

St Stephen and All Martyrs' CofE School

Radcliffe Road, Bolton, Lancashire, BL2 1NZ

Inspection dates 20–21 February 2013

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.

- In the large majority of lessons teaching is good and some is outstanding. This is having a positive impact on the attainment and progress of pupils.
- Given their starting points, almost all pupils make good progress throughout the school, particularly in reading and writing.
- This is a school that meets the needs of all its pupils very well and where every pupil is equally valued. Pupils say they feel safe and very well cared for in school.
- Pupils are polite and well-mannered to each other and to adults. The behaviour of pupils and their attitudes to learning are good.
- The curriculum is well planned and has a positive impact on pupils' achievement and personal development. This prepares them well for the next stage of their education and also effectively supports their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The quality of leadership and management from senior leaders and the governing body is good. There is a clear focus on the continued improvement of teaching and raising pupils' achievement further.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A small minority of teaching requires improvement and not enough teaching is outstanding.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' work does not always help pupils to learn well. Teachers do not always ensure that pupils have opportunities to respond to their written comments.
- In a few lessons, teaching assistants are not used well enough to enable pupils to learn quickly enough.
- Not all pupils actively take part in opportunities to develop their speaking and listening activities.
- Teachers do not always ensure that all pupils learn quickly enough.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons taught by nine teachers. Three lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors looked closely at the school's work, including the school's analysis of how well it is doing and its improvement plan, the school's data on pupils' progress and pupils' work, documents relating to behaviour and safeguarding and minutes of meetings of the governing body.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, staff, two members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 35 responses from parents recorded in the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), together with the 67 responses to the parents' questionnaire carried out by the school in July 2012 and informal conversations with some parents.

Inspection team

Alan Parkinson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Peter Jones

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Stephen and All Martyrs' is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is above the national average. The pupil premium is the additional funding provided for children in local authority care, known to be eligible for free school meals and the children of forces' families.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language have increased over recent years and are slightly below the national averages.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion of those supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is slightly above average.
- The school has met the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school provides a before-school and after-school childcare club for some pupils from the school. It is managed by the school's governing body.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has achieved the Leading Parent Partnership Award and Healthy Schools status.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is at least consistently good and increase the proportion of outstanding lessons to raise further pupils' achievement, particularly in English and mathematics, by:
 - ensuring that the marking of pupils' work by teachers is consistently used to provide clear guidance on what pupils need to do to improve and that opportunities are always provided for pupils to respond to teachers written comments
 - ensuring that the knowledge and skills of the teaching assistants is always used to actively support all groups of pupils so that they learn more quickly
 - ensuring that all pupils take part in opportunities for speaking and listening in lessons
 - providing opportunities for pupils to learn independently, or with support, according to their needs and abilities.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and abilities that are below those expected for their age and well below in communication, language and literacy, and in numeracy. The good teaching in reception enables children to make good progress. By the end of reception, the vast majority of children have developed skills that are typically expected for their age across all areas of learning with a few children achieving above those typically expected.
- At Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress and in 2012, the unvalidated results show that attainment was above national averages in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Between Years 3 and 6, pupils continue to make good progress. In 2012, by the end of Year 6, pupils' progress in mathematics was below that in English. However, recent actions taken by the school to focus on developing pupils' mathematics skills is having a positive impact. As a result, pupils' attainment and rates of progress in mathematics have begun to improve.
- Pupils' average point scores at the end of Year 6 have risen steadily over the last three years in both English and mathematics. By the end of Year 6 in 2012, pupils' attainment in both English and mathematics are broadly average.
- There is a clear emphasis on reading development throughout the school. The whole-school reading programme is having a positive impact on developing pupils' reading skills and as a result, is successfully raising pupils' attainment in reading in all key stages.
- There are no significant variations between the achievement of different groups of pupils over time. Pupils at risk of falling behind in their learning are quickly identified and additional support is provided, such as one-to-one or small group work provided for pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and those who are eligible for pupil premium funding make similar, and sometimes better, progress than their peers.
- In 2012, the average point scores for pupils eligible for free school meals was above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, the gaps between those pupils and those not eligible for free school meals are closing.
- The few pupils who speak English as an additional language and those from minority ethnic backgrounds receive effective additional support. This has enabled them to develop their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make and improve their reading, writing and numeracy skills well.

The quality of teaching is good

- In the Early Years Foundation Stage there is a clear focus on improving basic communication and numeracy skills. As a result of good teaching, children make good progress. Teachers use the outside provision and structured play to support learning well. This provides children with exciting activities that stimulate them so they are attentive and enjoy learning.
- In the best lessons, learning takes place at a good rate and timed activities keep pupils focused on their work. This good teaching provides pupils with many opportunities to become actively involved in lessons. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge, lessons are well planned and activities and resources are used that match the needs of individual and groups of pupils well. Teachers question pupils effectively to challenge them and check their understanding.
- In a small minority of lessons, teachers do not always pick up quickly enough where learning is too slow and as a result, pupils do not always get enough chances to show they can get on with their work and learn on their own or get the support they need to achieve well.
- The whole-school reading programme is very effective and is accelerating the development of pupils' literacy skills across all stages. Pupils read a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books, which support learning across the curriculum. They make good use of their phonic skills (linking

letters to the sounds that they make) to help them read difficult words. Phonic sessions are well organised with tasks that match pupils' needs. This enables pupils to make at least good progress.

- In some lessons, some pupils do not always take part in speaking and listening activities. As a result, they do not develop their speaking and listening skills well enough and their learning slows.
- Teachers provide generally good feedback through their marking of pupils' work but it is not consistent across all subject areas. Teachers do not always provide clear information on what pupils need to do to improve. In addition, teachers' comments are not always followed up by pupils because they do not have sufficient opportunities to do their corrections or to complete work.
- In the majority of lessons, teaching assistants are used well and make a significant contribution to the learning of different groups of pupils, particularly for less-able pupils, disabled pupils or those with special educational needs and those identified by the school for additional support. In these lessons pupils' develop their skills and make progress that is consistent with all other pupils. However, in a few lessons, the use of teaching assistants is less effective because their role is more passive and so some pupils do not learn quickly enough.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Pupils say they enjoy their lessons and are taught and learn well. This view is supported by the vast majority of parents.
- Pupils are polite and well mannered. The relationships between pupils of all abilities and backgrounds and between pupils and adults are very good. Pupils report that bullying is rare and any instances are quickly resolved. They learn about and are fully aware of the different forms of bullying. For example, Year 4 pupils spent a day working with an actor on an anti-bullying play called 'No Laughing Matter'. The class then performed the play, very effectively, to the rest of the school and to several parents at the end of the day. This gave a very clear message about behaviour and anti-bullying that was very much appreciated by both pupils and adults.
- Pupils say they feel safe because they are well cared for by teachers and other adults. Pupils learn about keeping themselves safe. For example, 'Connect with Respect' tells them how to use the internet safely, and they learn how to keep themselves fit and healthy.
- Effective partnerships with parents and external agencies ensure that pupils who display any cause for concern are identified early and this ensures that appropriate support is provided. The school's support for pupils whose circumstances make them potentially more vulnerable is very effective. The pastoral system is a strength of the school and ensures that pupils are well cared for.
- The responses to Parent View and to the parental survey carried out by the school are very positive. The vast majority of parents agree that pupils behave well in school that their children are well-cared for, are not bullied and feel safe at school.
- The school's provision of before-school and after-school childcare club is good. These sessions, in a caring and secure setting, offer a range of activities enjoyed by the pupils.
- The school provides opportunities for pupils to develop as responsible individuals. For example, raising money for charities, such as Red Nose Day, Comic Relief and Children in Need. Some pupils take on positions of responsibility such as sports captains, house captains, members of the school council and as eco-cops. The school has taken part in a litter-pick in Bolton and the school choir has sung at local old people's homes.
- Attendance has recently improved and is now in line with the national average.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, senior leaders and the governing body know the school well. They have accurately identified the school's strengths and areas for further development. There is rightly a strong focus on raising standards further by improving the quality of teaching, which is its main priority.
 - Regular observations of lessons and systems to check and improve the quality of teaching and learning are effective and provide teachers with accurate feedback on their performance. This information is used well by the headteacher in order to provide a relevant programme of staff training, and to advise the governing body about teachers' pay awards.
 - The school's systems for checking pupils' progress are good. Pupils at risk of falling behind in their learning are quickly identified and additional support is provided. This shows the school's commitment to offering equal opportunity for all its pupils.
 - The curriculum is well planned so that it meets pupils' interests well. The school provides pupils with a variety of activities to enrich pupils' experiences, such as the Year 6 trip to Cadbury's World as part of pupils' topic work, and to Alton Towers as part of a their fairground topic. These activities also help them to extend their range of academic and social skills and contributes significantly to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
 - Safeguarding procedures and policies meet statutory requirements. The school has effective procedures in place to protect pupils, especially those pupils whose circumstances make them most vulnerable. This is strengthened by the effective partnership and support from the local authority.
 - The school has benefitted from the local authority's effective and valuable advice and support in improving its performance, particularly to improve teaching and learning.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body knows the school well because of the information they receive and from regular visits to the school. The governing body know the strengths of the school and has an accurate understanding of what needs to be done to improve the school further. The governing body monitor the quality of teaching and use performance management to set appropriate and challenging targets. They have a good understanding of the school's finances. This includes allocating the pupil premium funding to provide one-to-one support and to improve the reading and mathematical skills of pupils who are at risk of falling behind.
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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	105217
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	404974

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	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jenifer Ashworth
Headteacher	Michael Cummins
Date of previous school inspection	29 March 2011
Telephone number	01204 333155
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