

The Giffard Catholic Primary School

Hordern Close, Hordern Road, Wolverhampton, WV6 0HR

Inspection dates

6–7 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		Requires improvement	3
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

- There is not enough good teaching for all pupils to do well.
- Teachers do not always expect pupils to complete enough work in lessons or move them on quickly to tasks that are closely matched to their abilities.
- Marking is not helping pupils to improve their work.
- Teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to practise their mathematical skills in other subjects.
- Pupils' behaviour at playtimes is sometimes too boisterous.
- The school's leaders are not doing enough to bring about rapid improvements in pupils' attendance.
- Training provided for teachers is not always put into practice in lessons.
- Subject leaders are not taking an effective lead in checking or improving teaching.
- Leaders, including governors, do not set high enough targets or hold subject coordinators to account sufficiently.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders have used extra funding well to ensure disadvantaged pupils achieve in line with others.
- Teachers use interesting topics to motivate pupils.
- Pupils feel safe at school and get on well with one another.
- Checks on teaching by the headteacher paint an accurate picture of its quality.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons and listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors checked pupils' current progress by analysing the work in their books.
- Meetings were held with pupils, members of the governing body, representatives of the local authority and staff, including leaders at all levels.
- Inspectors met informally with parents and carers. There were 9 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), and inspectors considered the views expressed by parents and carers through the school's own surveys.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' current progress and attendance, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

David Driscoll, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Shahin Fazil-Aslam

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is similar in size to most other primary schools.
- A below average proportion of pupils is supported through school action. Few pupils are supported through school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or belong to other groups for whom the school receives additional income (the pupil premium) is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school currently has an acting deputy headteacher who has been seconded from another school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and accelerate pupils' progress by ensuring teachers:
 - move pupils more quickly to tasks that are better matched to their capabilities
 - have higher expectations, especially of the most able, of how much work can be completed in a lesson
 - provide pupils with clear guidance, when marking their work, on what they need to do to improve
 - provide pupils with more opportunities to practise their mathematical skills in other subjects.
- Raise attendance to the national average by December 2013 by:
 - making parents and carers more aware of the impact that poor attendance has on their children's achievement
 - contacting parents and carers as soon as their children are absent
 - taking more robust actions to ensure parents send their children to school more frequently
 - increasing the rewards for pupils who attend well.
- Improve leadership and management in order to increase the rate of school improvement by ensuring:
 - senior leaders, including governors, set and meet more demanding targets for the school's performance
 - governors take a more structured and consistent approach to checking teaching and achievement in different subjects
 - subject coordinators play a full and effective role in checking and improving the quality of teaching
 - senior leaders, and governors, hold subject leaders accountable for performance in their areas of responsibility.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Children join the Nursery with skills and experiences that are below the level expected for their age. They make steady progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage and start Year 1 with standards that are below average. Children's progress in language skills has been a little slower than that in other areas of learning, but this is now improving as teachers give them more opportunities to speak in lessons.
- Pupils' progress accelerates in Year 2, so standards are close to average by the start of Year 3. From then on, pupils make steady progress in each of their subjects and leave the school with average standards.
- Pupils' progress is slower in mathematics than it is in English. Pupils are often asked to read in class and write in a range of different styles in other subjects. However, they are rarely given the opportunity to use their mathematical skills in subjects such as science or design and technology.
- There are few differences in the progress of different groups of pupils. Pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium do not fall behind others at any stage of their education, so leave with standards that are broadly average. The most able pupils sometimes make slower progress when they have to wait for other pupils to complete their work or are given tasks that are a little too easy for them.
- Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils. The school's leaders have changed the way that reading is taught to the slowest readers in Years 1 and 2 to cover more letters and sounds in a shorter time. This approach is working, but some of their reading books are now a little too easy for them.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because, although there is none that is inadequate, there is not enough that is of a good or better quality.
- Lessons usually start with all of the pupils listening to the same lengthy introduction. As a result the most able pupils are unnecessarily wasting time waiting to start their work; teachers do not always plan carefully enough to provide them with something new or more difficult work. Teachers' planning for work in pairs or groups is better when tasks are matched more closely to pupils' abilities. However, they often give pupils too much time to complete their work, so the pace of learning is slow.
- Generally teachers plan suitable work for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities. Some teaching assistants are too quick to help them and do not give them time to think or work things out for themselves. In a mathematics lesson, for example, the teaching assistant immediately wrote the necessary sum on the whiteboard without waiting to see if the pupils could do it for themselves.
- Teachers mark pupils' work frequently, but it does not help pupils to improve. Much of the marking consists of ticks and some congratulations, such as 'well done, you have met the objective', but it does not tell the pupil what they need to do next.

- Teaching in Year 2 is consistently of a better quality than in the rest of the school. The teachers ensure that lessons are a buzz of activity as pupils work hard on a range of well planned tasks that build upon what they already know and can do. The results are clear in their books, which contain much more learning than those in other year groups.
- All teachers make good use of a range of topics to make lessons interesting. They make links between topics, such as the Aztecs and Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory to make learning relevant. In Year 6 the topics are particularly effective at making pupils think about moral dilemmas and social injustice, such as how much someone in India is paid to make a pair of jeans and how long they would need to work to afford a visit to the cinema.

The behaviour and safety of pupils requires improvement

- Pupils often work hard when the topic interests them and the work is well-matched to their ability. At other times their attention wanders. They stop to talk to their friends and distract them from their learning, but do not misbehave.
- Pupils from all backgrounds get on well together and feel safe in school. Some pupils make unkind comments about others, but pupils say that bullying is rare and teachers always deal with it quickly. Pupils know about the different types of bullying and are very clear about the punishments for bullies. Incidents of racism are extremely rare.
- There are very few incidents of poor behaviour and it is rare for a pupil to be excluded from school. Behaviour in formal situations, such as assemblies, is good. Behaviour at break and lunchtimes sometimes gets too rough among older pupils and some feel intimidated when staff do not intervene quickly enough.
- Attendance is low, but improving. However it is not improving rapidly enough for it to reach the national average any time soon. The school's leaders are not telling parents and carers about the impact that absence from school can have on their children's education, especially in Reception and Year 1, where attendance is lowest. The school has a limited range of incentives, such as awards, for encouraging attendance, but the range is too limited to have a big impact on reducing absenteeism.
- New procedures are being implemented to encourage good attendance, but the school does not always contact parents and carers as soon as their child is absent. The school's leaders have placed too much reliance on the Education Welfare Officer to take actions instead of dealing with parents and carers who do not send their children to school themselves.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The school's performance is improving, but not quickly enough for pupils to make consistently good progress. The checks on teaching carried out by the headteacher are accurate and provide a clear picture of its strengths and weaknesses. Suitable training has been provided for teachers, and this has eliminated inadequate teaching. Nevertheless, some teachers are not putting into practice all that they have learnt from their training, so teaching is not yet good.
- The school's leaders, including governors, have agreed robust criteria for managing the performance of teachers. These are used appropriately when considering pay rises and only

those who meet the criteria have been moved up the pay scale.

- The school has provided substantial training for subject coordinators on how to lead their areas of responsibility. However, this has had limited impact on their performance or that of their subjects. Weaknesses in their checks on teaching led to their role in these activities being suspended and taken over by the headteacher. The new acting deputy headteacher has been appointed specifically to improve the quality of teaching. This is already having an impact, for example in the Early Years Foundation Stage where children are being given more opportunities and encouragement to speak.
 - Staff take a good approach to tackling any discriminatory behaviour and provide good opportunities to learn about other cultures through the different subjects.
 - The Local Authority has provided an appropriate level of support, including access to a wide range of training for teachers.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have received training in how to hold the school to account. They now ask more challenging questions and have a better understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors have a good understanding of the budget and have spent the pupil premium funds particularly effectively. Individual governors have responsibility for checking the performance of subjects, but there is no consistent approach to carrying out this role and subject leaders are not held to account for weaker performance. The pupil premium has been used well to target extra support to those who most need it, especially in providing short, sharp one-to-one help for individual pupils. The targets they, and other senior leaders, set are not sufficiently demanding. The targets bring about adequate progress when met, but no better. Governors meet all statutory requirements, including those for safeguarding.
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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	104383
Local authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	400710

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary Aided School
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	213
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nick Benton
Headteacher	Ann Lombardi
Date of previous school inspection	14-15 July 2010
Telephone number	01902 556447
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