

St Charles' Roman Catholic Primary School

Emlyn Street, Moorside Road, Swinton, Manchester, M27 9PD

Inspection dates 10–11 April 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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 yet good because

- Although pupil's progress and standards in English and mathematics are now improving rapidly, not enough pupils have been making good progress.
- Teaching is not consistently good across the school and this limits the progress of some pupils. Not all adults ask questions that encourage pupils to think hard.
- Teachers mark pupils work frequently but their comments do not always tell pupils how to improve their work and pupils' individual targets are not used consistently to help them know what they have to learn next.
- Pupils have many opportunities to use their reading and writing skills in a range of subjects. However teachers do not include enough opportunities across the range of subjects for pupils to apply their mathematical skills to solve real-life problems and in turn speed up their progress.
- Although the headteacher and deputy headteacher are providing strong leadership to improve the school, not all leadership or management responsibilities are fully developed.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders' swift actions can be seen in pupils' recent assessments. These indicate improved progress across the school and higher attainment at the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics national tests.
- Children are given a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, particularly the Nursery. They learn how to behave well and develop relationships with each other as well as adults; this continues through school.
- The curriculum is well planned through topics and themes that give pupils positive experiences and support their learning.
- Since joining the school the headteacher has already begun to improve teaching and accelerate pupils' progress. She is well supported by members of the governing body who know the school well.
- Pupils' behaviour is good; they have good attitudes to learning and to each other. Parents confirm that their children feel safe here.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed eight teachers and visited 14 lessons which included a joint lesson observation with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, members of the leadership team, English and mathematics subject leaders, the special educational needs coordinators, pupils, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors observed pupils' work and listened to pupils read.
- A range of the school's documentation was examined, including the school's analysis of how well it is doing, documents relating to monitoring and evaluation, systems for tracking pupils' progress, documents regarding safeguarding and key policies.
- The inspectors took account of responses to the school's most recent questionnaire for parents and 89 responses from the on-line questionnaire (Parent View). Twenty nine questionnaires completed by staff were also analysed.

Inspection team

Sue Sharkey, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Frances Farnorth

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Charles' Roman Catholic Primary School is an average-sized primary school.
- Most children are of White British heritage. A few children are from minority ethnic backgrounds and speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below the national average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. (The pupil premium is additional government funding provided for children in local authority care, for children from armed service families, and for children known to be eligible for free school meals.)
- There have been a number of changes of headteacher and teachers since 2011. The current headteacher and three teachers took up post in September 2012.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- There are breakfast and after-school clubs which are not managed by the governing body. These are subject to separate inspections and reports of their quality are available on the Ofsted website.
- The school has the Healthy School and Investors in People awards.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching in order to improve pupils' progress and raise standards by:
 - developing a more consistent approach to pupils' individual targets and further develop the marking of pupils' work so that pupils know what they have to learn next to improve their work
 - ensuring that all teachers and teaching assistants always expect the very best from pupils
 - making sure that work planned for each pupil always matches what they need to learn and extends their thinking particularly the more able pupils
 - ensuring that adults always ask pupils questions during lessons that challenge them to think harder.
- Raise attainment in mathematics by:
 - providing pupils with many more opportunities to use the skills they learn in mathematics lessons in other subjects through practical problem-solving activities
 - raising the profile of mathematics throughout the school in order to show how pupils learn mathematics and its importance in their daily lives.
- Strengthen leadership and management by developing the roles of subject leaders even further, particularly for mathematics and the Early Years Foundation Stage, so that there are a greater number of leaders and managers checking performance.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- When children start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage their skills and abilities are below what is expected for their age. Relationships between staff and children are good and staff encourage children skilfully to play cooperatively, manage their own behaviour and follow routines. Children enjoy chatting together as they share a book, build a model or plant seeds.
- Good progress is made by children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, particularly in the Nursery but this does not continue through Key Stages 1 and 2. Most pupils make the progress that is expected of them but not enough are making good progress which is why standards are broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 and progress requires improvement. The trend is changing and progress across the school is beginning to improve rapidly in response to stronger leadership and better teaching.
- Groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs as well as pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language make similar progress to other groups of pupils.
- Pupils eligible for pupil premium funding also make progress that requires improvement. The standards reached by pupils eligible for free-school meals are broadly average. Regular support from well-trained teaching assistants is now established for pupils who need additional help. Already these pupils are making accelerated progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils say they enjoy reading both at school and at home and are delighted that their teachers also like reading. At the end of Key Stage 1 in 2012 teacher assessment showed that pupils were achieving significantly above average in reading as well as writing but this was not the same in other year groups. As result of training at the beginning of the school year, the teaching of letters and sounds is now a regular feature across the school and pupils are developing a good grasp of how to tackle new words so that they are confident readers. Pupils' writing has also improved. Pupils use a wider vocabulary and their spelling has improved.
- For example in a mixed Year 1 and Year 2 group with a teaching assistant, pupils were involved in different reading activities as the lesson moved along swiftly. Pupils in different groups were reading words and checking spellings in their writing as the teaching assistant challenged pupils to think even harder. Accurate letter sounds were used as the pupils joined letters to make new words.
- Writing has been a focus of improvement throughout the school. Pupils talk about their favourite authors and types of books. As they progress through school pupils use punctuation well to help them express different words and bring the story to life. Pupils' books in English and other subjects show how they take great pride in their work; writing is neat and work is well presented.
- Elements of mathematics are not included in other subjects as often as are elements of English. As a result pupils do not get opportunities to use their mathematical skills regularly to solve practical problems, for example helping them understand the use of mathematics in their daily lives.
- Boys have not been as excited about reading or writing as girls but recent improvements have fired their enthusiasm. Books have been chosen specifically for boys and when reviewing the curriculum teachers have chosen topics with a wide range of practical activities and pupils have written and performed in the style of 'rap' music. Boys are enjoying this approach which is having a good effect on their progress.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- School leaders have concentrated on improving the consistency and quality of teaching. While significant staff changes over the last 2 years have been disruptive, staffing is now more secure. During the inspection good and outstanding teaching was observed but this is not seen

throughout the school which is why teaching still requires improvement.

- Strengths in teaching include the good relationships pupils have not only with staff but also with each other. Lessons move along quickly so that pupils are working all the time and are not distracted. In lessons where teaching is at least good, adults expect pupils to work hard and their questions help pupils to expand their thinking. Activities are exciting and make pupils concentrate throughout the lesson.
- In a Year 6 lesson pupils were analysing how Shakespeare explores a wide range of emotions. The teacher made very good use of information and communication technology (ICT) to show how anger and love can be seen through actions as well as words. Pupils worked well in pairs discussing what they saw while the teacher encouraged them to find new words to describe the power of emotions. Pupils worked quickly and were engrossed throughout.
- Classrooms are bright and pupils' learning is supported through helpful displays and practical resources. There are examples of pupils' work particularly in writing and art but the work that pupils have done in mathematics is not as obvious throughout the school.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly giving good praise. However comments and the use of individual targets to help pupils know what they have to learn next in English and mathematics are not developed enough or used consistently.
- Teachers check pupils' progress regularly but this information is not used precisely enough to plan activities that challenge pupils to think even harder particularly pupils achieving the higher levels.
- School leaders make sure that teaching assistants are used well to support pupils individually or in small groups. Their activities are a regular feature during lessons to make sure that pupils who need additional help are well supported.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour whether pupils are in lessons, walking around school or playing outside, is good and parents agree. Any incidents of poor behaviour are dealt with quickly and firmly by staff.
- Pupils are polite and courteous to visitors and to the adults who work in school. There is a positive atmosphere in classrooms where pupils settle quickly and quietly to their tasks.
- Pupils are enthusiastic, they want to learn and they enjoy school which is why their attendance is above average. The vast majority of parents who responded to Parent View say their children are happy in school.
- Parents say pupils feel safe in school. When talking to pupils they say that bullying is rare. There is name calling occasionally but pupils say that adults in school respond to this swiftly. Through their work in school pupils are fully aware of different kinds of bullying such as cyber-bullying.
- Pupils are extremely sociable and are proud to talk about their school. They are keen to take on daily responsibilities and Year 6 pupils say it is important to be friendly and look after each other. They value the 'Buddy Benches' in the playground as this provides opportunities to sit with friends and talk.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The headteacher provides firm direction and is clear about the strengths and areas for development in the school. She is well supported by the deputy headteacher and senior leaders and is beginning to improve the school well.
- The headteacher, leaders and governors make sure that this is a school where everyone is made to feel welcome and equal opportunity is at the heart of its work. There is a real determination to succeed in making a difference to the lives of its pupils.
- School leaders are committed to improving the quality of teaching. New approaches for regularly observing lessons, checking the quality of work in pupils' books as well as teachers' planning have been introduced this year. These actions are proving to be successful and have

already contributed to improved teaching. Not all leaders though are fully involved in checking the performance of the school so monitoring often falls to the same leaders.

- Rigorous checking of the quality of teaching by leaders ensures that teaching is improving across all subjects. Performance management for teachers is robust and the school is careful to reward teachers who meet their targets. Regular training for teachers and teaching assistants is now linked closely to the school development plan. For example training on the teaching of letters and sounds to improve reading across the school.
- The local authority knows the school's circumstances well and has worked closely with governors to ensure that turbulence in leadership over the last 2 years has been stabilised. The good partnership continues with the local authority providing support for staff appointments.
- Partnerships with parents are good and most speak well about the work of the school. A very large majority of parents who completed Parent View recommend the school to others.
- The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through the curriculum. The topics that pupils learn about are enriched through a wide range of opportunities to take part in creative and sporting activities as well as residential trips. During the inspection, Year 5 pupils were excited as they left for their two day visit to take part in adventurous outdoor activities. These activities help to raise pupils' awareness of different peoples' needs and life experiences, ensuring that they are well equipped for their future life.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body works closely with the headteacher to make sure that, following leadership and staffing changes, the school moves forward. It knows the school well through its various committees, visits to school, and regular checks on the school work. Governors ensure that safeguarding meets requirements. The school budget is managed effectively. Governors are involved in appointing staff and using performance management to inform the progress of teachers' salary. They check how pupil premium funding is spent to support pupils' learning.

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	105955
Local authority	Salford
Inspection number	413095

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	240
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Leon Dawd
Headteacher	Clare Campbell
Date of previous school inspection	19 May 2009
Telephone number	0161 794 4536
Fax number	Not applicable
Email address	stcharles.rcprimaryschool@salford.gov.uk

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