

St George's Catholic Primary School

Dennett Close, Maghull, Liverpool, Merseyside, L31 5PD

Inspection dates

30 April–1 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils achieve well and make good progress across the school, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- Teaching is good. Teachers have high expectations and good subject knowledge. The teaching of writing has improved since the last inspection and this has raised achievement.
- Better systems to monitor pupils' progress have been introduced, and these have helped to improve teaching and raise achievement.
- Pupils receive appropriate support and intervention when they need it.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils get on well with their teachers and each other. They are eager to learn and feel safe in school.
- The curriculum is well-organised to provide pupils with a range of learning opportunities and contributes to their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- School leaders and governors have a clear view of how well the school is doing and have secured improvements to teaching and achievement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always provide pupils with enough opportunity to think learn and work by themselves.
- Teachers do not always ensure that work is matched closely enough to pupils' needs, particularly for more-able pupils, so that they can reach the highest levels.
- Pupils are not always given clear enough guidance about what they need to do to improve their work, and teachers do not always check that this advice is followed.
- Pupils have too few opportunities to use and apply their mathematical knowledge and skills in real-life situations.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage there is not always a balance between adult-led and child-chosen activities, and between the use of the indoor and outdoor environment.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons, including one joint observation with the headteacher, and visited a school assembly.
- Meetings were held with school leaders and managers and with the Chair of the Governing Body. Inspectors also met a representative from the local authority.
- Discussions were held with two groups of pupils and inspectors spoke informally to other pupils in lessons and during break and lunchtime.
- Inspectors looked at the work pupils were doing in lessons and in their books over time. They listened to pupils in Year 2 and Year 5 read and talked to them about their enjoyment of reading.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at a number of documents including data on pupil's current achievement, development plans, records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding arrangements. Minutes of governing body meetings and the school adviser's reports were also considered.
- Inspectors took account of 26 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire, and 11 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Robert Birtwell, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sheila Loughlin

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average sized primary school.
- Pupils are taught in eight single year group classes from Nursery to Year 6.
- Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and children from service families) is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement by:
 - ensuring that work is always carefully matched to pupils' needs, particularly for the more-able so that they can reach the highest levels and make more than expected progress
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to use and apply their mathematical skills in real life situations both in mathematics lessons and across the curriculum.
- Improve teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring that teachers plan lessons that provide more opportunities for pupils to think, learn and work by themselves
 - ensuring that there is more consistency in teachers' marking so that pupils are always given very clear guidance about what they need to do to improve their work, and that pupils respond well to this advice
 - ensuring that in the Early Years Foundation Stage there is always a balance between adult-led and child-chosen activities, and between the use of the indoor and outdoor environment.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with knowledge and skills that are generally below those expected for their age. They make good progress overall and are well prepared to enter Key Stage 1.
- Progress in Key Stage 1 is also good. At the end of Year 2 pupils attain broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils continue to make good progress when they move into Key Stage 2, especially in Years 5 and 6. Following a dip in performance in 2011 pupils' attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 has improved. In 2012 it was around average. The school's data shows that current Year 6 pupils are on course to achieve above average outcomes in national assessments this year.
- The school's detailed tracking information shows that pupils currently make good progress and achieve well throughout the school whatever their starting point. This is supported by inspection evidence from work in pupils' books and lesson observations.
- Pupils make good progress in reading. Teachers and teaching assistants ensure that pupils read regularly and have a good knowledge of phonics (letters and the sounds they make). In 2012 the proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in the national phonics check was well above average.
- There has been a whole school focus on improving writing and this has led to better teaching and achievement. Work in pupils' books shows that they have many opportunities to write in different styles across the curriculum.
- Pupils have good basic skills in mathematics and make good progress overall. However, they do not have enough opportunity to use and apply these skills to solve problems in real-life practical situations, both in mathematics lessons and other subjects.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well and make good progress because their needs are clearly identified. They receive extra support in lessons, individually or in small group sessions.
- Funding for pupils eligible for the pupil premium has been used to provide extra support and raise their attainment and progress. As a result the gap in their achievement has closed rapidly. The pupils getting the extra support in Year 6 in 2012 achieved well. The attainment of pupils known to be entitled to free school meals as measured by average points scores was very close to that of other pupils in the school and both their attainment and progress was above that of similar pupils nationally.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is typically good across the school, with some that is outstanding. Almost all parents who responded to the online Parent View survey thought their child was well taught and made good progress, and inspection evidence supports this.
- There are good relationships between pupils and teachers, and pupils are keen to learn. Teachers have good subject knowledge and explain new ideas clearly. They know pupils well, have high expectations and use praise effectively to motivate and engage pupils.
- In the best lessons where pupils make the most rapid progress, imaginative work is carefully matched to meet the needs of all pupils, and pupils have plenty of opportunity to work independently or in groups investigating ideas or solving problems.
- In an English lesson for example, pupils used a computer game as a stimulus to write a new 'level' incorporating particular literary features. Different pupils had different targets. All pupils greatly enjoyed the lesson and produced some very imaginative creative writing. As a result they made very good progress.

- In other lessons where progress is slower, work is less exciting, pupils have fewer opportunities to take the lead in their own learning, and more-able pupils are not always given work which challenges them enough and enables them to reach the highest levels.
- Teachers' feedback to pupils about their work is variable. In the best-marked books teachers provide detailed comments and suggestions for improvement, and check that pupils respond to these comments. However, some marking is less detailed and does not provide pupils with enough information about what they need to do to improve.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage teachers ensure that there are stimulating activities that meet the needs of all children. However there is not always a balance between activities led by adults and those chosen by children, and between the use of the indoor and outdoor environment.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work well together. A range of measures is used to address any slower progress. Support is given to those pupils who need it, including those eligible for the pupil premium and those who are disabled or have special educational needs. This ensures that they make the same good progress as other pupils in the school.

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

- In lessons and around school pupils behave well. They enjoy their work and cooperate well with other pupils and with adults. There is a positive attitude to learning with pupils wanting to do well. Attendance has improved and is now around average.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and are looked after well. They know how to keep themselves safe in different situations, including when using the internet. They have a good knowledge of different forms of bullying, but say that it is very rare in school. They are confident that staff would sort it out quickly if it occurred.
- School behaviour logs show that no pupils have ever been excluded, and that instances of poor behaviour are rare and dealt with effectively when they happen. Some parents who completed the online Parent View survey expressed some concern about behaviour in the school, but inspection evidence shows that behaviour over time is typically good.
- Pupils readily take on responsibility and contribute to the school in areas such as the school council or as 'buddies' for younger pupils. This makes a good contribution to their spiritual, moral social and cultural development.

The leadership and management**are good**

- School leaders and managers, including governors, have ensured that the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection have been addressed, particularly in improving the teaching of writing in the school. As a result pupils' achievement has increased.
- Since the dip in pupils' achievement in 2011 more effective tracking systems to monitor pupils' performance have been introduced. Consequently the school has a good view of how well it is performing and where it needs to improve. The school development plan accurately identifies the key areas for improvement.
- Information on pupils' progress is considered when judging how well teachers are doing, and this is used to identify where further training and support is needed. It is also taken into account when making decisions about salary awards.
- Pupils' progress is accurately monitored and any underachievement is tackled by providing extra help when pupils need it. This ensures that the school promotes equal opportunities for all pupils effectively.
- The curriculum provides a well-balanced range of learning opportunities for all pupils. Links with other schools in the local area add enrichment. For example the school has good physical education and sporting links with a local secondary school. It is also enhanced by a range of extra-curricular activities, trips and visits. Year 6 pupils spoke very enthusiastically about their

recent residential visit to an outdoor activity centre. As a result the curriculum promotes positive behaviour and contributes to pupils' good spiritual, moral social and cultural development.

- The local authority provides effective support in reviewing the performance of the school and the headteacher. It has an accurate view of the school's performance and has contributed to identifying and delivering training for staff and governors.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The Chair of the Governing Body has a clear view of how well the school is doing, including an understanding of data and of what the school needs to do to improve further. Governors are supportive of the school, but also question school leaders effectively and challenge them when necessary. They make sure that pupils' achievement and progress is taken into account when deciding on pay awards. They know how pupil premium funding is spent and how it helps to raise achievement. They manage the budget well and ensure that the school meets its statutory duties, including those related to safeguarding.

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	104925
Local authority	Sefton
Inspection number	412917

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	169
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr S Crowther
Headteacher	Mr L McKay
Date of previous school inspection	11 May 2010
Telephone number	0151 5261624
Fax number	0151 2886560
Email address	admin.stgeorgesprimary@schools.sefton.gov.uk

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