

St John's Catholic Primary School

Melbourne Street, Tiverton Devon EX16 5LB

Inspection dates 5–6 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		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher, staff and governors have high expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving. They have worked hard to improve the effectiveness of the school since the last inspection. As a result, the overall quality of teaching has risen and this has improved pupils' progress. By Year 6 standards in English and mathematics are above average.
- There is a strong sense of community in the school. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding at all times. Pupils clearly feel safe. They are polite and courteous and display a high level of respect for others.
- Governors know the school well. They have an accurate idea of the school's strengths and the areas in need of development, and are not afraid to ask challenging questions about the school's effectiveness.
- Disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and also those for whom the pupil premium provides support, make good progress.
- Good leadership and management at all levels ensure that teaching and learning is rigorously checked on a frequent basis. This has helped staff to focus on improving their teaching.
- Parents are pleased with the school and the academic and personal progress their children are making. The vast majority of parents who used the on-line Parent View survey to express their opinions about the school said they would recommend the school to others.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The standard of writing in Key Stage 1, especially that of boys, needs improvement. Pupils often struggle when trying to use punctuation and spelling correctly when completing longer pieces of written work.
- Teachers' marking does not consistently provide pupils with the information they need in order to improve their work and this can affect their progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 12 lessons. Two were joint observations with the headteacher.
- Inspectors heard pupils from Year 2 and Year 6 read and made short observations of sessions on the teaching of letters and sounds.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, curriculum leaders, parents and carers, a representative of the local authority, members of the governing body and pupils.
- Inspectors observed pupils' attitudes and behaviour and scrutinised the school's safeguarding procedures.
- Inspectors took account of the 26 responses to the online Parent View Survey in planning and carrying out the inspection. They also took account of the views of school staff in the 34 completed questionnaires
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at documentation, including the school's review of how well it is doing, teachers' planning, school development planning, information about individual pupils' progress, performance management documentation and school policy documents.

Inspection team

Michael Barron, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Carol Jones

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- Pupils are mainly White British. A below-average proportion speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding) is below the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is above the national average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- There is a pre-school setting on the school site which is not managed by the governing body and was therefore not included as part of this inspection.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has gained several awards, including the Sing Up Platinum award and the Healthy Schools Plus award.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the standard of pupils' writing, especially boys' writing in Key Stage 1, by teaching pupils to use punctuation and spelling correctly when completing longer pieces of written work.
- Ensure that the quality of teachers' marking is consistently good or better throughout the school and that it always provides pupils with the information they need in order to improve their work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the school's Early Years Foundation Stage with average skill levels for their age, especially their early numeracy and reading skills. Children make good progress during their Reception Year and continue to make good progress throughout the rest of the school
- By the end of Year 2, pupils have developed above average reading skills. By the end of Year 6 standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. This was seen in pupils' work and in information from the school's effective systems to track the progress of individual pupils.
- The parents and carers who completed the on-line survey in Parent View believe that their children are making good progress and achieving well throughout the school. Inspection evidence supports this view.
- By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' writing skills are below those expected for their age. This is particularly the case with boys. Pupils frequently have difficulties using punctuation and spelling correctly when completing longer pieces of written work.
- Pupils with disabilities or who have special educational needs, and also those eligible for the pupil premium, make similar progress to that of all other pupils because they receive an effective level of support.
- The school also caters well for the needs of the more able pupils and this enables them to achieve good standards, especially in Key Stage 2. Their work in English and mathematics in Year 6 is of a particularly high standard and confirms that they have developed the range of skills they are capable of attaining.
- Pupils usually make good progress in lessons, especially when teachers make learning interesting by mixing subjects together, especially in literacy lessons. As one Year 6 pupil put it, 'Lessons are never boring, and we learn a lot.'
- An example of this was observed in a Year 3 literacy lesson. Pupils made good progress in developing their understanding of how to plan a story because the teacher linked learning to the class topic on Ancient Egypt, which had caught pupils' interests very well. The work pupils were asked to complete was well matched to their abilities and those pupils requiring extra help with their learning made good progress because they were well supported by the effective use of an additional adult.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is good overall, and some is outstanding. The pupils benefit from this teaching which adds to their enjoyment of learning and inspires them to work hard at tasks which are usually not only very interesting but also well matched to their abilities. For instance, in a Year 6 literacy lesson based on the Second World War, pupils were given the chance to interview a soldier regarding his thoughts about being shot. This inspired pupils to develop not only their questioning skills but also their ability to incorporate ideas about people's feelings into their written work.
- Although the vast majority of teaching meets the needs of pupils of different ages and abilities well, some inconsistencies still remain, especially in the teaching of aspects of literacy in Key Stage 1, and this affects pupils' progress, especially in relation to developing their writing skills.
- The quality of teachers' marking varies throughout the school. Some is of a very good quality. However some does not consistently provide pupils with the information they need in

order to improve their work and this can affect their progress.

- The attainment of pupils entitled to the pupil premium has risen because the school has used the extra funding to improve the level of support for them.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding and their attitudes to learning are exemplary. These are important factors in ensuring that pupils make good progress during their time at the school.
- The school offers a welcoming environment for all pupils, who respond very well to the high expectations teachers have of how pupils should conduct themselves at all times. They are polite and show respect for other pupils and adults.
- Pupils say that they really enjoy school, and this is reflected in their above average and improving rates of attendance. One pupil commented, 'I really enjoy coming to this school because teachers are kind and make learning fun.' Pupils' punctuality is very good and instances of persistent absence are low and declining.
- Parents and carers believe that the school is a safe and secure place and that their children are very well cared for. Pupils also say that they feel very safe and are confident that adults will always help them if they have any concerns.
- The school has a very inclusive ethos and all pupils, including those with disabilities, are provided with the support they need in order to take a full part in school activities.
- Older pupils state that they enjoy caring for the younger ones and are adamant that very little misbehaviour ever takes place either in lessons or at playtimes. They are aware that a very small minority of pupils sometimes find it difficult to behave well all of the time.
- Pupils of all ages say that incidents of bullying are very rare. They are also confident that, should bullying of any type, including physical, emotional or cyber-bullying ever happen, it would be dealt with quickly and firmly by adults.

The leadership and management are good

- The school is led by a headteacher whose leadership is dynamic. She is dedicated to ensuring that the school continues to improve. She receives a good level of support from the governing body and from school staff, including her senior leadership team. They all share her vision for school improvement.
- The school ensures that all pupils are provided with equal opportunities to succeed and does not tolerate discrimination of any kind. The range of subjects and topics covered in lessons is rich and varied and meets the needs of all pupils effectively. Different subjects are linked together well in lessons and pupils say that they really like this approach to learning. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are supported very strongly.
- Music, sports and the arts play important roles in school life. Pupils are given opportunities to join the school orchestra and sing in the school choir and take part in a range of popular after-school activities. They enjoy talking about the wide range of trips they take part in and about the interesting visitors to the school. Activities such as these develop pupils' awareness of the wider world in which they live.
- The headteacher and senior leadership team have developed good performance management procedures which reward good teaching and which make teachers responsible for ensuring that pupils make good progress.
- Teacher performance is led and managed rigorously, and linked effectively to performance management. Staff work very closely as a team. They understand that the school has a

commitment to their continued professional development. This has been a key factor in improving the quality of teaching since the previous inspection and is reflected in the rise in pupils' achievement.

- The school presently receives light touch support from the local authority, which believes the school has improved since the last inspection and that it now offers a solidly good education to pupils. The school clearly displays the capacity for further improvement.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body monitors the performance of the school regularly and effectively. All governors have received training in ensuring that the school effectively fulfils all its statutory duties, especially those related to safeguarding pupils. They are well aware of the strengths and weaknesses of provision and share the headteacher's vision. As one governor put it, 'We want this school to be the very best.' The governing body supports the school's aims well and they are not afraid to ask the school's leaders searching and challenging questions should the need arise. This includes issues related to the school's budget and around procedures for monitoring the performance of teachers and assessing the impact of extra staffing provision from pupil premium funding on improving 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	113496
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	405474

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	181
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andy Pryce
Headteacher	Sally McCloskey
Date of previous school inspection	2–3 December 2010
Telephone number	01884 253630
Fax number	01884 242079
Email address	admin@tiverton-st-johns-primary.devon.sch.uk

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