

Our Lady and St Hubert's Roman Catholic Primary School, Great Harwood

Hallfield Road, Great Harwood, Blackburn, BB6 7SN

Inspection dates 2–3 May 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 good because

- Pupils' progress is inconsistent and not enough pupils make good progress in mathematics and writing.
- Pupils' achievement in Key Stage 1 does not build effectively on their previous achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Pupils do not use their writing skills well in subjects such as history and science.
- Teaching is not consistently good and marking is inconsistent.
- Sometimes teachers spend too much time introducing and explaining tasks and, also, opportunities are missed to use questioning well.
- Leaders, including governors, did not make effective use of information about pupils' progress in order to ensure weaknesses are addressed successfully without delay.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils achieve well in reading.
- Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The school provides a very caring environment and pupils are very friendly, behave well and say they feel safe.
- Attendance is above the national average.
- The acting headteacher, with the good support of governors, has worked hard and successfully to ensure that there have been some improvements. For example, pupils' attainment in Year 6 is higher than in 2012 and better use is now being made of assessment information when planning lessons.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 13 lessons of which one was a joint observation with the acting headteacher. Additional short visits to lessons were carried out to look at important issues such as how well pupils get on with their classmates and how well they behave.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils chosen at random, members of the governing body and with senior staff. A meeting was also held with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and talked to them about the types of books they enjoy.
- Pupils' current work and assessment from the previous academic year were scrutinised, including information which showed how well pupils do in English and mathematics.
- Twenty nine responses were received to the online questionnaire (Parent View). In addition, inspectors scrutinised the school's own parent questionnaire survey. The lead inspector also spoke to some parents on the telephone.
- Inspectors reviewed the staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Geoff Yates, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Peter Bailey

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well-below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil-premium funding is below average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after.)
- In 2012 the school did not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- The school has achieved awards, including Healthy School status.
- In the last 18 months there has been staffing disruption.
- The school is in a hard federation with a local Catholic Primary School. At the time of the inspection there was no headteacher in post as head of the federated schools but a permanent appointment has been made as from September 2013. The school is currently led by an acting headteacher.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of consistently good and better teaching by ensuring that:
 - questioning is used well in checking out whether pupils understand what it is they are being asked to do and in encouraging pupils to develop their answers
 - marking is used well in helping pupils really understand how they might improve their own work and also making sure that pupils respond to the suggestions made
 - there is not too much time taken up in introducing and explaining tasks that then limits the time pupils have to work independently
 - pupils are given good opportunities to use their writing skills well in other subjects.
- Raise attainment and achievement in Key Stage 1, especially in mathematics and for the more-able pupils, by ensuring that the work pupils are asked to do builds effectively on the good start they have achieved in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Ensure leaders, including governors, make effective use of information about pupils' progress across the school in taking decisive and prompt action to remedy any weaknesses.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because progress is inconsistent and not enough pupils are making good progress. Staffing disruption in the previous year has been a factor in a lack of progress by some groups of pupils.
- Information about pupils' progress has not been used effectively to address weaknesses. As a result in 2012, the progress and attainment of Year 6 pupils dipped drastically in comparison to the previous year when both were above average. For example, only just over two-thirds of pupils made the expected progress in mathematics.
- Most children start school with skills and knowledge in line with those expected for their age. When they leave Reception, they reach levels in most areas of learning that are above those achieved nationally. This good progress is a result of good quality teaching. Children enjoy the work they are asked to do. For example, speaking and listening skills are developed well through role play in the garden centre shop, with children discussing what to charge the inspector for a melon!
- This good start is not built on sufficiently well in Years 1 and 2 in writing and mathematics. As a result, by the time pupils reach the end of Year 2, attainment has been, at best, broadly average for a number of years. Some of the tasks set in mathematics lack challenge and pupils' writing skills are not developed well. With better use now being made of assessment information to tailor activities to pupils' abilities there are some signs of improvement this year.
- Attainment at the end of Year 6 in 2012 was below average in English and well-below average in mathematics. School data and the work in pupils' books indicate that attainment in the current Year 6 is broadly average.
- Attainment in reading is above average at the end of both key stages. Pupils enjoy reading and classes have displays showing pupils' top 10 favourite authors. Currently, younger pupils are making good progress in developing their knowledge of letters and sounds to work out words they are unsure about. Pupils did better than pupils in schools nationally in the 2012 Year 1 phonics (the sound letters make) check.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those with disabilities are supported effectively and they achieve at least as well as other groups of pupils.
- The school makes good use of the extra money from pupil-premium funding to enhance the learning opportunities of the pupils. This includes, where required, pupils being given additional support in class or in withdrawal groups. The attainment of pupils who were known to be eligible for free school meals in 2012 was below that of other pupils in English and mathematics by about one term but the progress they made was similar to that of those not eligible for free school meals. The school's records show that, currently, there is no significant difference between the attainment of pupils eligible for free school meals and those who are not. This demonstrates that the school suitably promotes equality of opportunity and tackles any discrimination.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because not enough of it is of good quality and, because of this, pupils' progress across the school is not consistently good. As a result in 2012, Year 6 pupils failed to meet government floor targets. Teachers get on well with their pupils and encourage them to be responsible and to develop good social and moral skills and understanding.
- Opportunities are missed across the school for pupils to use their writing skills well in subjects such as science, and history and geography (topic work).
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. The range of activities ensures that children develop skills in all areas. While there is a good balance between indoor and outdoor

learning, the quality of learning outside is not quite as strong as that inside.

- The teaching of early reading skills is successful and reading is taught well throughout the school.
- In some lessons teachers do too much talking when introducing and explaining tasks and this results in pupils having to sit over-long on the carpet and having very little time when they do start to work to do so independently. Where the pace of lessons is good pupils are given the opportunity to move swiftly to independent work.
- At times teachers do not have high enough expectations of their pupils. They ask questions but then take answers from the few who put up their hands and move on without being certain that all pupils understand. Some teachers do not persist in encouraging pupils to develop their answers. Where learning is best, teachers follow up answers with extra questions such as, 'What do you mean by that?'
- Where work is well matched to pupils' ability, they make good progress. For example, the more-able pupils in a Year 6 class worked very well in independently editing and refining their tourist attraction publicity brochures. One pupil, wanting to make their brochure more appealing, added the line, 'If little children are getting bored then take them to watch Dora and her friends by the entrance.'
- However, work is not matched well to pupils' different abilities in all classes. For example, in Key Stage 1, the more-able pupils in particular are not always challenged by the mathematical and writing tasks that, at times, are over-reliant on commercial work-sheets.
- Marking has improved as a result of actions taken by the acting headteacher, but it is better in English than in other subjects. Teachers do always make sure that pupils take into account, and act on, suggestions for improvement.
- Pupils with special educational needs and other pupils benefit from the mostly good quality help provided by teaching assistants.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils enjoy school as shown by their above-average attendance.
 - Parents who completed the school's own questionnaire and those who completed the online questionnaire are sure that the school provides a safe environment and that pupils enjoy school and behave well.
 - Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Pupils are keen to talk about the school and the work they have done with the school with which their school is federated. They are very polite and friendly. Pupils taking part in, for example, an after-school dance class or those learning to play the guitar are proud of what they achieve, and rightly so.
 - A scrutiny of records and observations during the inspection demonstrate that behaviour over time is good. Isolated incidents of unacceptable behaviour are dealt with very well.
 - Pupils are mostly confident and want to achieve well.
 - Pupils respond extremely well to the many opportunities provided for them to take on school responsibilities. These include being a member of the school council or being a 'Hubert Helper' to younger pupils. School council members say they feel 'honoured' to have been chosen. They are pleased that their ideas have been acted on by the school, for example, with regard to improving play-ground equipment.
 - Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe and are very confident that any issues they raise will be dealt with promptly by the school. They recognise dangers when using the internet and know how to avoid these problems. They have a very good understanding of different types of bullying and are confident that, if it happens, adults would deal with it well.
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The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because actions taken since the previous inspection have not ensured that teaching and achievement are good. Staffing disruption has not helped matters in this respect.
 - Responses to the staff questionnaire indicate clearly that the acting headteacher has been successful in improving staff morale.
 - There is a system for leaders and governors to check the progress pupils make but the information gathered has not been used effectively in making sure enough is done to address weaknesses that have been identified. The acting headteacher, with the support of governors, has taken steps to begin to address this issue but it is too early to see the full impact of the actions taken.
 - The acting headteacher is clear about the school's strengths and areas for development but the school has too generous a view of how well it is doing. Teaching is monitored on a regular basis. Performance-management systems are used appropriately to identify professional development needs. However, the impact of the actions taken has not ensured that teaching is typically good.
 - The school's good work with regard to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is linked well to the curriculum. As a result pupils are very aware of the needs of those less fortunate than themselves. Topics are taught on a rolling, two year, programme so pupils do not repeat work in mixed-age classes. While there are examples of mathematics being used in subjects across the curriculum, opportunities are missed for pupils to use their writing skills well.
 - Some good links are being established with the federated school but disruptions in the leadership of both schools have hindered progress.
 - The local authority has provided light-touch support to the school but has made sure that the acting headteacher has had additional support from a highly experienced headteacher from another school.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is led well by an experienced Chair who makes sure that governors offer challenge to senior staff. She has ensured that the recent change in school governance, with regard to the new hard federation with another school, has been carried out effectively. Governors are aware of the school's performance in comparison to national data and what it means. A well-organised committee structure ensures that governors have a good understanding of most aspects of the school. However, governors accept that they have asked too few questions about pupils' progress in Key Stage 1. Governors keep a close check on the school's budget, making sure that, for example, pupil-premium money is used to good effect and for the purpose intended. Governors have a good understanding of how performance management is carried out and how good teaching is linked to pay awards. Governors make sure that school policies are regularly reviewed and that safeguarding arrangements meet regulatory requirements.
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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	119645
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	412724

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	173
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs E Hayes
Headteacher	Mrs P Lund
Date of previous school inspection	16 June 2010
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