

St Chad's Catholic Primary School

South Hill, Blackburn Road, Whittle-le-Woods, Chorley, Lancashire, PR6 8LL

Inspection dates 17–18 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- Pupils enjoy learning in this welcoming school. They are cared for exceptionally well.
- Pupils make good progress. They achieve particularly well in reading and mathematics.
- Teaching is always good and some is outstanding. Teachers make lessons fun and pupils are keen to learn.
- Behaviour is outstanding. Pupils feel very safe and are exceptionally courteous and keen to take responsibility.
- The headteacher is tireless in wanting the best for all pupils. Staff respond enthusiastically to this clear lead. Every teacher leads an aspect of the school's work and does it well.
- Methods for checking on the quality of teaching and the progress of pupils are good. Leadership has a positive effect on raising achievement and teaching and the school is improving.
- A dedicated governing body provides challenge and support. Parents regard the school highly. One summed it up by saying 'my child is happy and has settled brilliantly'

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not all teaching is yet outstanding. In a few lessons the pace of learning is not brisk enough. Pupils are not always sure of their personal targets.
- Writing is not as strong as reading. Higher ability pupils do not always make as much progress as possible and there is too little use of writing skills in subjects other than English.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching in all classes and saw 10 lessons.
- The inspector looked at the work in pupils' books to get a view of current achievement and progress over time. The inspector did this jointly with the headteacher. The inspector spoke to groups of pupils to get their view of, amongst other things, how teaching helps them to learn.
- The inspector took account of 39 responses from parents to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).
- Meetings were held with four members of the governing body, teaching and classroom support staff and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector looked at a number of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, records of the quality of teaching, the improvement plan, provisional results in 2012 of standardised assessment tasks and the school's tracking of pupils' progress.
- The inspector listened to pupils read and checked the school's records of reading progress.

Inspection team

David Law, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average sized primary school.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. No pupils speak English as an additional language.
- Staff have identified a smaller than average proportion of pupils who are supported through school action because they have a disability or special educational needs.
- A below average proportion of pupils have a statement of special educational needs or are supported at school action plus.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium is smaller than average. The pupil premium is extra funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, who are looked after by the local authority or are children of families in the services.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so more is outstanding by:
 - making sure that the pace of learning is brisk enough in all lessons
 - being consistent in helping pupils to know and understand their personal targets.
- Improve standards of attainment in writing by:
 - helping all pupils to use their writing abilities well in different subjects
 - making sure pupils of higher ability achieve more in their writing.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children join the Reception class with knowledge, skills and understanding that are broadly typical for their age. All groups of pupils make good progress throughout their time at the school. By the end of Year 6, standards of attainment in English and mathematics are higher than those seen nationally.
- All pupils have equal opportunity to learn. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because they receive good support. Pupil premium funding is used well to provide extra teaching. Pupils who receive this make the same good progress as others in the school and reach higher standards of attainment than similar pupils nationally.
- In the Reception class, children settle well into school routines, enjoy learning and make good progress. Children were enthralled by Ted the sleepy hedgehog who had come out of hibernation to help them count their numbers.
- At Key Stage 1, pupils enjoy reading and make good progress. By the end of Year 2, their performance exceeds that seen nationally. They read fluently and show a good understanding of letters and sounds (phonics). Pupils make brisk progress in mathematics showing a firm grasp of numbers. Although progress in writing is good overall, too few pupils reach standards above those expected for their age.
- Good progress continues across Key Stage 2. It is particularly strong in mathematics and by the end of Year 6 standards of attainment are well above those seen nationally. In one lesson, pupils in Years 5 and 6 made strong gains in understanding how to calculate and solve problems using decimals.
- In Key Stage 2, pupils show a love of books and an excellent ability to read with understanding. By the end of Year 6, standards of attainment in reading are above those seen nationally and the majority reach the higher level.
- Although pupils make good progress in acquiring handwriting, grammar and punctuation skills progress in writing is not as strong as reading or mathematics. By the end of Year 6, fewer pupils reach the higher level in writing. This is because pupils have too little chance to use their writing skills in other subjects. When they do their writing comes alive, for example, when pupils wrote about slavery following a visit to a museum.

The quality of teaching is good

- Good teaching underpins pupils' good progress over time. Teachers prepare lessons carefully and all classrooms are alive with the buzz of learning. Pupils are keen to do their best and acquire positive attitudes to learning as they work well together and show independence when required.
- Teachers foster excellent relations between pupils. Pupils describe their teachers as 'enthusiastic' and one spoke for others in saying 'they treat every child equally'. This contributes strongly to pupils' social and personal development.
- Every pupil has an equal chance to learn because lessons are planned thoroughly and teachers are skilful in explaining clearly what pupils need to do. Teaching assistants are deployed well to support groups and individuals.
- Reading is taught effectively and pupils' progress is carefully tracked. In one outstanding Year 2 lesson, pupils were captivated when reading the traditional story of Jack and The Beanstalk. One pupil took the role of Jack and said he was going to hide the cow in a cave in the mountains rather than sell it. Another pupil challenged this by saying 'what if some mountain climbers come up on ropes and find it?'
- Teachers have good subject knowledge in mathematics. In one lesson about fractions, teaching

moved at a brisk pace as the teacher checked on what pupils understood and made sure the work was challenging for the more-able.

- Teachers expect the best from their pupils. Teachers mark work carefully and show pupils how they can improve. Pupils have individual targets but there are some inconsistencies in how effectively teachers use these so that pupils know them and try hard to achieve them. Most lessons proceed briskly but on a few occasions the pace slows, especially when teachers talk for too long.
- Since the last inspection, training for teachers has included robust methods for tracking pupils' progress. Consequently, all teachers have a good knowledge of how well pupils are doing and make sure work is appropriate for them. This has made a strong contribution to very good progress in mathematics, for example.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- All groups of pupils get on exceptionally well together. The school is a happy place with a welcoming atmosphere. Pupils say they feel entirely safe and parents strongly agree that their children are kept safe.
- School records show that bullying is extremely rare. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep safe and of different types of bullying because the school has an exemplary programme to teach them about this.
- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is outstanding. This supports the good progress in all classes. Pupils are extremely polite and are very friendly towards each other. As one said 'we look after each other and teachers watch us and care for us'.
- Pupils are extremely keen to take responsibility and are always willing to be helpful around school. They thoroughly enjoy looking after playground equipment and tidying the hall after dinners. They are very proud to take on important jobs such as being house captains and members of the school council.
- Attendance is well above average and there is no persistent absence. The school has outstanding methods to encourage good attendance. Pupils enjoy learning and are eager to get to lessons on time.

The leadership and management are good

- Staff morale is high and everyone works together to support the clear vision of the headteacher. She is relentless in ensuring teaching continues to improve and some is now outstanding and in enabling the very good achievement in mathematics. School leaders have recognised the need to improve pupils' writing further and are implementing relevant plans to achieve this.
- The headteacher's strong leadership is complemented by the deputy headteacher and they work well together. All teachers are keen to lead aspects of the school's work and do this successfully. This is seen for example in the good provision for pupils with special educational needs, which helps them to make good progress, and in the capable leadership of literacy which supports good achievement in reading.
- There are good methods for checking the progress of pupils. This has improved since the last inspection through regular scrutiny of pupils' work and careful tracking of their progress. Pupils at risk of falling behind are identified quickly and action is taken.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher check on teaching through regular observations of lessons. They use their findings to improve teaching and only a few variations exist between classes. There is a training programme linked to teachers' individual needs and school priorities. Consequently, teaching is refreshed by new ideas.
- Teachers are set targets to improve based on their performance and the progress pupils make. These targets are ambitious and closely linked to pay awards.

- School leaders and governors provide very well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, particularly through strong links with the church and local community. They foster excellent relations and make sure discrimination is tackled so there is equal opportunity for all pupils to flourish. Consequently, all groups of pupils learn and play together well.
- All leaders and governors share a strong ambition for all pupils to do well and make sure that many interesting opportunities are provided for them to learn. For example, pupils take part in a wide range of sport. One pupil said 'this is the best school for sport and I really enjoy the chance to learn judo'.
- Leaders and governors manage the budget well and have improved facilities for sport, music and drama through the addition of a spacious school hall. Funds available through pupil premium are used well to provide additional teaching and pupils in receipt of this make the same good progress as others in the school.
- Leaders and governors are grateful for the support of the local authority and value both the advice provided and the help given to establish productive links with local schools whereby good practice can be shared.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are highly committed and well informed about teaching. They systematically visit classes to find out about teaching and how well pupils are doing. Data about pupils' progress is reviewed. This helps them to ask challenging questions and to make good decisions about teachers' pay and performance. Governors support the headteacher well in managing staff performance and challenge when they need to. They make sure that safeguarding requirements are met.

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	119679
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	403408

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	137
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jane Hart
Headteacher	Catherine Coyle
Date of previous school inspection	25 April 2008
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Fax number	01257 232152
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