

# St Begh's Catholic Junior School

Coach Road, Whitehaven, Cumbria, CA28 7TE

**Inspection dates** 26–27 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		Good	2
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

- Although, overall, pupils make expected progress by the time they leave school, too few are making better than expected progress, particularly in mathematics.
- While there are examples of good teaching, some lessons lack pace and do not stretch pupils enough to reach their full potential. The teaching assistants provide support for pupils, but there are inconsistencies in how well they are deployed throughout lessons.
- There are inconsistencies in the quality of teachers' marking, particularly in mathematics, and time is not regularly set aside in lessons for pupils to respond to teachers' comments.
- Some middle managers are new to post and are still developing their skills to raise standards in their areas of responsibility.
- The governing body is still building on its capacity to monitor the impact of new initiatives on improving teaching and learning.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has effectively taken measures to eradicate inadequate teaching and ensure that all staff have a shared vision to drive school improvement. The achievement of pupils is now closely and regularly monitored.
- The school provides a caring environment in which pupils can learn. Pupils particularly enjoy their topic work, which allows them to explore areas of interest to them.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They feel safe and well cared for, they like their teachers and feel that they help them to learn.
- The school promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed nine teachers and visited 14 lessons, two of which were observed with the headteacher. In addition, a number of short visits were made to lessons. Inspectors listened to pupils read.
- Discussions were held with school staff, groups of pupils, senior leaders, subject leaders, parents, a representative from the local authority and members of the governing body.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation including safeguarding documents, reports of the school's checks on how well it is doing, development plans, local authority reports, records of pupils' current attainment and progress, documents relating to pupils' attendance and behaviour and pupils' work.
- There were no responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) prior to the inspection. Sixteen responses were recorded during the inspection and these were taken into account by the inspectors.

## Inspection team

Naomi Taylor, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Sheila Mawer	Additional Inspector
Sheila Iwaskow	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- St Begh's is a larger than average size junior school.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding provided for children in local authority care, those from services families and those known to be eligible for free school meals) is much lower than that found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is lower than average but the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is higher than average.
- Since the previous inspection there has been turbulence in staffing but this has been resolved.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is at least good or better by:
  - providing greater pace and challenge in lessons which inspire pupils to learn more quickly
  - ensuring that teaching assistants are used effectively throughout lessons to support pupils with their learning
  - having a consistent approach to marking, particularly in mathematics, and regularly allowing time in lessons for pupils to respond to teachers' comments in order to correct and improve their work.
- Ensure that pupils are learning quickly enough in mathematics by checking that pupils clearly understand the task that they have been given and that they have the skills to solve problems on their own.
- Improve leadership and management by:
  - increasing the skills of middle leaders to drive up standards in their area of responsibility
  - build further the ability of all members of the governing body to measure the impact of new initiatives on improving the quality of teaching and learning.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Pupils settle well into St Begh's due to good links between teachers, families and the local primary school.
- The school's assessments and inspection evidence show that most pupils start school with skills in English and mathematics that are broadly typical for their age. Overall, Year 6 pupils make expected progress and leave school with skills in English and mathematics that are broadly in line with national standards. However, standards reached in mathematics are not as strong as English but improving.
- Since the previous inspection there have been inconsistencies in progress made in different year groups and in classes within year groups due to turbulence in staffing. Several new staff have joined the school and, together with improvements in the quality of teaching, this is now ensuring more consistency in the progress of pupils across the school. However, these improvements have not yet resulted in pupils making consistently good progress.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve as well as other pupils in school in mathematics, but reading and writing is weaker. There are now improved systems and procedures in place to ensure better support from teachers and teaching assistants.
- The attainment of pupils eligible for pupil-premium funding is slightly above similar pupils nationally in English and comparable in mathematics but below other pupils at school. In national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2012 in English and in mathematics, the attainment of those eligible for free school meals was one term behind that of all other pupils in the school. The pupil premium is being used to narrow further the gaps between groups of pupils and this demonstrates commitment to equality of opportunity.
- The development of reading skills is a priority and there are now sessions in the timetable for pupils to read to themselves and to have their reading skills checked. Pupils who read to inspectors were enthusiastic about reading and knew the importance of reading in order to make good progress in school generally. The weaker readers have a good grasp of how to link letters and sounds in order to work out unfamiliar words. There are regular slots on the timetable to accelerate the skills of the lower-ability readers. Attainment in reading is broadly average by the time pupils leave Year 6.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- While there is some good teaching, overall it needs to be improved. This is why pupils are not making better than expected progress by the time they leave school.
- Teaching that requires improvement is often found in lessons that run at a slow pace. For example, in one class, the introduction to different methods of subtraction to the whole class took about 20 minutes and some pupils became disinterested. When the pupils were moved onto group work, some did not fully understand the task and they did not complete enough work. It took too long for the teacher to become aware of this difficulty and remind pupils of what they should have been doing.
- In some mathematics lessons, pupils do not always have the ability to apply their skills to working out number problems and this slows progress. In a mathematics lesson, pupils were spending valuable time copying the problem into their books rather than finding the appropriate method to work out the answer.
- In a geography lesson where the teaching was good, pupils were stimulated by learning about an environment which contrasted to their own and they further developed their cultural awareness. They were given good opportunities to find out for themselves what life is like, living in a Tanzanian village in the shadow of Kilimanjaro. Expectations of the children were high and pupils worked together in teams, making good observations and the lesson was skilfully planned to

develop their literacy skills.

- Teaching assistants support small group and one-to-one work effectively because they question pupils well. This was seen during a phonics session when the pupils were clearly engaged and enjoying their work and, as a result, making good progress. Occasionally, there is not enough thought given by the teachers on how the teaching assistants can best be used throughout the whole of a lesson, particularly during the start and end of lessons.
- Teachers regularly mark pupils' work. However, teachers are not always precise enough about how pupils can improve and extend their work and this slows progress. Pupils do not always have time in lessons to correct and improve their work.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- St Begh's is a strong school community which is highly valued by pupils, their families, staff, the local community and visitors to the school. During the inspection pupils behaved well in lessons and around the school and showed respect for each other and the adults around them. Pupils and school records confirm that this is typical of behaviour in the school.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and they learn how to stay safe in their own community and other environments. Pupils were able to explain how to keep safe when using computers and the potential dangers of making friends through the internet. Through the curriculum they learn about different forms of bullying and are adamant that they can turn to any adult if they have any concerns. Staff, governors and almost all parents, are confident that the school provides a safe and secure place.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. This is due to the ethos in the school and the opportunities for personal development through the planned curriculum and extracurricular activities.
- During the inspection, pupils had the opportunity to work with professional musicians and engage in an African drumming workshop which they clearly enjoyed. There are links with schools overseas and visitors from Indonesia have shared aspects of their own cultures which have included engaging the pupils in dance, music and cooking.
- Generally, pupils have good attitudes to learning and find lessons interesting. However, when too much time is spent on whole-class introductions, some pupils become disinterested and lack concentration. Pupils particularly enjoy topic work in which they have opportunities to find out things for themselves. This was evident from the project on Canada and previous work on the Olympics. The older pupils had very clear views on where the games should have been hosted and why and this was presented well in an extended piece of persuasive writing.
- Attendance is average and the vast majority of pupils are punctual.

### **The leadership and management requires improvement**

- The headteacher has a very clear view of how successful the school can be. School leaders, including the governing body, are very committed and determined to drive forward improvements.
- The headteacher has worked tirelessly to eradicate inadequate teaching. Those responsible for the quality of teaching are ensuring improvements are being made through appropriate support, training and checking on the quality of teachers' work. However, teaching continues to require improvement as there is still not enough that is consistently good.
- Leaders and managers now regularly check the progress that individual pupils are making through the tracking system. There are procedures in place to check how well teaching is helping pupils to learn, and there are direct links made between the impact of the quality of teaching and teachers' pay. However, there is not yet enough rigour from some middle leaders

in seeing how well teachers use information on pupils' progress to plan activities to ensure all individuals are learning quickly enough.

- The local authority now has 'light touch' support at St Begh's. There is confidence in the staffing structures to embed new initiatives to drive improvement and accelerate pupils' progress.
- A more creative curriculum is now being used and this gives pupils the opportunity to learn through topics, which they enjoy.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- There have been many recent changes to the membership of the governing body. They are deeply committed to driving improvements at St Begh's. They ensure that the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities; all staff have been vetted and trained appropriately to keep pupils safe. They have an accurate overview of overall provision. However, governors are not yet challenging staff well enough on why progress is not yet better than expected and they have not fully checked the link to new initiatives and the quality of teaching. Governors play a central role in shaping the long-term plans for the school based on how well pupils are progressing compared to other schools. They have taken important spending decisions, including making new appointments. There is evidence of the governing body working closely with senior leaders to address weaker teaching. They have also agreed the use of pupil-premium funding to ensure that all pupils make at least similar progress.

## 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>	112354
<b>Local authority</b>	Cumbria
<b>Inspection number</b>	401258

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>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	270
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Stephen Scott
<b>Headteacher</b>	Louise Northern
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26 May 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01946 696959
<b>Fax number</b>	01946 691226
<b>Email address</b>	admin@st-beghs.cumbria.sch.uk



Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)  
[Store St](#)  
[Manchester](#)  
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2013

