

# St Hilda's Roman Catholic Primary School

Waterstead Lane, Whitby, North Yorkshire, YO21 1PZ

**Inspection dates** 6–7 June 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Throughout their time at St Hilda's, pupils make good progress overall. They consistently reach standards above age-related expectations by the time they leave the school.
- Teaching is good and on occasion, it is outstanding. There are many interesting activities in lessons that the pupils enjoy. They particularly enjoy topic work, which captures their imagination and helps them to develop their literacy and numeracy skills well.
- All staff are dedicated to providing a stimulating and safe environment in which pupils learn well and develop into responsible young people. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the work of the school.
- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. From an early age, pupils clearly enjoy school and this is demonstrated in their frequently exemplary attitudes to learning. They show a great deal of respect towards each other and to all staff and visitors to the school. They feel safe, are polite, well mannered, work hard and are proud of their school.
- The headteacher, supported by the governors, has ensured a clear focus on continuing to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. Leaders and managers have successfully introduced recent changes to further enhance this.
- Governors provide a good balance of support and challenge for the school.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not yet sufficient outstanding teaching to lead to a higher proportion of pupils making outstanding progress.
- The role of middle leaders requires further development so that they can have a greater impact on the subjects they lead.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed five lessons, one of which was a joint observation with the headteacher. In addition, the inspector made a number of short visits to classrooms.
- Meetings were held with pupils, members of the governing body, the headteacher and the school's senior staff. The inspector also met with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the 16 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), together with the results of the school's own questionnaire to parents and discussions with parents at the start of the school day.
- The inspector also took account of seven staff questionnaires.
- The inspector observed the school's work and examined a range of documents, including the school's own view of its performance and planning for improvement, the information the school keeps on pupils' current progress and achievement, records relating to behaviour and attendance and the school's safeguarding information.
- Pupils were observed at playtime, lunchtime and at the beginning and end of the school day.

## Inspection team

Alan Sergison, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This school is much smaller than the average sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British background.
- Pupils are currently taught in three classes: one class for Reception/ Year 1/ Year 2 pupils, a Year 3/4 class and a Year 5/6 class. The organisation of classes can change annually due to the differing numbers of pupils on roll in each year group.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage provision is within the mixed Reception/Year 1/ Year 2 class.
- The headteacher has a teaching commitment of one day each week.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those children in local authority care or from services families, is below average.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported at school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school exceeds 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?

- Improve the overall quality of teaching so a higher proportion is outstanding in order to raise standards and accelerate pupils' progress further by:
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to respond to teachers' marking
  - ensuring that the questioning skills of all teachers are as sharp as those in the very best lessons so that teachers can regularly check pupils' understanding in order to finely tune teaching to meet pupils' different needs
  - making the best use of additional adult support so that it is all as good as the very best practice in the school
  - providing opportunities for teachers to share the very best practice in the school and in other school.
- Further develop the skills and knowledge of middle leaders about how well pupils are doing, to support them to accelerate pupils' progress in their subject areas by:
  - providing more opportunities for them to observe colleagues teaching and to undertake formal analyses of pupils' work in their subject areas
  - enabling them to use this information to inform and develop provision in their subject area.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- The achievement of pupils is good and improving. Lesson observations, talking to pupils about their learning and looking at their work in books all confirm this.
- Most children start school with skills that are typically as expected for their age. This can vary significantly from year to year however, given the very small numbers in each year group. Children make good progress throughout the Reception class because of good teaching and the exciting range of well planned activities, which take account of their individual learning needs. Children are encouraged to be independent, taking responsibility for their own learning. They are well prepared to enter Year 1.
- Pupils continue to make good progress across Key Stages 1 and 2, so that by the time they leave the school in Year 6, their attainment is consistently above age-related expectations. All groups of pupils make equally good progress relative to their individual starting points. This demonstrates the school's successful promotion of equality of opportunity.
- Pupils who read to the inspector demonstrated how to work out unfamiliar words and read with enthusiasm. Older pupils talked animatedly about the work of different authors and expressed a clear view of their preferences. Pupils say that they enjoy reading and the vast majority read with expression, understanding and fluency. As they move through the school, most use punctuation to emphasise words and vary their voice when reading. By the time they leave Year 6, pupils' ability to read is good.
- Inspection evidence confirms that pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding are progressing well across the school now. This is the result of the extra support provided, such as small-group work and intervention activities. Consequently, the gap between their achievement and that of their peers is closing quickly. In 2012, there were not enough of these pupils to comment on their attainment.
- Pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs make similar progress to that of their peers. Sensitive, well organised support from teachers and teaching assistants enables these pupils to gain confidence in their own ability and promotes their learning well.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently good throughout the school and on occasion outstanding.
- Where teaching is at its best, teachers and teaching assistants plan lessons very well together to ensure that pupils have work to get the best out of them. Consequently, pupils learn rapidly because they have work which matches their ability and they are finding things out for themselves. This was clearly demonstrated in a very successful science activity observed in the Reception class where children were totally engrossed in experimenting with simple electrical circuits.
- In another very successful lesson with Years 5 and 6 pupils, the teacher's high expectations and sharp use of questioning, challenged and supported pupils to compare and contrast the differences between similes and metaphors. Pupils were all highly motivated and displayed exemplary attitudes to learning. As a result they made very good gains in their knowledge and understanding and very good progress in their learning.
- Teachers make very good use of 'learning partners', where pupils talk together to share their ideas. This shared working helps them to clarify their thinking and rehearse their ideas before writing.
- Not all teaching is as outstanding as this. On occasions, teachers' questioning is not quite as sharp and does not probe and extend pupils' learning as well, which means that the pace of learning is less rapid. Further, the additional adult support available is not always used to best effect.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' work is consistent and pupils are given good guidance on how to

improve their work and they appreciate this. There are, however, insufficient opportunities for pupils to respond to this marking in order to take full advantage of its potential help.

Nevertheless, there were some good examples of pupils checking their own and others' work and assessing how well they have completed or understood what they have done.

- Recent changes have been made to the teaching of reading skills. These have been successful and have resulted in improvements in pupils' ability to link letters to the sounds they make (phonics).

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

- From an early age, pupils learn how to value each other, the adults around them and their vibrant school community. There is a strong atmosphere of mutual respect, best summed up in the words of one pupil who stated that St Hilda's was a good place to be 'because everyone loves one another and we get on very well together. It is not all about results, it is also about kindness, and we have fun too.'
- As the result of the very high expectations of all staff, pupils behave exceptionally well both in lessons and around the school and this results in extremely good attitudes to learning and care towards each other.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the work of the school and very much appreciate the care and support that their children receive. This was reflected in conversations with parents. As one commented, 'Staff are amazing! If you speak to them you never feel rushed, the door is always open if you have a problem. You cannot find fault with them.'
- Pupils enjoy taking responsibility, for example, as class monitors or as members of the school council.
- Pupils say that bullying is not an issue at the school although they do learn about different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying. They know how to stay safe when using the internet. They were very clear that they could turn to any adult in the school if they felt unsafe and that there are clear procedures that would deal with issues should they arise.
- Staff have worked very successfully to improve attendance which is now average. Pupils are punctual to school and to lessons.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- The headteacher provides caring and effective leadership. The school benefits from her boundless enthusiasm, which is reflected in the very high proportion of pupils, staff and parents who say that they enjoy and are proud to be part of the school. Staff are fully committed to her clear direction. There is a strong commitment to build upon the positive climate for learning which pervades the school.
- The headteacher systematically checks how well the school is doing. Consequently, she has an accurate view of its strengths and a clear understanding of the priorities for improvement and actions needed to achieve them.
- There has been a determined and successful focus on improving the quality of teaching. When necessary, senior leaders have taken decisive action to address areas of underperformance. The headteacher has a clear view of what needs to be done to improve teaching further. However, teachers do not yet have sufficient planned opportunities to share more widely the very best practice seen in the school and in other schools.
- Training provided for all staff matches the needs of the school well. All staff work well together as a cohesive team, closely focussed on improving pupils' achievement. The management of teachers' performance is linked closely to the quality of learning and how well pupils are progressing.
- The progress pupils make across the school is tracked robustly and staff are held to account for this at regular meetings with senior leaders. Middle leaders, however, have not yet been given

sufficient opportunities to gain a full understanding of their subject across the school. For example, they do not systematically observe their colleagues teach or undertake a formal scrutiny of the work pupils undertake in their subject areas.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The good, broad and exciting curriculum contributes significantly to this. The school provides a good range of stimulating educational visits and visitors to the school. Older pupils also benefit from the opportunity to participate in a residential visit to Hornsea. The good range of extra-curricular activities has a significant positive impact on pupils' development, supporting them to work well in teams, to show initiative, to develop a sense of right and wrong and to improve their self-confidence.
- Safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements.
- The local authority provides good light touch support for the school. This is much appreciated by the governors and the headteacher.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governance is good. Governors know the school well and access a range of training and development opportunities to develop their skills. They know about the quality of teaching at the school, and how well pupils are doing compared to other schools locally and nationally, through regular visits and detailed reports. They fully support the drive to improve the quality of teaching further and to raise pupils' achievement. They challenge and support school leaders and are increasingly involved in school improvement, building on strengths and diligently tackling underperformance. They are aware of how pupil premium funding is spent and the impact of this on pupils' attainment. They take responsibility for how the school rewards staff, managing the performance and salary of the headteacher and other staff. Financial management is secure.

## 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>	121658
<b>Local authority</b>	North Yorkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	411910

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>	52
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Alison Hodgson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Pamela Crabtree
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 March 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01947 603901
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