

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Primary School

Tout Hill House, South Street, Wincanton, BA9 9DH

Inspection dates 15–16 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		Requires improvement	3
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

- Teaching is not consistently good across the school and pupils do not make as much progress as they should.
- Pupils' achievement has declined since the last inspection. Too few pupils are reaching the higher levels of attainment in both mathematics and English.
- Teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to contribute their own ideas in lessons and work independently.
- Marking is inconsistent. It does not always tell pupils what they need to do to improve their work.
- Information from assessment is not used effectively to plan work that exactly meets the individual needs of pupils.
- Pupils do not complete enough written work. This is partly because teachers spend too long in explanation, but also because they do not have high enough expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving both in terms of content and quantity.
- Senior leaders have not analysed assessment data rigorously enough, particularly in English. As a result, teachers have not received enough guidance on exactly what it is that requires improvement.
- Until this year, governors had not monitored the work of the school effectively enough, with the result that they failed to notice how achievement was declining.

The school has the following strengths

- The leadership of the headteacher is very strong. She quickly identified the weaknesses in teaching and has worked tirelessly to remedy these. As a result, inadequate teaching has been almost eradicated and pupils' learning has significantly improved since Christmas 2012.
- Teachers have responded well to the changes made and share the commitment to improvement.
- The school takes good care of its pupils and nurtures them effectively.
- Pupils look after each other. They are warm and polite, kind and friendly.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons or parts of lessons, one of which was a joint observation with the headteacher. She also observed parts of two phonics sessions (pupils learning about letters and the sounds that they make), as well as looking at the support provided for individuals or small groups in and outside the classroom. She heard pupils from Years 2 and 6 read and discussed their books with them.
- She also examined the work in pupils' books while observing lessons, and scrutinised some English and mathematics books from Years 5 and 6 in greater detail.
- The inspector scrutinised and evaluated a wide range of school documentation. This included assessment data, the school's development plan, monitoring records and minutes of governing body meetings as well as documentation relating to safeguarding and the care of pupils.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher and staff as well as the members of the governing body. She also had telephone conversations with a representative of the local authority and a local leader in education who is providing support for the new headteacher. She also met with a senior representative from the Clifton diocese.
- The inspector considered the responses to the questionnaire on the Parent View website to be recorded and shown. She also considered the views of staff recorded on the eight questionnaires returned by them.

Inspection team

Christine Huard, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Our Lady of Mount Carmel is a much smaller than average school in Wincanton. Pupils attend from a wide area around the school.
- There are five mixed-age classes which change from year to year as group sizes change. This year the make up is: Reception and Year 1, Years 1 and 2, Year 3, Year 4, and Years 5 and 6. Years 5 and 6 are taught separately for literacy and numeracy every morning.
- The school has a similar proportion of pupils supported through school action than most other schools.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is smaller than the national average.
- A broadly average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those from service families.
- There is an above average proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and the proportion of pupils learning English as an additional language is also above average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher took up her position in January 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that it becomes consistently good by:
 - ensuring that marking consistently tells pupils what they need to do to improve their work and giving them time to respond to this
 - making sure pupils have plenty of time in which to complete their written tasks, particularly in English, and having high expectations of what they can achieve in the time allowed
 - giving pupils more opportunities to think for themselves, contribute their own ideas and become actively involved in their learning during lessons.
- Raise achievement by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills in practical situations by solving problems and carrying out investigations
 - encouraging pupils to use the skills they are learning in phonics to help them develop their writing and reading skills
 - using assessment more carefully to plan tasks that more closely match the needs of all individuals and groups of pupils.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - ensuring senior leaders take full responsibility for analysing data relating to their subjects and areas, identifying areas for improvement and monitoring progress towards these
 - providing an external review of the work of the governing body.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' attainment in Key Stage 2 has declined in the last three years and attainment in both English and mathematics at the end of last summer was broadly average. Pupils have not made as much progress as they should have done because teaching is not consistently good.
- School documentation indicates that the decline should not continue this year. The robust actions taken by the newly appointed headteacher are successfully improving the quality of teaching. Pupils' books show that they have made demonstrably better progress since her appointment, in both English and mathematics, than they did in the time running up to last Christmas.
- The progress made by all groups of pupils, although steadily improving, shows some level of inconsistency. This is because teachers do not always use the information from assessment to plan tasks that closely match the needs of all individuals and groups of pupils.
- The best progress is made by disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. This is because the leader for this area understands very clearly the needs of all the pupils and works hard with the class teachers to ensure pupils receive the support they need.
- The pupils in Year 1 attained above average scores in the phonics screening check at the end of last summer. Most younger pupils show a good understanding of phonics and use them competently to help them with both their reading and writing.
- Most older pupils read well and many read at an above average level. Pupils discussed the texts they were reading maturely. They could demonstrate their ability to skim and scan texts as well as make predictions and give reasons for their preferences.
- A few older pupils struggle with their reading. This is because they have not been taught phonics effectively in the past. However, they are not always encouraged enough to use their newly developing phonic skills to help them with their reading and writing.
- Pupils in Year 6 have good opportunities to use their mathematical skills to solve problems and carry out mathematical investigations. However, this does not apply to all other classes. As a result, pupils' attainment is not as good as it should be.
- Children enter the Reception class with attainment that is broadly in line with that expected for their age, although it varies from year to year. They benefit from a wide range of activities across all areas of the Early Years framework and enter Year 1 well prepared to work at the National Curriculum levels.
- There are few pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium and some year groups have none. Last year, these pupils achieved similarly to their peers in English but did not do as well in mathematics and they were nearly half a year behind their classmates. This was because their needs were not considered closely enough. The school has now paid greater attention to these and individuals are better provided for. Additional support is provided through individual and small teaching for those pupils who require it. As a result, these pupils are making better progress and the gap is narrowing significantly.
- The support provided for pupils who are learning English as an additional language enables them to make similar progress to their classmates.
- The success that the school has had since last Christmas in improving the quality of teaching and thus improving pupils' achievement shows that all staff are committed to promoting equal opportunities and trying to ensure there is no discrimination.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is not consistently good. As a result, pupils are not making as much progress as they should.
- The pace of learning is occasionally too slow. This is because teachers' explanations are

sometimes too long and involved. This means that pupils do not have enough opportunities to find things out for themselves. Because of the time taken in lengthy explanations, pupils often have too little time in which to complete their written tasks.

- Teachers do not always have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. Pupils' books, particularly in English, show that at times they complete little work. This is often of mediocre quality. This has improved significantly in the latter part of the year but the quality and quantity of work produced is not yet consistently good.
- Marking is inconsistent. It has improved during the year, but it still does not always tell pupils clearly enough what they need to do to improve their work. Teachers do not give pupils time to respond to their marking at the start of lessons.
- Teaching for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is often well focused on their needs. Usually teachers plan tasks that meet pupils' individual needs that will also fit in with whole-class learning. Nevertheless, some class teachers do not take sufficient responsibility for the overall progress that these pupils make.
- The school is using the pupil premium funding appropriately to provide one-to-one support and some small group teaching. This is helping to develop pupils' confidence and effectively close any gaps in their learning particularly in mathematics.
- During the inspection, where teaching was good or better the pupils were lively; they responded enthusiastically to clear explanations and thoroughly enjoyed their learning. In an outstanding music lesson, the teacher had Year 6 pupils playing ukuleles and singing a three-part song highly competently. She then went on to teach a country and western song from scratch, which all had mastered to some degree by the end of the lesson.
- Pupils are beginning to learn to judge how well they are doing. They are at an early stage of evaluating their own learning, and teachers are using appropriate strategies to enable them to do this more effectively.
- There is clear evidence to show that teaching has significantly improved, particularly in the latter part of this year. School documentation shows that teachers' planning is now much more effective and lessons better planned to build on previous learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

- Pupils' behaviour requires improvement because they do not have sufficient opportunities to find things out for themselves and work independently. This means that they become passive learners because teachers give them too much information and do not involve them enough in planning and carrying out their own learning.
- When pupils have opportunities to work together in class, they are generally sensible and collaborate and cooperate well. When teaching is not as good as it should be, they sometimes lose concentration.
- Pupils are generally well behaved in class and around the school. They are happy at school and say they feel safe.
- They have a good understanding of what bullying entails and are adamant that there is no bullying in the school. They understand that it takes different forms such as name-calling or persistent nastiness. They receive good guidance on how to keep themselves safe when using the internet and have a good understanding of cyber bullying.
- Pupils say there is little bad behaviour and few conflicts. They try and sort out their own problems although adults will always help them out when necessary.
- Attendance is above average and pupils' punctuality is good. The school has a zero tolerance approach to term-time holidays and refuses to authorise unless the circumstances are truly exceptional.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The headteacher is very clear sighted, ambitious and determined in her efforts to bring about improvement. However, leadership and management require improvement because over time senior leaders have not been sufficiently robust in their monitoring of the school's work and standards have declined.
- Senior leaders have not analysed data sufficiently and consequently do not have a strong enough idea of how well pupils are doing. This is particularly so in English. In mathematics, the leader is fully aware that problem solving and investigative work have not been integrated sufficiently into the curriculum and has made some effort to rectify this.
- In English, a guided reading scheme was introduced at the beginning of the year, but the success of this has not been evaluated. The headteacher quickly identified that older pupils' knowledge of phonics was lacking and took action to remedy this. However, effective monitoring in English has largely been due to the headteacher rather than the subject leader.
- The school has taken effective action to improve the quality of teaching and learning. It is clear that pupils' learning is now accelerating and confirms that the school has the capacity for further improvement.
- The headteacher has gained the support of staff in her quest for improvement as is shown by the questionnaires that were returned. Many staff appreciate her uncompromising approach to improvement as shown in comments such as: 'The headteacher shows great vision,' and 'The school has needed inspirational leadership'.
- The headteacher asked the local authority for a review when she took up her position, as she quickly identified the weaknesses in teaching and learning. It has helped her to draw up an action plan with a local leader of education with whom she is working closely. This is already resulting in significant improvements being made.
- In the past, there has been too little consideration of the progress of pupils and the quality of teaching when teachers' movement along the salary scales was considered. The headteacher has made it clear that the teachers' performance will now be measured against these requirements.
- The school has an interesting curriculum which supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. Pupils are given appropriate opportunities to reflect on their learning, appreciate and celebrate each other's accomplishments and gain an understanding of different faiths and cultures.
- The school ensures that all statutory requirements for safeguarding pupils are met and arrangements for children's welfare and their protection are robust.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is very supportive of the school. However, it has not monitored how well it has been doing in comparison with other schools, both locally and nationally, until this year. As a result, it failed to notice the decline that has been taking place over the last three years because it relied too heavily on what it was being told rather than finding out for itself. However, this situation has been addressed. Governors have received appropriate training to enable them to effectively analyse data about the school's performance and understand the key areas that require improvement. They are now more confident to both challenge and support the school. They do check on the quality of teaching and hold the school to account. They monitor the finances of the school effectively and ensure that the money from the pupil premium is used effectively to support these pupils; for example, by providing one-to-one and small group support for pupils. The governing body now has a clear understanding of the new arrangements for managing the performance of teachers and the link to pay progression.

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	123858
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	411882

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	133
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brian Matthews
Headteacher	Alison Fishlock
Date of previous school inspection	25–26 November 2009
Telephone number	01963 32660
Fax number	01963 31653
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