

# St Joseph's RC Primary School, Todmorden

Wellington Road, Todmorden, Lancashire, OL14 5HP

**Inspection dates** 6–7 February 2013

| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>   | Previous inspection: | Satisfactory                | 3        |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------|
|                                | This inspection:     | <b>Requires improvement</b> | <b>3</b> |
| 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

- The quality of teaching means that pupils make adequate rather than better progress.
- School development planning is not focused tightly enough on raising pupils' achievement.
- The checking of the quality of teaching is not rigorous enough.
- Too many pupils do not use punctuation, grammar and spelling accurately.
- Pupils' quick mental recall and problem-solving skills in mathematics are not well developed.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to write at length in different subjects.
- The work of the interim executive board and leaders is beginning to improve teaching and raise achievement. However, it has not had time to impact fully on school improvement since the previous inspection and this is satisfactory.

### The school has the following strengths

- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- There is good support for those pupils at an early stage of learning to speak English.
- Pupils are able to take on a variety of responsibilities and, in so doing, add to the life of the school.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school. They know how to keep themselves and others safe.
- The curriculum is enriched by extra-curricular activities and visits.
- The interim executive board and leaders make sure that safeguarding requirements are met.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons or parts of lessons taught by four teachers. Five of these were joint observations with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with the Chair of the Interim Executive Board, parents, staff, pupils and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at school documentation, including that relating to safeguarding, records of meetings of the interim executive board, assessment information and curriculum planning. Work in pupils' books and displays around the school were examined. The inspector listened to groups of pupils read.
- Account was taken of the 26 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning and carrying out the inspection.

## Inspection team

Melvyn Hemmings, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- St Joseph's is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- An above-average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. A few pupils of Polish ethnicity are at an early stage of learning to speak English
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- An interim executive board replaced the governing body in May 2012. It will govern the school until a new governing body is constituted.
- The school has gained a number of national awards, including the Active Mark, and holds Healthy School status.

### What does the school need to do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is good or better by:
  - making sure that pupils are always given work that gets the best out of them and is matched to their ability so that it is not too hard or too easy
  - ensuring teachers provide pupils with sufficient opportunity to work things out for themselves
  - improving marking so that it gives pupils precise guidance on how to improve.
- Raise pupils' attainment in writing and mathematics by:
  - improving pupils' ability to construct sentences accurately
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to write at length in different subjects
  - improving pupils' quick mental recall and problem-solving skills in mathematics.
- Improve leadership and management by:
  - improving school development planning so that it is tightly focused on raising pupils' achievement
  - rigorously checking the quality of teaching to provide precise areas for development and ensuring that teachers respond to them successfully.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- In the Early Years Foundation Stage children make good progress and achieve well from their skills on entry, which are below those typical for their age. Through the rest of the school progress is adequate and pupils' achievement requires improvement. Pupils' attainment in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 is broadly average.
- Children in Nursery and Reception work and play happily together, taking turns and sharing fairly. They grow in confidence and are willing to make choices for themselves. Children show much enjoyment in their activities, as is evident in their role-play activities in an area set up as a 'Clock Shop.'
- In Years 1 to 6 pupils show interest in their work and are keen to support each other to complete tasks. They are enthusiastic and can concentrate for lengthy periods. Pupils listen attentively to the teachers' instructions and follow them carefully.
- Recent improvements in the way that pupils are taught to understand letters and the sounds they make mean that progress in reading is beginning to accelerate. There has not been enough time for this to have affected pupils' attainment fully. Pupils' attainment in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time they leave school is broadly average.
- Pupils enjoy writing in a variety of styles, such as poetry and narrative writing, to express their ideas. Their writing is imaginative but lacks accuracy in the use of correct grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- Pupils have secure mathematical calculation skills. However, their quick mental recall skills and ability to solve number problems in real-life situations are not well developed.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make the same progress as other pupils because of the extra support they are given. The support for pupils at an early stage of learning English is effective in enabling them to make good progress in their language skills.
- The funding for pupils eligible for the pupil premium is used to provide individual and small-group activities, led by teaching assistants, to raise their achievement in English and mathematics. The full impact of this has not yet been seen but it is evident that the gap in attainment between pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and other pupils in school is narrowing.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- In the Early Years Foundation Stage adults work well together to meet children's individual needs. They provide practical and interesting activities that capture children's imagination so that they want to learn. There is a good balance between activities led by adults and those chosen by children and this encourages children to find out things for themselves.
- In Years 1 to 6 teachers have secure subject knowledge and are able to explain clearly and confidently to pupils what they are going to learn. They make appropriate use of a range of resources, including new technology, to support learning. Teaching ensures that pupils usually get on with their work and little time is wasted.
- Teaching assistants are deployed well to provide extra support for disabled pupils, pupils eligible for the pupil premium and those who have special educational needs. It enables them to be fully involved in all activities and make the same progress as other pupils. The support for pupils at an early stage of learning to speak English is good and ensures that they make rapid progress in gaining English language skills.
- Teachers do not consistently set activities that get the best out of pupils, which means some pupils find work too easy and others too hard. Marking is not used effectively to provide pupils with the precise next steps they need to take to improve their learning. Teachers often provide too much direction and not enough opportunity for pupils to show they can get on with their

work and learn on their own.

- Pupils' social development is promoted well by being able to work in pairs and small groups to complete tasks. This was evident in a mathematics lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2 when they were learning to estimate, measure and compare different weights. Moral development is fostered by pupils having the opportunity to discuss the implications of their actions on others.
- Teachers promote pupils' spiritual and cultural development by encouraging them to think about the world around them and by providing opportunities to learn about cultures different from their own, such as when finding out about the Chinese New Year.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils

### require improvement

- There is a clear understanding among pupils of how to keep themselves and others safe. They know about the dangers relating to roads, railways and water, and what they need to do if approached by a stranger. The curriculum is planned appropriately to develop pupils' understanding of these issues.
- Pupils generally behave well, being kind and considerate to others and acting responsibly in and around school. However, there are a few pupils with behavioural difficulties who find it hard to act responsibly. Some staff and parents indicate that the management of this behaviour by leaders is not always effective in bringing about improvement.
- Pupils know about the different kinds of bullying, such as name-calling and physical bullying. They say such instances are rare and are confident they would be dealt with by adults.
- Though pupils say they enjoy coming to school, their attendance is only average. Pupils arrive at school on time so there is no delay in starting activities.
- Pupils willingly take on a variety of responsibilities and carry them out diligently. These include being a member of the school council or a safety officer. In so doing they add to the life of the school by giving pupils a say in how it develops.

### The leadership and management

### require improvement

- Following a breakdown in the working relationship between the governing body and the headteacher an interim executive board was put in place to govern the school. This has resulted in a variety of improvements, including better systems for managing the performance of staff and a more rigorous approach to checking on how well the school performs. There is more to do in order to accelerate pupils' progress and raise their attainment.
- The training of teachers and other adults is now more effectively matched to whole-school and individual staff needs. There is a stronger link between the performance of teachers and their salary progression. Teachers are becoming more accountable for the progress that pupils make.
- Lesson observations are undertaken regularly by the headteacher. They provide areas for development but these lack precision in bringing about improvement. Subsequent observations do not rigorously check whether staff have responded positively to identified areas for development.
- The school has appropriate procedures for gaining an accurate view of its performance so that the correct areas for development are prioritised. However, the plans for improvement are not focused tightly enough on raising pupils' achievement. Nevertheless, the school's track record since the previous inspection shows sufficient ability to take it forward.
- The school's promotion of equality of opportunity and tackling of discrimination is adequate. In some areas there has been good improvement, such as in the progress made by pupils at an early stage of learning to speak English.
- The local authority has provided good support to stabilise and improve leadership and management over the last year. This support is continuing.
- The curriculum provides a variety of interesting activities that are enhanced by extra-curricular activities and visits, such as to Eureka, the national children's museum in Halifax. There are not

enough opportunities for pupils to improve their writing skills by writing at length in different subjects. The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development satisfactorily.

- Parents are mainly positive about the school but indicate that communication about their children's progress could be improved. Inspection evidence supports this view.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The work of the interim executive board, which is professionally trained, has strengthened leadership and management. Members have a thorough understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are fully involved in driving improvement. The board effectively manages the budget and holds the school to account for the way the funding for pupils eligible for the pupil premium is used to raise their achievement. Members understand the comparative data of the school in relation to similar schools. They ensure safeguarding requirements are met so that staff and pupils are safe. The view of the quality of teaching is accurate. The board knows how the management of performance is used to improve staff expertise, reward good teaching and tackle any areas of underperformance.

## 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

|                                |            |
|--------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | 107560     |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Calderdale |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 405109     |

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

|  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary                               |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Voluntary aided                       |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 3–11                                  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                                 |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 114                                   |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The interim executive board           |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Alistair Ross                         |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Maria Cooper                          |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 11 April 2011                         |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01706 812948                          |
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