

Leyland St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School

Haig Avenue, Leyland, Lancashire, PR25 2QA

Inspection dates 6–7 December 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.

- All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, achieve well.
- Teaching across the school is good. Pupils respond well to good questioning by teachers and support staff.
- The views of pupils are listened to and as a result, they enjoy their learning.
- The behaviour of pupils in lessons, at break and lunchtime and when they move around school, is good. Pupils are considerate of one another's feelings.
- Pupils say they feel safe while in school and parents agree.
- The headteacher and senior staff, supported and challenged by the governing body, have ensured that the many changes since the previous inspection have resulted in improvements throughout the school.
- All staff work well together to provide a calm, welcoming and purposeful environment which adds interest to learning.
- The school's ability to carry on making improvements is good.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching in all areas is not yet outstanding. In some areas, teaching does not make best use of the time available for learning.
- Teaching does not always help pupils to work and to learn on their own.
- The attainment of pupils is not high enough. Opportunities are missed to challenge pupils even more.
- Attendance is not yet good enough. Recent improvements need to be continued to move it to above average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 lessons or parts of lessons. They observed pupils in the playground and while they were moving around the school. Inspectors scrutinised teachers' planning and a selection of pupils' work books.
- Meetings took place with senior leaders, teachers, groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and the school improvement advisor who was also a representative of the local authority.
- A selection of documentation was considered by the inspectors and included pupil progress documentation and records relating to behaviour, attendance and the safeguarding of pupils.
- Inspectors considered responses from 19 parents on the online questionnaire (Parent View) and discussed the findings with a number of parents. Responses to the school's own parent survey were taken into account as were those of the staff.

Inspection team

Drew Crawshaw, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Susan Barkway	Additional inspector
Gillian Burrow	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is a larger than the average sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage with a below average number who speak English as an additional language.
- There are slightly fewer girls than boys in the school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is average.
- The proportion of pupils with additional needs including those with a statement of special educational needs and those in receipt of support through school action plus is well above average. The proportion of pupils who receive support at school action level is above average.
- The school has a higher than average incidence of pupils joining or leaving the school during the year.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- In the time since the previous inspection, there have been a number of changes in staffing, including the appointment of a permanent deputy headteacher and substantial changes to the fabric of the school.
- The school was awarded the 'Step Into Quality Award' by Lancashire County Council in October 2011.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching to outstanding by:
 - ensuring teachers make better use of time during lessons
 - giving more opportunity for pupils to develop the skills of being able to work and learn on their own.
- Improve attainment further by:
 - providing additional challenge through targeted extension activities
 - providing opportunities for pupils to consolidate their learning by giving them time to respond to the marking of their work
 - raising attendance to above national figures.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Based on their levels of understanding when children enter school and what they know when they leave, achievement is good.
- On entry to nursery, many children demonstrate skill levels well below those normally expected, as do many children who join at the beginning of reception. By the time pupils leave reception, many have made outstanding progress.
- The careful targeting of support in Years 1 and 2 contributes to the continued progress of the pupils. Phonics screening, a method of checking how well pupils understand letters and words, and other information related to how well pupils are learning, shows that they make expected progress.
- By the time pupils leave Year 6, attainment generally is just below that expected nationally. Not enough pupils reach the level expected nationally in English and mathematics. However, a good proportion of pupils achieve and even exceed the level of progress expected of them.
- The effect of support programmes for those in need of additional help or for pupils who have fallen behind, for example, booster groups for mathematics and English and a daily reading programme, can be seen in their good progress.
- A guided reading programme ensures that pupils read regularly and new books in the library are beginning to give a wider choice.
- The development of basic skills takes place in a wide range of subjects, for example, older pupils developed their data handling skills in a topic lesson based on space, while younger pupils used literacy skills to follow the instructions on how to make a snowman puppet.
- Pupils who require additional help due to their special educational needs make good progress because of early identification of need, a well planned range of support carefully matched to the pupil and the regular monitoring of progress.
- Pupil premium funding, additional funding received for pupils who might be disadvantaged, is used well to provide booster groups, a nurture group and smaller class sizes. As a result, the achievement of this group of pupils is beginning to improve and the gap between their attainment and that of other pupils in the school is closing.

The quality of teaching is good

- The mainly good teaching seen throughout the school is contributing to the improving progress being made by pupils. In some cases, teaching is outstanding.
- Improvements in teaching since the previous inspection have been a result of a more focused approach to staff training.
- Teaching is good because work is well matched to the needs of pupils. Occasionally, teachers do not provide additional work and pupils are not challenged enough to make progress for the whole of the lesson.
- Other adults in the class are used well to support those identified as in need and they mirror the good practice of teachers, using good questioning to encourage pupils to explain their thinking and to come up with their own answers.
- Teachers normally expect the most from pupils across all subjects and constantly look for opportunities to strengthen literacy and numeracy skills. Younger pupils in one lesson were decorating cakes and place mats using halves and quarters.
- In outstanding lessons, pupils learn quickly. However, in some lessons, teachers spend too much time on instructions and do not focus on the learning which needs to take place.
- Teachers give pupils lots of opportunity to work on their own or in small groups. As a result, pupils are interested in their work and take responsibility for their own learning although opportunities to develop skills in some lessons are missed.
- Samples of pupils' work shows that good progress is being made overtime as a result of good and well planned teaching. In mathematics, pupils' books showed that they moved quickly from using tally charts to accurate bar graphs to present data.

- Marking is accurate, up to date and gives reasons for praise so that pupils understand what they have done well. However, teachers do not always give pupils the time to complete the corrections and reflect on teachers' comments.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The typically good behaviour of pupils contributes to the welcoming, calm and positive feeling of the school.
- Pupils enjoy school and are proud to tell visitors why school is so good. They find staff kind and helpful and feel that they are making good progress.
- Pupils are willing to take on responsibilities, for example supporting in the dining room and answering the school office phone at lunch time or acting as book monitors when other pupils want to exchange their reading books.
- Pupils feel that behaviour is good and that they are kept safe in school. They understand what bullying is and are clear that problems are dealt with by caring staff. Each pupil has a key person with whom they can talk about interests and concerns. Parents agree with their children's view on behaviour and safety.
- Behaviour management is good due to most staff dealing with minor issues early. In some lessons, pupils can show a lack of concentration because the teacher does not provide challenge throughout the whole lesson.
- One parent said that school made regular contact with her and this helped to create a teamwork approach to dealing with her son's behaviour problems and helping him to make a marked improvement.
- School records show the number of serious incidents is extremely low. However, records are not always detailed enough and do not always include all the actions the school has taken along with the outcome.
- Attendance has improved and is now closer to the level expected nationally. The school recognises that it needs to continue with strategies to improve overall attendance and monitor closely those pupils who have higher levels of absence. Records do not always detail actions to support these pupils along with any improvements.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, senior leaders and the governors have a good understanding of how well the school is performing and what it needs to do to improve further. The school has strategies that ensure all leaders and managers are involved in the monitoring of progress and these in turn are verified by the local authority school improvement partner. The local authority provides useful support for the school, for example, through the Intensive Support Programme which focused on improving teaching and learning.
- The school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its performance are good and provide a detailed analysis of current data as a means of supporting judgements made by the headteacher. Much of this data makes comparisons to other local schools but not always with national figures.
- The school improvement plan provides a clear framework for moving the school forward. The plan is very well supported by a staff team which takes responsibility for a range of areas within the school. Teachers' performance management is closely linked to the plan and as a result, has contributed to the improvements made by the school. Senior leaders, including governors, are well informed and have robust practices on pay progression related to the quality of teaching.
- The curriculum is well balanced and effective due to a concerted effort to meet the needs of all pupils including groups such as those with special needs and those in need of additional support. The introduction of the creative curriculum as a means of capturing the interests of pupils while providing a platform to develop basic skills, has contributed to the good progress in literacy.

- The well organised curriculum provides effective learning opportunities for all pupils beyond the classroom. Younger children have extensive outdoor learning areas, with climbing equipment, gardens and role play areas while older ones benefit from an adventure trail, a friendship room and an assortment of educational visits such as to the Spaceport.
 - The school works closely with the local children's centre and as a result, successfully works with all parents. This partnership is beginning to have a positive impact on the attendance of pupils.
 - The school makes a strong contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils.
 - The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governors are well informed about how well the school is doing. The recently introduced headteacher's report provides great detail about the school's assessment data from which the governors can and do provide challenge to the senior leaders. Decisions on additional spending, on things such as a counsellor for pupils and the use of pupil premium funding, are only taken following extensive analysis of data. Governors take part in appropriate training and a sufficient number of trained governors ensure that safeguarding meets requirements.
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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	119677
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	401861

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	293
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr S McBride
Headteacher	Mrs E McNamara
Date of previous school inspection	8 March 2010
Telephone number	01772 422431
Fax number	01772 455133
Email address	bursar@st-marys-leyland.lancs.sch.uk

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