

St John's Catholic Primary School

Innage Gardens, Bridgnorth, WV16 4HW

Inspection dates 15–16 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	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.

- The work of the headteacher, well supported by a strong staff team and governing body, has led to a number of improvements.
- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers promote learning well and demonstrate good subject knowledge, thanks to thorough and regular checks on the quality of teaching, followed up by effective staff training.
- Pupils of all abilities achieve well and standards at the end of Year 6 are above average in English and mathematics.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and this contributes strongly to the good learning in most lessons. Their attendance is above average. They say they feel safe in school.
- Provision in the Reception class is good and children make a strong start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children respond well to the good range of stimulating activities provided and are confident and inquisitive about the world around them.
- Pupils are treated with respect and as individuals in an atmosphere of care and support. As a result, they are considerate and take very good care of each other and are welcoming and courteous to visitors.
- Pupils enjoy a good variety of exciting additional activities throughout the school year, including visits, visitors and residential stays.
- The school accurately evaluates how well it is doing and what needs to be done next.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Just occasionally, teachers do not provide work at the right level for all pupils in the class and, in a small minority of lessons, the pace of learning slows after a good brisk start.
- Pupils' attainment in mathematics, although improving rapidly, is not yet as high as it is in reading and writing.
- Teachers regularly mark pupils' work but do not always give advice on how to improve.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 14 lessons, three of which were observed jointly with the headteacher. The inspectors also made a number of shorter visits to classrooms.
- Meetings and discussions were held with governors, members of staff, a representative of the local authority and groups of pupils. The inspectors also heard a number of pupils read.
- The inspection took into account the 45 responses to the online questionnaire for parents and carers (Parent View) and the outcomes from the school's consultations with parents.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupil mobility, pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Clive Lewis, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Michael Onyon

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St. John's is a small Catholic primary school that serves the parish of Bridgnorth and a large area around it. The school is heavily oversubscribed. Just under half of the pupils are from Catholic families.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and very few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils eligible for free school meals and other specific groups) is below the national average.
- An above-average proportion of pupils join the school at other than the normal time, mid-year and mid-key stage.
- Pupils are organised in single year group classes.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported at school action is below the national average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average, and particularly high in some year groups.
- 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?

- Further raise the overall quality and impact of teaching to be outstanding by ensuring that:
 - all learning in lessons proceeds at a brisk pace throughout
 - teachers consistently provide suitably challenging work for all pupils in their classes
 - when marking pupils' work teachers always give advice on how to improve their work.
- Improve achievement in mathematics by ensuring that pupils are provided with more opportunities to practise their calculation and numeracy skills in other curriculum areas.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Good teaching leads to pupils making good progress throughout the school. This progress is reflected in the good quality of learning in most lessons observed and is confirmed by the work in pupils' books.
- Children's experiences and skills when they enter the school in the Reception class are broadly in line with those typically found for this age group. They get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make good progress in their first year in school.
- Pupils in Reception and in Key Stage 1 quickly learn the sounds letters make (phonics) to support their writing, as well as the mathematics skills they need to complete simple calculations. Pupils in Key Stage 2 continue to build on these good achievements and, by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6, attainment in English and mathematics is above average.
- Pupils make good progress in developing their reading skills. Younger pupils are taught to read through daily phonics lessons and guided reading activities which then continue in all age groups. As a result, pupils throughout the school read confidently.
- Although significant progress has been made in mathematics, pupils are not provided with enough opportunities to practice their rapid recall of number facts and their calculation skills across the curriculum.
- School data indicate that those eligible for the pupil premium make the same progress and attain similar standards in English and mathematics to those of other pupils. Any barriers to learning are quickly identified and the funding is used well by the school to provide carefully matched additional support through frequent one-to-one or small-group work. The school also uses a proportion of the money allocated to ensure these pupils can join in all the extra activities provided for other pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. Class teachers, teaching assistants and outside agencies provide good support. This ensures that work is set at the right level for them, enabling them to make small but progressive steps in their learning.

The quality of teaching is good

- Good teaching enables pupils of all backgrounds and abilities to learn successfully during their time in school. Teachers plan their lessons well, sharing with pupils what is to be learned and, in the best cases, how they can judge successful learning for themselves.
- A good range of stimulating activities, both indoors and out are provided by staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage classroom. These help make children confident and inquisitive about the world around them.
- Good use is made of resources, including information and communication technology, to motivate pupils and enhance their learning. Marking of pupils' work is up to date and, in the best cases, gives pupils guidance about how well they have met the learning objective and how they

can improve their work.

- In one good literacy lesson focusing on planning and continuing a story, the teacher set a good pace for learning, which was maintained throughout the lesson. The work was demanding for pupils of all abilities and there were high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. Good use was made of questioning to gauge and guide pupils' understanding. The teacher modelled the task thoroughly. This provided a good basis for their work and ensured that pupils were confident in approaching the tasks.
- In most lessons, learning moves along at a good pace but, in a small minority of lessons, the pace of learning slows after a good start. Similarly, in a few lessons, the work set does not match the varying abilities of pupils in the class.
- Teachers' strategies to manage pupils' behaviour are very effective, with the result that lessons are calm and purposeful. Pupils concentrate on their work and work hard without the need for constant adult intervention. There is no discrimination evident in the school and all pupils are given equal opportunities to succeed.
- Pupils are supported by a strong and well-deployed team of teaching assistants who provide good support for individuals and groups, including those who have special educational needs, and pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium.
- Pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics is checked and tracked rigorously as they move through the school. The headteacher meets each class teacher termly in order to evaluate and discuss the information about progress and attainment gained and to set targets for further improvement. These meetings ensure that each teacher has a clear understanding of how well the pupils in their charge are doing and the action they need to take in order to support them in reaching their improvement targets.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The school is a calm, friendly and well-ordered place in which to learn and work.
- Pupils' behaviour is typically good both in the classroom, where they listen carefully, cooperate well and contribute eagerly, and around the school. This good behaviour has a positive impact on the good progress made in lessons. Pupils like and understand the system of sanctions and rewards which ensures that any inappropriate behaviour is dealt with effectively and promptly and, pupils say, fairly.
- Pupils respond well to the strong spiritual, personal, moral and social guidance they receive. They develop positive attitudes to life and learning through the teaching of common values and expectations through assemblies and personal and social education. They have a clear sense of what is right and wrong and embrace new experiences enthusiastically.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe and describe the school as being 'very safe'. They are clear about seeking help for themselves and others should the need arise, and are confident that any issues that arise will be dealt with promptly and fairly.
- Pupils say they find learning fun and are enthusiastic about their education.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying they may encounter, including through internet sites.

Pupils all say they enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their levels of attendance, which are above the national average.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, with the strong support of staff and the governing body, provides good leadership. As a result of regular monitoring and support, teaching is typically good across the school, and planning is founded on robust evidence and based on accurate data. Thus the school demonstrates the capacity to improve.
- Staff are well-motivated and demonstrate a shared sense of responsibility and commitment to improving the school. They are set challenging targets based on the quality of their teaching and the progress pupils make in their classes, and these are reviewed annually.
- All pupils and families are known very well by staff. The school's very positive relationship with parents and carers and its good links with a wide range of partners contribute significantly to improvements in pupils' achievement and well-being. Safeguarding systems are secure and discrimination is not tolerated.
- Good leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage ensure that children make a strong start to their learning.
- Strong links with a number of local schools enable staff to share their expertise, and ensure pupils gain wider experiences and broaden their horizons.
- The school is constantly alert to any variation in achievement and is proactive in devising initiatives to overcome any weaknesses. Fully supported and monitored by the governing body, the school makes effective use of the money derived from the pupil premium to support frequent small-group and one-to-one work. This helps eligible pupils to achieve as well as their friends.
- The school provides a rich and imaginative curriculum experience for all its pupils. A significant number of pupils are currently learning to play a musical instrument – all of Year 4 are currently learning to play the clarinet, for example. All pupils learn French, and pupils greatly enjoy and look forward to their lessons in the school's Forest School area. They speak very enthusiastically about the wide range of additional after-school activities which have a positive impact on pupils' progress, enthusiasm and ability to learn and work on their own.
- The school provides outstanding pastoral care for its pupils. This ensures that all pupils are able to learn successfully and develop confidence, regardless of their individual circumstances. Pupils learn to reflect on and appreciate their own skills and the skills of others. This approach, together with collaborative work, is very successful in increasing pupils' self-esteem and promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well.
- Self-evaluation has identified the appropriate key areas for school development. Local authority support has been helpful to the school in monitoring and improving the quality of teaching and in confirming the accuracy of teachers' assessments of how well pupils are doing.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body provides good support and challenge for leaders and managers to ensure that the school improves and moves forward. It checks that safeguarding is secure and has

overseen the arrangements for the use of the pupil premium funding and the arrangements for relating teachers' performance to pay effectively. It plays an active role in the school's self-evaluation, monitoring and improvement planning processes. It has a good understanding of the data and the comparative performance of the school in relation to similar schools. It knows what is happening in the school and is aware that overall provision is good.

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	123551
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	413269

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	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	George Sabin
Headteacher	Jane Payton
Date of previous school inspection	8 July 2008
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