

Our Lady of the Rosary Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary

Westway, Peterlee, County Durham, SR8 1DE

Inspection dates

6–7 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
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

- Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 do not make as rapid progress as they should.
- The school sets the same progress target for every pupil at the beginning of the school year and some pupils are capable of achieving better results and making more progress.
- Pupils with special educational needs who are supported at school action do not attain as well as they should.
- Boys' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is lower than average in English, especially for the more-able boys, and mathematics.
- The quality of teaching is inconsistent and requires improvement in Key Stages 1 and 2, especially in providing work which is not too easy and not too difficult for pupils.
- The quality of marking is inconsistent across the school and across subjects. Pupils are not regularly given time to act upon marking and make improvements to their work.
- School improvement planning systems are not yet rigorous and robust enough to bring about fast improvements to pupils' achievement.
- Performance management targets for teachers in respect of pupil progress are not always demanding enough and there are no performance management systems in place for the school's teaching assistants.

The school has the following strengths

- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Pupils behave well and are respectful, courteous, well-mannered and confident.
- Pupils learn to read quickly.
- There is an effective partnership with parents with many opportunities for parents to collaborate in the life of the school.
- Attendance has improved and is now above average.
- The school has a sound system for tracking the progress and attainment of pupils. Subject leaders use this information to plan interventions during termly pupil progress meetings. These are now helping to improve achievement and school performance.
- Challenge from governors and the increased impact of subject leaders have resulted in pupils making good progress in science and geography.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons or parts of lessons, of which two were joint observations with the headteacher.
- Inspectors heard pupils from Year 1 and Year 2 read and undertook a scrutiny of pupils' work.
- Discussions were held with a range of pupils, senior and subject leaders, three members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors met a number of parents and carers informally and took account of 32 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), the results of the school's parent questionnaires, staff questionnaires and any written comments sent in by parents.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's view of its own performance, improvement planning, records of the checks made on the quality of teaching, policies, current data about the achievement and progress of pupils in all year groups and records of attendance, behaviour and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Belita Scott, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sonya Williamson

Additional Inspector

Anne Humble

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Our Lady of the Rosary Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School is an above average-sized primary school.
- An above average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils in local authority care, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and the children of military service families.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is slightly higher than that seen nationally.
- In 2012, the school met the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Some pupils are taught in mixed-age groups in Years 1 to 6.
- There have been a number of changes of governors since the previous inspection and recently a new Chair of the Governing Body has been appointed.
- The school has achieved the Basic Skills Quality Mark, ICT Mark and Healthy School Status.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the standards that pupils attain and improve the progress that pupils make in English and mathematics by:
 - ensuring the quality of teaching is good or better throughout the school
 - raising the expectations of some teachers in relation to what all pupils, but particularly boys, can achieve in English and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2
 - ensuring work is at exactly the right level for different groups of pupils, especially those with special educational needs who are supported at school action, so that it is not too easy and not too hard
 - planning and teaching lessons in which pupils have sufficient time to develop and record their learning and progress
 - amending the curriculum for mixed-age classes so that all pupils are taught the same concept but then are given the opportunity to complete appropriate work which enables them to make good or better progress
 - making sure that the best possible use is made of teaching assistants
 - providing opportunities for teachers and teaching assistants to observe and learn from outstanding teaching.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - improving the rigour of teachers' performance management by including more demanding and measurable targets related to pupils' progress and by including the school's teaching assistants in the annual cycle of performance management
 - increasing the impact of observations of teaching on pupils' achievement, by making explicit: any specific areas for development required, the support to be provided by the school, arrangements for checking improvements and timescales for completion
 - ensuring that every pupil has individual and challenging targets to achieve in reading, writing and mathematics
 - improving school improvement planning to include, for each identified action: the timescales

for completion, measurable targets and the person/s who will check whether these targets have been achieved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' attainment in English and mathematics at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is broadly average but their progress across Key Stages 1 and 2 is not as rapid as it should be and requires improvement. Most pupils make the expected rate of progress but not enough make more rapid progress. This is because of inconsistencies in the quality of teaching.
- Boys are not reaching the higher levels in English at the end of Key Stage 2; in reading, writing and mathematics, their attainment is lower than boys nationally and girls in school. Teachers do not always have high enough expectations of what boys should achieve.
- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage; they enter with knowledge and skills below those expected for their age and leave with knowledge and skills that have reached expected levels.
- The school gives high priority to the development of early reading skills and this is having a positive impact on pupils' achievement. For example, Year 1 pupils performed particularly well in the most recent check on their knowledge of letters and the sounds that letters make (phonics).
- In mathematics, by the end of Key Stage 2, although attainment is broadly average at Level 4, the middle-ability pupils are not making the progress they could to attain the higher Level 5. This is because not all pupils are regularly given the opportunity to use their knowledge of numbers in solving problems and because not all of the work that is set is challenging enough.
- Pupils with special educational needs who are supported at school action are not reaching expected standards by the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics because teachers do not always plan work at the right level of difficulty and teaching assistants are not always deployed effectively.
- Pupils who receive additional support funded by the pupil premium make broadly average expected progress in English and just below average expected progress in mathematics. Last year, there was no gap between the attainment of these pupils and others in school in reading and only a small gap in writing and mathematics; a better picture than that found nationally. The school promotes equality of opportunity well through its targeted intervention activities.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it is inconsistent in Key Stage 1 and 2. There is some good or better teaching in all key stages. However, overall, teaching does not enable all pupils to make good progress over time.
- Teaching that requires improvement does not include work which is pitched at exactly the right level of difficulty for all of the pupils in the class to make good or better progress. In some lessons, all of the pupils complete exactly the same work; it is too hard for the less-able pupils and too easy for the more-able pupils.
- The use of teaching assistants is inconsistent across the school. Some are deployed extremely effectively by teachers, for example in the teaching of phonics in Year 1 and Year 2, but others spend too much time listening to teachers when they could be leading the learning of groups of pupils.
- Marking is inconsistent across the school and across subjects. Longer pieces of writing in special exercise books are marked well and pupils are given good advice about how to make their work better. However, this advice is not read by pupils before they complete other work in English, in different exercise books, so they do not make the improvements necessary to make good or better progress straight away.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, teachers and other adults extend learning by asking open-ended questions, giving clear instructions and by providing individual guidance and support.
- The acquisition of phonic knowledge and early reading skills is given high priority by the teachers and the teaching assistants in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Pupils like to

read and read a wide range of books in school.

- In lessons where teaching is good or better, teachers: have high expectations of what their pupils can achieve; use assessments effectively to plan challenging activities which enable pupils of all abilities to make good or better progress; give pupils a chance to read their marking and respond to it; extend pupils' learning through careful questioning, and use their own subject knowledge to capture pupils' interest and imagination.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour and safety of pupils are good; pupils are keen to learn and respond well to teaching which requires them to use and apply their knowledge and skills in problem solving and investigations.
- A very caring ethos permeates the school; there is a strong feeling of community and well-being.
- The school manages occasional incidences of challenging behaviour very well and ensures that the learning and progress of other pupils in the class are not disrupted.
- Occasionally, pupils lose concentration when lessons are less stimulating.
- The school works well with a wide range of partners to promote the safety and well-being of the pupils.
- Parents and carers who spoke to inspectors and most who responded to Parent View agree that pupils in all key stages behave well in school and are respectful, courteous, well-mannered and confident.
- Pupils are knowledgeable about what constitutes bullying (including cyber-bullying) and are adamant that there is no bullying in school and, if there were any, that the adults in school would sort it out immediately.
- Attendance is above average and is improving year-on-year.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because the rate of improvement since the previous inspection has not been fast enough, pupils' achievement in two key stages is still broadly average and the quality of teaching is still not consistently good or better. However, some progress has recently been made in securing improvement. For example, catch-up intervention programmes are now identified during termly pupil progress meetings; their impact is analysed by the coordinator for special educational needs and the interventions are then adjusted where necessary.
- Leadership responsibilities are now shared more widely in school and subject leaders for English and mathematics, whose performance is developing in line with training undertaken, for example the completion of the Mathematics for Specialist Teachers qualification, have a very firm understanding of pupils' attainment and progress data in their subjects.
- The school is specifically addressing boys' under-attainment in English at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, for example a range of reading books which appeal to boys have been uploaded onto electronic reading devices for their use.
- The performance management cycle is well established for teachers; all teachers having met all targets over the last three years. However, performance management systems are not sufficiently robust because targets for teachers to achieve relating to the amount of progress pupils make are not always demanding enough or measurable. In addition, the performance of teaching assistants is not considered in the annual cycle.
- Lesson observations are carried out by senior leaders every term and an area for development is identified. However, they do not identify the support to be provided, the timescales for completion and the dates for follow-up observations so that progress can be measured and good achievement praised.

- Currently, every child is targeted to make progress of two National Curriculum sub levels every academic year in reading, writing and mathematics. However, some pupils are capable of exceeding the school's expectations and beginning of the school year target-setting procedures do not reflect the ambitious targets needed to challenge all pupils to achieve to the very best of their abilities.
 - School improvement planning is not robust enough. Although areas for improvement are identified, targets are not always demanding and measurable, timescales for completion are not always identified and who will monitor and report on the impact is not stated.
 - Pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is good and is promoted through the curriculum which benefits from a wide range of visits and visitors. Pupils described in detail sailing down the River Tyne as part of their work in geography and, during the inspection, were delighted to take part in a field trip which included walking through a stream and measuring, then comparing, its velocity in three different places.
 - The headteacher has worked tirelessly since the last inspection to build really strong partnerships with parents and carers; this has resulted in improved attendance and punctuality.
 - There are a wide variety of well attended extra-curricular clubs. Pupils are especially proud of their football team who have reached the final stages of a national competition.
 - The local authority has provided effective support to the school in developing the role of subject leaders, in carrying out scrutinies of work with the school and in developing science throughout the school.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is very knowledgeable about standards and progress in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, following full attendance by governors at recent training in data analysis provided by the local authority. Governors subsequently identified the need to improve the standards and progress of pupils with special educational needs who are supported at school action in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, and the more-able boys in English at the end of Key Stage 2. Governors are fully aware of the difference that the pupil premium monies are making to pupils' outcomes, know exactly how pupil premium monies are spent and are involved in planning for the increased pupil premium allocation in the next academic year. The role of governors linked to curriculum areas is well established; for example, the governor linked to English makes termly visits to school to meet with the subject leaders, is informed about current assessment data and fulfils the role of critical friend. A governors' sub-committee discusses the quality of teaching in the school on a termly basis. Safeguarding requirements are met.
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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	114282
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	401420

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	326
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Shaun Gooch
Headteacher	Christine Robson
Date of previous school inspection	13 July 2010
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