

# Rothwell St Mary's RC Primary School

Royds Lane, Rothwell, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS26 0BJ

**Inspection dates** 16–17 April 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school

- As the result of outstanding leadership and management, including that of the governing body, the high-quality provision has been maintained, and the already high attainment reported at the previous inspection built upon.
- Pupils' achievement is outstanding. Pupils of all ages and capabilities make remarkable progress in all subjects.
- The excellent provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage gives children a very good grounding in all areas of learning.
- Pupils' performance in music is exceptional. Their singing is of a very high standard and a joy to behold.
- Teaching is outstanding. Staff have embraced the high-quality training provided and used the ideas gained from training such as 'outstanding teaching' to improve their skills even further.
- Adults are very successful in ensuring all pupils are fully included in all activities and able to learn regardless of disability, special educational need, or background.
- Pupils' attitude to learning and their behaviour are outstanding. They have a thirst for knowledge which they are keen to share with their friends and adults. Their attendance is well-above average.
- Pupils' spiritual moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils talk knowledgeably and sensitively about the similarities and differences with pupils from an inner-city school, and with their e-pals in Nigeria.
- Considerable support is available to families. Parents report exemplary links with medical and other professionals, and with Catholic counsellors. This contributes significantly to the well-being of pupils and their families.
- Forward-thinking, passionate leadership is at the heart of this thriving school. Staff, pupils and their families share their leaders' aspirations to 'aim for the stars' and to 'be the best'. Leaders know precisely what they need to do to improve further. That is why they are now working on pupils' literacy and numeracy in other subjects.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 16 lessons or parts of lessons taught by seven different teachers. Two were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- The inspectors heard pupils read and looked at the work in their books.
- Discussions were held with pupils, representatives of the governing body, staff, including senior and middle managers, and representatives of the local authority.
- The inspectors took into account the parents' responses to the school's own survey and 40 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).
- From discussions and responses to their questionnaires, the inspectors took account of the views of staff.
- The inspectors looked at a range of evidence including the school's own data on pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents concerning safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Katharine Halifax, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Rosemary Batty

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This average-sized Voluntary Aided primary school serves the Parish of St Mary's in the Diocese of Leeds.
- The proportion of pupils identified as disabled or with special educational needs is below average, as is the proportion of pupils at school action.
- The proportion of pupils at school action plus (this means they need additional help with their learning) is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have a statement to meet their special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. The funding is intended for pupils eligible for free school meals, in the care of the local authority, or from families in the armed forces.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage, and all speak English.
- By the end of Year 6, the school meets the current floor standards set by the government for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school admits children from up to 15 different settings into the Reception class.
- The headteacher has been in post for a year and the deputy headteacher for two terms.

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

- Provide more opportunities for pupils, particularly the older and most-able, to use their higher-level literacy and numeracy skills in geography, history, religious education and science.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills typical for their age. By the end of their year in the Reception class they exceed the levels expected of their age. Pupils' progress from their individual starting points through the classes is consistent and exceeds that of pupils in most schools so by the end of Year 6 their attainment is well above the national average.
- School data and inspection evidence in both English and mathematics shows that all pupils in the current Year 6 are on track to attain the expected Level 4, with almost a half in line to attain the higher Level 5 or above. A greater proportion of pupils than would be expected are working for the exceptionally high Level 6 in both English and mathematics.
- There are now no significant differences in the achievement of pupils by gender, ethnic group, or by special educational needs. This is because adults go to great lengths to ensure all pupils have equal opportunities to take part in all elements of the curriculum and that all are valued. The pupil premium funding has been used wisely, for example for additional support staff, and in resources to boost pupils' progress in English and mathematics. As a result, the achievement of these pupils, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, is similar to that of their classmates because they make excellent progress in numeracy, literacy, communication, and in their personal development.
- The focus on daily phonics sessions coupled with daily reading lessons has seen continued high attainment in reading, as well as engendering a love of books. By Year 2, pupils have acquired a range of strategies to help them make sense of new words. They read simple texts with increasing fluency. Pupils' skills are furthered at Key Stage 2; they read with deeper understanding using their knowledge well to research topics such as the Ancient Greeks.
- Pupils develop their literacy, numeracy, computer, and communication skills well in other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 6 have compiled high quality, attractive, informative booklets about 'rocks'. The research they have undertaken is first-rate and detailed in its description of, for example, igneous rocks.
- When writing in history, geography and religious education, pupils handwriting is neat and well presented. Furthermore, it is precisely punctuated and grammatically correct. However, it is not of the same standard as in their creative writing books because, for example, pupils do not use their knowledge of higher-level skills such as the use of similes and metaphors, where appropriate, to make their writing come alive.
- Similarly, while pupils are accurate in their measurements and recording of their scientific results, these are mostly as simple tables rather than more sophisticated graphs and pie-charts. This is the same in geography and history.

### The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Pupils learn at a fast pace because teaching is first-rate. Planning for each lesson is precise and accurately matched to the varying abilities within each class group. Pupils are clear from the outset as to what they will learn in each lesson, and are surprisingly honest when recounting at the end of the session their understanding, or the knowledge and skills they have acquired.
- Teachers are skilled at pitching their lessons at a level which will make pupils think and reason while being of interest to them. For example, pupils in Year 4 could not wait to get started on an activity to buy party food. By the end of the lesson, they had completed three-stage mathematical problems drawing on their knowledge of multiplication, prior up to adding up the bill, and then subtracting the total from their budget.
- Teachers plan and provide for pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy in other subjects, but these are not always sufficiently challenging, especially for the most able and for older pupils.
- Teachers' understanding and use of assessment is more accurate than at the previous

inspection. Furthermore, it is used more effectively to keep a check on pupils' progress and to plan the next stage of their learning. Equally, the marking of pupils' work is much improved and contributing to pupils' excellent progress.

- Very good use is made of support assistants to ensure all pupils are included in all lessons. Pupils with disabilities and special educational needs are valued and stretched as much as their classmates. Activities are planned to enable such pupils to take the lead, for example teaching the whole class to use sign language and to perform 'Away in A Manger' at the carol service.

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

- Though children entering the Reception class come from numerous pre-school placements, they settle quickly, make friends, and become familiar with classroom routines. Children are confident, articulate and eager to participate in the myriad of activities available to them.
- Pupils of all ages thoroughly enjoy school. This is evident in their well-above average attendance. They take a lively interest in their work and are keen to get involved in all the school has to offer. They carry out their responsibilities conscientiously, as when Year 6 pupils team up as 'buddies' to children in the Reception class. Pupils are proud of their work and proud to represent the school. They speak with enthusiasm as they recount their contribution to a national 'young voice' choir festival.
- Pupils rise to the school philosophy of 'I can' and show remarkable self-confidence. They say they love to be challenged in their work and given 'tricky problems to solve'. Thoughts for the week such as 'I keep going when things are difficult and I do not give up hope' result in excellent discussions with pupils displaying considered opinions and thoughts beyond their years.
- Behaviour in and around school is of a high standard despite all the excitement of the trips out, and visitors in school during science week. Pupils who join the school with behavioural needs made great strides in improving their behaviour because of the well-thought out 'contracts' and the consistent application of the behaviour policy by all adults.
- Pupils care for each other, and keep a special eye out for the most vulnerable. They understand the different forms of bullying but say incidents are very rare and when they do occur they are nipped in the bud. Indeed, they found it difficult to recall any such instances. Pupils respond exceptionally well to the provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Through clubs, visits, residential sessions, and work in personal, social and health education, they are very well prepared for life.
- Pupils take safety very seriously and are keen to share their knowledge. They explain in detail what to do if any concern arises using the internet or mobile telephones. Their knowledge of road and water safety is equally good.
- An analysis of the school's own parental survey, the results obtained from the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and discussions with parents show that all agree their child is happy and safe in the school.

### **The leadership and management are outstanding**

- The internal appointment of the deputy headteacher to the post of headteacher has been successful in ensuring continuity, while the external appointment of a new deputy headteacher has brought a fresh pair of eyes and new ideas to strengthen the already outstanding provision, including the quality of teaching and learning. Leaders are innovative and relentless in their drive for excellence.
- No stone is left unturned in the monitoring of classroom practice or in the tracking of pupils' progress. Robust systems are in place to assess and record pupils' progress and attainment each half term. As a consequence, any slacking or misunderstandings are identified and remedied quickly. This means no individual or group of pupils are left behind.
- Senior leaders and governors are forthright in holding teachers to account for pupils' progress.

Meetings are held each half term to check how well they are meeting the needs of individual pupils. Scrupulous checks are made on the performance of teachers and support assistants and the information used effectively when deciding whether teachers should receive a pay rise.

- Leaders are not complacent, though the results in national tests are high; subjects are regularly reviewed and fine-tuned to ensure they reflect the latest educational guidance and most importantly the needs of the pupils. Middle managers are now part of this process and as such are honing their leadership skills.
- Adults go to great lengths to ensure all pupils have equal opportunities to take part in all elements of the curriculum and that all are valued. The curriculum is exciting and provides memorable experiences for pupils. In addition, it contributes extremely well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, pupils were positively animated as spoke about the wonder of their experiences in the 'star dome', their encounters with snakes and insects, and visits to museums as part of their science week experiences.
- Parents commend the school highly and all agree that it is well led and managed.
- Safeguarding meets statutory requirements and all staff are well trained in child protection.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governance of the school is strong. Members of the governing body have a very clear understanding of the school's goals and of the Catholic vision. They work very effectively with the school's leaders to ensure that this is being implemented successfully. Members of the governing body have made some excellent leadership appointments. They use their collective knowledge and experience exceedingly well. This is particularly so when discussing pupils' attainment and progress. They check the pupil premium is targeted wisely to ensure that no discrimination exists and to break down barriers to learning. Members of the governing body report they are able to have frank and open discussions with the leadership of the school.

## 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>	108018
<b>Local authority</b>	Leeds
<b>Inspection number</b>	413238

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	209
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Clare Skinner
<b>Headteacher</b>	Siobhan Leonard
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 June 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	0113 214 6313
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