

# St Michael and St John's Roman Catholic Primary School, Clitheroe

Lowergate, Clitheroe, Lancashire, BB7 1AG

**Inspection dates** 8–9 May 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
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

- Achievement requires improvement. Not enough pupils make good progress in both English and mathematics and rates of progress are too variable between classes.
- There is not yet enough good teaching to ensure that most pupils make consistently good progress over time.
- Teachers do not always set high enough expectations about what pupils can achieve, particularly more-able pupils.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop their problem-solving skills in mathematics or to use and apply these skills in other subjects.
- Marking does not always give clear guidance on how pupils can improve their work.
- School leaders including governors are not rigorous in their checks on pupils' progress and do not have an accurate enough view of the school's performance.

### The school has the following strengths

- The behaviour of pupils and their attitudes to learning are good. Pupils are polite and respectful towards each other and to adults.
- Pupils are well cared for and say they feel safe in school.
- The curriculum offers a good range of subjects, topics and opportunities that contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Children in the Reception class benefit from good quality teaching and learning experiences. As a result, they achieve well in all aspects of their work.
- Parents are confident that their children are well looked after and happy that any concerns will be dealt with promptly by school leaders.

## Information about this inspection

- Two additional inspectors visited 14 lessons and observed eight teachers. A joint observation was undertaken with the headteacher.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and looked at pupils' exercise books.
- Discussions were held with pupils, staff, representatives of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Many documents were scrutinised, including data on pupils' progress, the school's self-evaluation, safeguarding and other policies as well as reports from the local authority and from the headteacher.
- Inspectors took account of the views of staff from the 28 responses to the staff questionnaire and from talking to staff.
- The views of parents were gained from analysing 38 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), from informal conversations with parents bringing their children to school and from one telephone conversation with a parent.

## Inspection team

Michael Hewlett, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Emma Jackson

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs supported through school action and the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion known to be eligible for pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, in local authority care or whose parents are in the armed forces, is below average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language is low.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- There is a privately run before-school and after-school club which is inspected separately.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is all at least good and pupils make at least good progress by ensuring that:
  - assessment information about pupils' attainment is always used to plan activities which are accurately matched to their needs, especially for the more-able pupils, so that the work set is not too easy
  - teachers provide pupils with enough information on how they can improve their work and then give pupils the opportunity to respond to the advice
  - there is a better balance achieved by teachers talking less and giving pupils more opportunities earlier in lessons to be active, work things out for themselves and practise their skills
  - weaknesses in the teaching of phonics in Year 1 are rectified by teachers identifying and resolving pupils' misconceptions over some groups of letters and the sounds they make.
- Improve standards in mathematics, particularly at the higher levels in Key Stage 2, by teachers providing pupils with more problem-solving activities and chances to apply their skills related to real life situations.
- Improve leadership and management, including governance, by:
  - checking more assiduously that the extra support systems that they have put in place are helping to raise standards
  - improving the accuracy of the school's own view of its own performance
  - adding more rigour to the checking of work in pupils' exercise books in order that weaknesses are quickly diagnosed and rectified
  - ensuring that governors make better use of pupils' progress data in order to hold the school more thoroughly to account for the standards pupils are reaching.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because progress is inconsistent between classes and not enough pupils are making good progress.
- Children join the Reception class with skills that are generally in line with those expected for their age, with some children who are above. They make good progress and by the end of Reception Year, the vast majority of children have developed skills that are above those typically expected.
- Pupils' achievement across Key Stage 1 is uneven because teaching is not good in all year groups and subjects. For example, in Year 1 there are weaknesses in teaching pupils letters and the sounds they make (phonics). Teaching does not always pick up and resolve pupils' misconceptions about some groups of letters and the sounds they make. Weaknesses are reflected in the results of the national reading test in Year 1 which were below the national average.
- Nevertheless, pupils' progress picks up rapidly due to good quality teaching in Year 2 so that by the time pupils are ready to leave Key Stage 1 their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is above national levels.
- Pupils' progress in Key Stage 2 requires more improvement than Key Stage 1. Although there was some improvement in the proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels in English, including in writing at the end of Year 6 in 2012, the same cannot be said in mathematics where fewer pupils than nationally make the expected or better than expected progress. Some pupils do not do as well as they should because the work set for them is not always hard enough and there are not enough chances for them to solve mathematical problems independently.
- Across the school pupils enjoy reading and can talk about the books they have read with enthusiasm and knowledge.
- Pupils with special educational needs are supported effectively and inspection evidence show they are achieving at least as well as, and sometimes better than, other groups of pupils. There is no significant difference year-on-year between the performance of boys and girls. Equality of opportunity is promoted effectively.
- The school makes good use of the extra money from the pupil premium to enhance the learning opportunities of the pupils. This includes, where required, pupils being given additional support in class. School records show that there is no significant difference between the attainment of pupils eligible for free school meals and that of pupils who are not eligible.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because not enough of it is of consistently good quality. Consequently, too few pupils make good progress in both English and mathematics.
- Although there are examples of good teaching, not enough teachers use the information they have about pupils' attainment to provide work at the right level. In some lessons, pupils do not make as much progress as they should because the teacher spends too much time explaining the work and what has to be done. As a result, pupils have insufficient time to be active, practise their skills and work things out for themselves.
- Pupils who are more-able are often given work which is too easy and with same level of difficulty as that set for other groups in the class.
- In mathematics there is too much emphasis on number calculations and too few opportunities for pupils to solve problems or apply their mathematical skills in practical situations.
- By contrast, where the teaching is good, questioning is used well and pupils are given time to talk about the questions posed by teachers. This was observed, for example, in a Year 5 English lesson, where pupils were encouraged to produce a balanced argument. As a result, they were

able to argue persuasively and complete some high quality written work.

- There are examples of well-planned activities that are matched to the pupils' abilities in all parts of the school. For example, in the Reception classroom, children have good opportunities to use their imagination as they play and learn. There is a good balance between activities that children can choose for themselves and those directed by adults.
- Teaching assistants are effective in encouraging learning, particularly for the pupils receiving extra support.
- Teachers are conscientious about marking books regularly but do not give enough advice on how work can be improved or the next steps in learning. Pupils have too few opportunities to respond to any advice that might be given.
- Reading is given a high priority, although the amount of time allocated to read in school varies from class to class. The school encourages reading and writing by inviting authors to come into school and celebrating events such as World Book day.
- Teaching promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. For example, visits to places of interest and taking part in musical and sporting events broaden pupils' understanding.
- Parents are confident that the quality of teaching is good, as are the pupils who spoke with inspectors. However, evidence gained during the inspection and through looking at the data on pupils' progress disagrees with these views. There is some good teaching in some classes but it is not consistently good.

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

- Pupils behave well in classrooms and around the school. Relationships among pupils and between pupils and adults are very good.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning and are keen to participate in their lessons. When given the opportunity they collaborate well and help each other learn. 'We all get on well here and there is rarely any trouble', is typical of the comments made by school council members.
- Parents who completed the on-line questionnaire or spoke to inspectors are sure that the school provides a safe environment and that their children enjoy school and behave well.
- Pupils share this confidence and they trust that the adults will help to sort out any concerns that they might have. Pupils understand the different kinds of bullying and say that little takes place. They are taught to act safely as, for example, when they use the internet and pupils recognise the need to show consideration for others.
- Scrutiny of behaviour records and observations during the inspection confirm that behaviour over time is also good.
- Pupils enjoy the many responsibilities they are given. The prefect system and school council membership are particularly effective in developing leadership skills for all the pupils involved.
- Most pupils are punctual at the start of the school day and they say they enjoy coming to school. Attendance is consistently above average.

### **The leadership and management** requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because neither achievement nor teaching is consistently good.
- The headteacher and senior leaders demonstrate a clear commitment to continued improvement. The headteacher is highly regarded within the school community and parents talk of the strong pastoral leadership and care that he brings to the school.
- School leaders have identified the right priorities, for example, recognising that there is variation in progress in different classes and subjects. However, the impact of the changes that they have made with various support systems put in place have not been fully checked to ensure they are working properly. Consequently, the school's view of its own performance is overgenerous.

- Better systems to manage the performance of teachers are now in place. Teachers' performance is checked against how much progress their pupils make and how well they carry out their responsibilities. This has helped to highlight the mixed picture of teaching and pupils' learning across the school.
- Middle leaders are beginning to have more influence on the work of the school and increase the pace of improvement. This is particularly evident in the work of the special educational needs coordinator where detailed evaluation and monitoring of progress made by individual pupils has helped to ensure that those with additional needs are well supported. Checks made by school leaders are not yet rigorous enough in other areas, such as mathematics, where scrutiny of pupils' exercise books has not identified the lack of challenge in some lessons or the limited opportunities for pupils to solve problems or to use and apply their mathematical skills.
- Child protection and safeguarding have a high priority. Leaders ensure that all requirements are met and that the building is a safe environment.
- External support provided by the local authority has helped to identify some of the weaknesses in the teaching and offer useful guidance on how it can be improved.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well and is enriched with clubs, visits and visitors. The curriculum provides pupils with a good range of opportunities for learning both inside and outside the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is very supportive of the work of the school. Members understand how well the school is performing compared to other schools. Governors are aware of the need to improve the quality of teaching and their role in developing this through performance management. They recognise the variation in pupils' progress between classes and subjects and the need for them to scrutinise progress data more rigorously so that they can hold school leaders to account. The school budget is effectively managed and the pupil premium funding is allocated well to ensure that pupils eligible are receiving appropriate support and making good progress. Governors undertake their statutory duties well, receive appropriate training and ensure that safeguarding requirements are met.

## 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>	119644
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	412997

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>	203
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Martin Nolan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Vincent Murray
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 June 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01200 422560
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