their classmates and requires improvement. Pupils in this group from Years 2, 3 and 4 are mostly boys, pupils with special educational needs and pupils born in the summer months.
- Other pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress in their reading and writing. They read widely in daily literacy lessons and in other subjects to develop good research and comprehension skills. They write longer pieces every week to practise and apply correct spelling and punctuation. They do not always check whether they have used more interesting and complex sentences to get their ideas across to a reader.
- Pupils currently in Years 3 to 6 make good progress in mathematics. Older pupils use their good understanding of calculation methods and number facts to help them to calculate and solve problems quickly. Younger pupils have difficulty recalling simple addition and subtraction facts to support their learning and progress.
- Pupils for whom the school receive extra funding make progress in line with others at the school, and so this requires improvement. Many in this group who start school with knowledge and skills below their classmates do not close the gap because teaching has not been strong enough in the past.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Planning in the Nursery focuses too much on deciding the activities the children will follow rather than how to build individual children's learning from what they already know and can do. While

activities are relevant and so develop personal and physical development well, adults give too little support to developing the children's speaking skills when they play.

- In the Reception class, adults use the information on children's progress recorded in their 'learning journey' folders well to plan effective adult-led activities and to decide when and how to join in with the children's play. As a result, adults build learning well from the children's current levels.
- Teaching is improving but there is still some work to do to improve how all teachers use the information on how well pupils are doing to plan learning with enough challenge for all pupils. In many lessons, teachers and teaching assistants continue to follow what has been planned even though some pupils can already do what is being taught. Teaching is good when teachers continually question pupils to check their understanding and then change the task if it is too easy or too difficult.
- Marking has improved and all teachers now follow the 'two stars and a wish' school marking policy to explain to pupils what they have done well and what needs to be improved. Pupils follow this procedure too when assessing their own and others' work, and this is starting to build their ability to check their work as they learn. Pupils are not always given enough opportunity to make the improvements before moving on to the next lesson.
- The atmosphere in lessons is highly positive and so pupils have the confidence to have a go even when they find something difficult. They ask and answer questions confidently knowing, that their contribution will be valued by adults and fellow pupils even if they get things wrong.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- All pupils have positive attitudes to learning and strive to do their best when given the opportunity. They listen well in lessons, showing their engagement by asking relevant questions and focusing on the task in hand.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils are polite and treat each other, adults and the school environment with respect. Pupils know what they need to do to 'Go for Green' and particularly like being rewarded with certificates for good work. Everyone has played a part in deciding the 'Rainbow Rules' and so are clear about behaviour expectations. Most follow these all of the time. The very occasional outbursts of unacceptable behaviour are managed well by staff to ensure that they rarely reoccur.
- Pupils feel safe in school. They know and understand the different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying, and are confident that any concerns that they report are managed quickly and effectively by staff.
- Pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is reflected in their very positive relationships. They are very aware of the impact of their words and actions on others and nearly all make sure that they use kind words.
- Pupils have good opportunity to take responsibility and are fully involved in deciding improvements for the school. Pupils' comments in the school council's suggestion box are all looked at even if, as the chair says, 'We cannot always say yes.'

- Attendance is broadly average. It is no better because too many families take holidays during term time. The school has given good support to particular families to successfully reduce the levels of persistent absence by a few pupils.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- The school has an accurate view of its strengths and areas in need of improvement but has not been rigorous enough until recently in ensuring that actions are resulting in success. The school development plan identifies relevant areas in need of improvement. Targets include an expected rise in pupils' attainment in English and mathematics but they are not linked closely enough to pupils' expected progress in each year group to measure precisely how successful the school is being.
- Leaders and governors have strengthened procedures for evaluating teaching and rewarding success with incremental pay rises. Targets for teachers' performance are relevant to the school's improvement needs but are still not linked precisely enough to pupils' expected progress in each year group to measure whether teachers have been successful enough.
- Staff who lead learning in English, mathematics and for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are not yet as clear as they should be about pupils' progress and the quality of teaching in these areas across the school. As a result, the leadership and success of these aspects still rely too much on support from the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- The school employs extra staff to support the learning of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. Leaders and governors are not yet fully effective in monitoring closely whether this spending of the extra funding from the government is making the planned difference to the progress of this group of pupils because procedures are relatively new.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have successfully shared their intent to raise pupils' achievement and improve the quality of teaching. All staff support the drive for improvement and share successful strategies to use in their own teaching. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved, especially in Reception and Key Stage 2.
- Regular discussions with the headteacher results in the local authority having an accurate view of the school's performance. Local authority support for improving provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is relatively recent. While most pupils with a statement and at school action plus make good progress, the progress of pupils who receive support at school action requires improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Weekly conversations between the headteacher and the Chair of the Governing Body about the school's performance support the governing body in making decisions about staffing, and staff and governor training. Training for both governors and staff has increased over the last year and is effectively improving the expertise of those who attend. Three committees oversee policies and procedures for curriculum, finance and ethos, and individual governors visit regularly to observe what is happening in classrooms. Until recently, the governing body has not had enough detailed information about pupils' progress and the quality of teaching to aid its decisions about school improvement and to target resources to need. The breakfast club, which is well managed, gives pupils a positive start to the day. Safeguarding arrangements are robust and ensure that pupils feel safe in school.

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	104379
Local authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	404942

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	213
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Robert Grinsted
Headteacher	Lynnette Holden-Gough
Date of previous school inspection	12–13 October 2010
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