

St Bonaventure's Catholic Primary School

Egerton Road, Bishopston, Bristol, BS7 8HP

Inspection dates 12–13 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
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.

- Pupils make good progress and achieve well. Children enter school with skills and understanding expected for their age. By the time they leave, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are well above the national average.
- Teaching is good overall and some is outstanding. Most teachers have strong subject knowledge and high expectations of pupils. Learning support assistants support pupils well in lessons.
- Children in Reception have an outstanding start to their life in school. They receive very effective help and are given exciting and interesting things to do.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are stunning. They are passionate about learning and care deeply about their work and each other.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The school's core values of trust and respect are deeply embedded from the outset.
- The partnership between the headteacher, staff, governors and pupils has created a caring environment where pupils can thrive personally and achieve well academically.
- Governors play a major part in checking on the work of the school. They use their skills well and strengthen the overall leadership of the school.
- Teamwork and collaboration are essential elements of the school's approach. This is reflected in pupils' excellent attitudes to learning.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Leader and managers do not always focus sharply enough on pupils' progress when checking the quality of teaching.
- Some teachers' use of information about pupils' performance is not carefully enough to set work at the right level for them.
- A number of Year 3 pupils are not making the same progress as their peers.

Information about this inspection

- Twenty three lessons or part lessons and an assembly were observed and every class was visited. Two visits to lessons were undertaken as joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. A short number of visits to classrooms were made to look at pupils' work in their books and the range of activities on offer to pupils. Inspectors listened to some pupils in Year 1 and Year 3 read.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, other senior leaders and a representative from the local authority. Two representative groups of pupils from Years 3 to 6 were spoken with to gather their views about the school and talk to them about their work.
- Two meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body and seven other governors.
- Inspectors analysed 102 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, about the school and the responses from 12 members of staff to the Ofsted questionnaire.
- A range of documentation was scrutinised, including the school's plans for improvement, data and information on pupils' progress and minutes of governing body meetings. An analysis of the school's records of monitoring of teaching and the management of performance was conducted.
- During this inspection, inspectors asked additional questions designed to ascertain the school's view on the impact and effectiveness of the local authority services to support school improvement. The information will contribute to work being carried out by Ofsted to assess the use, quality and impact of those services.

Inspection team

Richard Light, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Janet Edwards

Additional Inspector

Elizabeth Strange

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is below average. This is additional government funding provided to schools to support pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care and those with a parent or carer in the armed services.
- There is a privately run pre-school on the school site which was not inspected at this time.
- 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?

- Improve the quality of teaching by:
 - making sure all teachers accurately use the information available about pupils' prior achievement to plan challenging activities that better meet their wide range of abilities
 - providing pupils with clear criteria for what they need to be able to do in order to achieve the next step in their learning
- Accelerate the rate of progress for pupils in Year 3 to match that of other pupils in the school.
- Ensure that procedures to check on the performance of teachers are firmly rooted in the progress that pupils are making.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter school with skills and abilities that are generally in line with those expected for their age. They make outstanding progress in Reception, benefiting from a very well-resourced environment, a rich variety of activities and regular checks on their learning. Children enter Year 1 with skills above the national average.
- For the past four years standards at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 in reading, writing and mathematics have been well above average when measured using average points scores. Pupils make good progress through Years 1 to 6 so by the time they leave school their standards are high. Very large proportions reach the expected levels and higher than expected levels for their age in national tests.
- The progress of pupils entitled to support from the pupil premium is similar to that of other pupils. The gap in their attainment and that of their peers, which was wide in 2012, is now much narrower. They now achieve standards similar to the national average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing.
- Pupils make good progress in reading because of the high-quality teaching and texts used to stimulate pupils' interest. This is also having a positive influence on pupils' writing and reducing the variation in standards between the two subject areas. In 2012 the gap between achievement in reading and that in writing was double what was seen nationally. Now it is narrower than the national average.
- Pupils achieve well in mathematics. In lessons they use mathematical language accurately and develop their understanding of mathematical concepts well. Well-planned independent activities enable pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge successfully in a variety of problem solving activities.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well provided for. Targeted programmes such as 'reading recovery' help pupils catch up rapidly. Learning support assistants provide strong support to pupils in lessons and in catch-up programmes. Practical approaches and aids to enable pupils to access planned activities in lessons help pupils achieve well.
- In lessons, pupils sustain their concentration admirably, persevere at tasks and listen attentively to teachers. Even when lessons lack imagination, pupils keep up their enthusiasm for learning. They cooperate very well and are at ease working independently, in pairs or in group situations. This prepares pupils well for their next stage of education.
- School sports teams, for example in netball, are successful at a national level because of the specialist teaching they receive. Pupils as young as Year 2 confidently and regularly perform challenging piano pieces in front of the whole school.
- Most of the 102 parents and carers who responded to the online parent survey said they feel their children make good progress. In addition, the pupils who met inspectors were extremely positive about their lessons and the progress they make.

The quality of teaching is good

- Overall, teaching is good across the school. Teachers have strong, technical subject knowledge, and they need to in order to challenge these very capable pupils. The school's 'three-way peer training plan' is improving teaching and further deepening teachers' skills.
- Teaching in Reception is outstanding. Children are given interesting and varied activities that link together exceptionally well. Plentiful opportunities to apply their skills in phonics (letters and the sounds they make), for example to write signs for their 'treasure island' as part of their work on an aquarium theme, are developing children's writing skills rapidly. Independence and self-motivation are fostered early. Children spontaneously record their own work, such as number sentences when carrying out a fish spotting activity.
- Where teaching is best, lessons ensure that pupils' needs are well met through effective learning

sequences. High expectations, good modelling of tasks, personalised feedback and deep questioning that requires pupils to think hard routinely challenge and support pupils' learning.

- Where teaching is less effective, teachers talk for too long and the pace of learning slows. In Year 3, information is not used carefully enough to plan work at the right level for pupils' needs. This means that work is sometimes too easy for them.
- Paired work is used effectively to develop pupils' use of language throughout the school. In Year 2, pupils animatedly discussed baby pictures of themselves when studying growth and differences. In Year 4, pupils excitedly explored the impact of using different adjectives in their writing. In Year 6, an open-ended mathematical investigation into Fibonacci's sequence prompted pupils to devise their own questions such as 'What if you extend the sequence?' and 'Are there any different patterns using the multiples of 9?'
- Teachers use carefully considered questions and give pupils time to think about and deepen their understanding. The visual interpretation of a word problem in a Year 5 mathematics lesson that focused on the method pupils used, and not the answer, was highly effective. This gave time for pupils to carefully use mathematical language when expressing and exploring their different strategies.
- The teaching of reading is strong. Teachers know the technical aspects of text structures and how language works. Pupils are taught how to manipulate texts to create an effect. Teachers check carefully language and punctuation use during lessons. Pupils were heard to explain why they had used commas in a clause and more importantly, what impact this had on the reader.
- Examples of advanced and mature comments made by older pupils have established a highly developed learning dialogue with teachers. This style of thoughtful work, both on the part of the teacher and pupils, is highly skilled. However, many other pupils are unclear of what the criteria is for their next step in learning and what they need to do to get there.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. An exceptionally friendly and polite atmosphere permeates the school. Pupils get on very well with each other and with adults. They enjoy school and are extremely keen to learn. There is a deep dislike of any poor behaviour; a hushed silence of shock descended the class when a teacher thought a pupil might be chewing a sweet during a lesson; he was not!
- Pupils respond extremely positively to the high expectations of them in lessons. Their behaviour and attitudes make a particularly powerful contribution to their own learning.
- The typically inclusive nature of the school is summed up by the pupils who told an inspector of their wish that a new pupil could speak English 'so we could tell him we are nice, kind and friendly, because he is blind and he can't see us smiling'.
- Pupils are very quick to help and support each other in classes and around the school. On seeing a younger pupil struggle with her shoelace on the playground an older pupil stopped to help. When asked if it was her sister, the younger pupil replied 'No, I'm not sure who that was, but it really helped because I find tying my laces very hard.'
- Pupils are extremely confident, mature and knowledgeable about their own needs and the needs of others. Independence is fostered right from the word go. Even at the age of four, children carry out activities, follow instructions and complete tasks by themselves in a trustworthy manner. These early routines are effectively built upon through the school.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of different types of bullying. They say it is extremely rare and any problems are quickly dealt with. Pupils have a very thorough understanding of how to stay safe, including e-safety.
- Pupils act safely and feel very safe in school. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school's ability to keep their children safe.
- Pupils' attendance is good because they thoroughly enjoy coming to school.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, in combination with other senior leaders, is determined to bring about further improvements to the school. The conscientious, reflective and calm style of leadership has engendered a great amount of trust among the staff and wider community. These characteristics are complemented well by the different skills of other senior leaders and all combine to make an effective team.
- The school knows its strengths and areas for further development well through the wide programme of activities to check on the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. This information is shared fully with governors. However, the scrutiny of books and lesson observations do not place a sharp enough focus on the progress pupils are making when forming judgements about a teacher's performance.
- Leaders and managers reacted methodically to a dip in results in 2012. The revised school improvement plan is mature, ambitious and reflects a deeper understanding of learning. Its success can be seen in the improved quality of subject leadership in English and mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT). Training through a peer study approach is helping to improve teaching, demonstrating the school's good capacity for further improvement.
- The curriculum's depth and richness are developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness outstandingly well. Visitors to the school, a wide variety of trips, many after-school activities and the chance to perform to real audiences raise pupils' aspirations.
- Performance management arrangements provide support and appropriate training for teachers. More challenging targets in 2012 that are linked to the school improvement plan priorities, the Teachers' Standards and pupils' achievement have raised expectations and improved teaching which is now mostly good or better. Teachers are aware of the relationship between performance management, promotion and salaries.
- The local authority is effective in supporting and challenging the school to improve. Direct support to the headteacher by the school improvement officer has strengthened the quality of leadership in the school. Advice and support to school leaders to learn from outstanding practice have improved the quality of teaching. Training provided to governors is helping them interpret school data robustly and carry out their performance management duties. Firm challenge to the school, following a dip in its performance in 2012, by carrying out additional monitoring visits has raised expectations and is improving pupils' achievement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is highly skilled and effective. Governors strengthen the overall leadership of the school considerably. Governors are acutely aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are highly ambitious for further improvements. They use the good quality information provided for them to ask searching questions about the performance of different groups of pupils. They make sure the pupil premium is well spent and check that the pupils entitled to the funding are benefiting from its use. Governors are fully supportive of the school, but also consistently challenge its performance. A series of paired visits to the school to gain first-hand evidence helps fully inform governors of the impact of school improvement plans. Consequently, governors are very aware of how good teaching is in the school and how priorities set in the school improvement plan are helping to make it even better. They know that an even sharper focus on the progress of all pupils will help the school become outstanding.

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	109255
Local authority	Bristol City of
Inspection number	423408

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Voluntary aided school
School category	Primary
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	406
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Eduardo Romero
Headteacher	Lucille Charles
Date of previous school inspection	14–15 October 2008
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