

# St Dominic's Catholic Primary School

St Mary's Hill, Inchbrook, Stroud, GL5 5HP

**Inspection dates** 13–14 March 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	<b>Not previously inspected</b>	
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- The school strives successfully to include all pupils and their families. It provides all groups of pupils with a good start to their education; they make good progress and achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching is good and some is outstanding. Pupils are eager to learn because they find lessons interesting.
- Pupils are well supported by other adults in the classroom.
- Behaviour and safety are outstanding. Pupils are exceptionally well behaved and have exemplary attitudes to learning. Pupils work very well with each other in lessons. They are very proud of the school and behaviour around the site is calm and well ordered. Pupils say they feel very safe in school.
- The headteacher expects the very best from pupils and staff. She has worked tirelessly to maintain high standards and improve teaching.
- Leaders and managers know how well the school is performing and what needs to be done to improve. They check the quality of teaching and the progress of individual pupils thoroughly.
- Attendance is above average.
- Governors have close links with the school and know the school well. Governors with particular areas of expertise successfully support and challenge staff through probing questions about their work.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough teaching that is outstanding to enable pupils to make more rapid progress and to reach the higher levels at the end of Year 6.
- Work is not always planned at precisely the right level for all pupils. It is sometimes too easy or too hard.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed nine lessons or part-lessons and listened to groups of pupils read.
- One lesson observation was carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector scrutinised the 27 responses to the on-line Parent View survey and parents' comments made to the inspector during the inspection.
- Meetings took place with staff, pupils and governors, and a telephone discussion was held with a consultant commissioned by the school.
- The inspector observed the school's work and scrutinised records of pupils' progress, the school's checks on teaching and learning and their development plan, governing body minutes, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding documents.

## Inspection team

Carol Warrant, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- St Dominic's is a smaller than average sized primary school.
- There are four classes, a mixed Reception and Year 1 class and mixed Year 1 and Year 2, Year 3 and Year 4, and Year 5 and Year 6 classes.
- The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (extra funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those looked after by the local authority and those children from service families) is below average and no such pupils were in Year 6 in the school year 2011 to 2012. In other years there are no pupils who are looked after by the local authority or who are from service families.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average.
- A very small number of pupils are new to learning English.
- The percentage of pupils 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 also below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school converted to become an academy in February 2012. When its predecessor school, of the same name, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be good.
- There is a breakfast club and an after-school club on the school site; these are not managed by the governing body and are inspected separately.

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

- Improve teaching so a greater proportion is outstanding and pupils make more rapid progress by:
  - planning work at precisely the right level for pupils of different abilities so it is not too hard or too easy
  - using the outstanding teaching in the school to inspire and develop teachers where teaching is less strong.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Achievement throughout the school is good. Children enter the school with skills, knowledge and understanding broadly in line with those expected for their age. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, they make good progress in all areas of learning.
- Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2, so that by the end of Key Stage 1, their attainment is above average in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2012, a higher proportion of Year 1 pupils achieved well in the phonics (the sounds that letters make) check than in other schools nationally.
- Pupils make good progress in their early reading because the teaching of letters and sounds (phonics) is effective. Older pupils have a wide range of books in school and enjoy reading. The best readers are fluent and read with expression. They are developing opinions about favourite types of books and authors. Less confident readers are well supported in small group and individual sessions for phonics.
- By the end of Year 6, pupils have achieved well and a significant number exceed the usual levels of progress in mathematics and English. Work in pupils' books and the school's own checks supported by inspection findings confirm that this level of progress is continuing.
- All groups of pupils make good progress over time, including disabled pupils, those with special educational needs, pupils from minority ethnic groups and the small number of pupils who are new to learning English.
- Pupil premium funding is used well to provide extra teaching and support. This has boosted performance so that, based on average point scores in English and mathematics, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals achieve as well as their peers and make the same good progress as others in the school.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching makes a consistently good impact on pupils' learning and teachers manage the mixed-age groups well. Strengths of teaching are the clear routines in lessons and the positive relationships between teachers and pupils. Teachers have good subject knowledge and they explain clearly to pupils what lessons are about, linking learning with what pupils have learnt previously. Teaching is consistently good in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- In the best teaching, for example in a Years 5 and Year 6 English lesson where pupils were writing poetry, expectations were carefully matched to different ability levels and pupils worked extremely productively in pairs and groups. The teacher skilfully checked on learning in the lesson, adapting tasks and carefully questioned pupils to ensure they made rapid progress.
- Where teaching is less strong, teachers do not always plan well enough to provide challenge at the correct level for pupils of all abilities. As a result, some pupils are given tasks that are too easy or too hard and teachers do not always adjust their teaching during the course of a lesson to ensure they meet the needs of pupils as these emerge. Consequently, some pupils do not always make the fastest progress they could.
- The teaching of letters and sounds is very effective. Pupils are engaged by the methods used and the content of lessons are well planned and delivered confidently. As a result of this, pupils participate actively and make good progress in learning to read accurately.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly with positive comments to help pupils improve their work. Pupils say they know their targets, and appreciate the pointers for improvement and suggested next steps given by their teachers. In most classes, pupils are given opportunities to respond to teachers' marking.

- The work of other adults who help pupils learn in the classroom is effective. This is because they work as part of a team with teachers and they are closely involved in checking how well pupils have learned. Small group and individual interventions carried out by these adults have helped pupils who may be in danger of falling behind to get back on track.

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

- The school has a very positive ethos in which doing well is celebrated by adults and pupils alike and, as a result, pupils' behaviour in the school is outstanding. The vast majority of parents and pupils agree. Pupils say they feel very safe in the school and know how to keep safe from a range of dangers, for example when using the internet.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress in their personal and social development. Pupils say they enjoy coming to school and they clearly get on very well with each other. They feel pupils are helpful and considerate of each other's needs and they feel very well cared for by teachers and the other adults in school.
- Pupils also say that bullying of any sort is a rare event in the school. They are confident that teachers deal quickly and well with any incidences that may occur, and they know who to go to for help if they have a problem. School records and logs of incidents confirm this.
- Attendance is above average and pupils are punctual in arriving at school.
- Pupils participate fully in lessons. They readily volunteer to answer questions, take on challenging tasks and work extremely well individually and in pairs and groups. Their attitudes to learning are exemplary.
- Pupils enjoy taking on responsibility and they make a very good contribution to the school and wider community. Examples of this include their work in support of the school council, as peer mediators in the playground, serving at the annual harvest lunch for the local community and the school's many links with the church.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- The capable and uncompromising leadership by the headteacher has led to the consistently good teaching and achievement evident in the school. She has built a strong team which, along with members of the governing body, shares an ambition to secure further improvements.
- The school knows its strengths well and has accurately identified the areas for further improvement.
- Pupils' progress is checked carefully. Any underachievement is identified quickly and actions are taken to provide additional support. The school's leadership promotes and checks that all pupils have equal opportunities for success and discrimination in any form is not tolerated.
- The school has put plans in place and carried out a number of well-considered actions aimed at improving pupils' attainment. For example, additional income received by the school to support those pupils eligible for the pupil premium is used very effectively to accelerate their rates of progress.
- Performance management procedures are very thorough. These are based on the priorities identified for the school as well as specific areas for members of staff. The school uses a range of evidence including lesson observations, checks on teachers' planning and pupils' books, pupil progress records and pupils' views to ensure it has a comprehensive view of teaching in the school. Teachers are only paid more if they meet their targets, regularly teach well and their pupils make at least good progress.

- The curriculum is broad and balanced and exciting topic work supports the development of pupils' basic skills. There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities. During the inspection, Year 6 pupils took part in a mock trial against another school. They had to play the parts of witnesses and court officials based on a given scenario and were extremely excited by the experience. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported well in lessons and assemblies. For example, all pupils have weekly specialist French lessons and even children in the Reception class confidently answer simple questions and sing in French.
  - All parents who shared their views say they would recommend the school to others and parental support for the school is strong.
  - The staff at the school work well together as a team. Teachers have worked closely and effectively with schools in the local small schools' and Catholic schools' clusters. Close links have also been established with the local Catholic Secondary Academy and this has worked well in developing the quality of teaching.
  - The school has recently engaged the services of an outside consultant to provide further scrutiny of the effectiveness of its work. Leadership and management are not judged as outstanding because teaching is not yet outstanding.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - Governors provide good support and challenge for the work of the school. They know the school well. They understand how well the school is doing compared with other schools and understand the data that show how well pupils are making progress. They make checks on the school's information about the quality of the teaching in the school and of how this relates to performance management and links to salary progression, including that of the headteacher. They are aware of the use made of pupil premium funding and check the impact of this spending on pupils' progress. They ensure all statutory requirements are met, including for safeguarding children. Governors have a secure grasp of the school's finances.
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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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	137373
<b>Local authority</b>	Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	403698

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Academy converter
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary Aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	103
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Michael Walker
<b>Headteacher</b>	Margaret Smith
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	01453 832682
<b>Fax number</b>	01453 833422
<b>Email address</b>	admin@st-dominics.gloucs.sch.uk



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