

St Matthew's Catholic Primary School

Saffron Drive, Allerton, Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD15 7NE

Inspection dates 18–19 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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils' achievements, particularly in English and mathematics, are good.
- By the time they leave school in Year 6, standards are average which represents good progress from their starting points in nursery.
- Teaching is consistently good and sometimes outstanding; it enables pupils to learn well and feel pleased with their work.
- Beyond regular lessons, pupils take part in a wide range of activities that they find fascinating, such as Tea Dancing in Year 6 (from the waltz to the jive).
- The headteacher leads very well ensuring that this good school is continually improving. Senior leaders work effectively, in partnership with the knowledgeable governing body, to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Parents and staff all agree that pupils' welfare is given top priority. A parent declared that, 'the school feels like home to me.' As a result, pupils feel safe, enjoy lessons and talk enthusiastically about all that they do.
- Pupils are justly proud of their school, which is demonstrated by their good behaviour and personal development.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not yet enough outstanding teaching to make sure the progress of all pupils is first-rate.
- Attendance is below average and, although there are signs of improvement, it is not yet rising quickly enough.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 11 lessons or part lessons taught by nine teachers.
- Two lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher or the deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and examined a range of pupils' workbooks in English, mathematics and other subjects.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, 12 parents, the headteacher and some staff. Inspectors spoke on the telephone to a representative from the local authority and an independent consultant employed by the Bradford and Keighley Catholic Schools' Partnership.
- The inspectors took account of 35 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).
- Twenty-seven questionnaires from staff were analysed during the inspection.
- The inspectors observed the work of the school and examined a variety of documents including those relating to pupils' progress, the school's evaluation of its own performance, plans for development, attendance, behaviour and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Roger Gill, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jonathon Yodaiken

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding is above the national average. A very few pupils are looked after in public care. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after.)
- The proportion of disabled pupils or with a special educational need who are supported at school action is above average but the proportion at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, including those who are learning English as an additional language, is greater than that found nationally.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which set the minimum expectations of pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school operates a breakfast club.
- There has been some significant remodelling of the school building since the school's last inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching to accelerate learning even more by:
 - ensuring that all higher-attaining pupils receive sufficiently challenging work to do
 - speeding up progress in writing for pupils who receive pupil premium funding, disabled pupils and for those with a special educational need
 - improving the marking of all pupils' work so that more precise targets for improvement, in writing and mathematics, are provided
 - making sure that, when reading, all lower-attaining pupils in Key Stage 2 apply confidently their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make.
- Raise attendance to at least the national average by:
 - evaluating closely the attendance of groups of pupils and acting accordingly with parents and pupils to promote better attendance.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children start school with skills that are well below the expectations for their age, particularly in literacy and numeracy. They make good, and sometimes outstanding, progress in Nursery and Reception classes because they learn well through play and special sessions to foster skills, for example, in reading. As a result, they are well prepared to start Year 1 in all aspects of learning.
- By the end of Year 6, standards are at the national average and have been since 2009, which is why inspectors judge that pupils make good progress, at least, from the start of nursery. In 2012, it appeared that pupils' progress in Key Stage 2 required further improvement to be good, particularly because not enough pupils exceeded the nationally expected rate of progress. However, this year pupils in Year 6 have progressed at a faster rate than those in 2012 and the proportion of pupils doing better than is expected nationally is greater.
- Pupils' progress is also better in Key Stage 1 than it was in 2012. This is demonstrated, for example, by Year 1 pupils' much higher level of understanding about letters and the sounds they make.
- The 23 home languages spoken demonstrate the school's increasingly diverse culture. That said, pupils' progress in English is good, with among other things the school's engaging curriculum giving pupils plenty to talk about.
- Although progress is good, some higher-attaining pupils are not given sufficiently demanding work to do. Tasks are not always difficult enough and pupils are not always expected to solve more complicated problems independently.
- Overall, progress in reading is good but some lower-attaining readers in Key Stage 2 find it hard to recall their knowledge of letters and their sounds to help them read fluently. This prevents them making consistently good progress.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs progress as well as other pupils in reading and mathematics because teachers and teaching assistants work closely together to make sure they learn well. However, by contrast, in writing these pupils are not always advancing as quickly as their classmates.
- Pupils who receive support from pupil premium funding generally learn at the same rate as other pupils because they are given a wealth of extra guidance, but they still have some ground to make up in writing.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is good and pupils learn well because lessons are planned to suit their needs and relationships are very positive.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception classes) are taught well. They make good strides in learning to read, write and calculate because direct teaching is dovetailed with well-planned educational play activities designed to foster basic skills. Opportunities to extend learning outside the classroom are sometimes excellent, such as when children played in the Farm Shop where they learnt very many useful skills.
- Pupils are taught consistently well from Year 1 to Year 6. The teaching of reading benefits from a comprehensive system of teaching the sounds letters make and in mathematics, pupils often practise the basic rules in imaginative ways. For example, pupils in Year 5 calculated rations in a history lesson devoted to the Second World War.
- Some higher attainers lack sufficient challenge in the work they are given in mathematics and writing but nevertheless progress is good overall.
- Teachers' regular marking in English and mathematics praises pupils well but they are often not given specific enough guidance on how to reach the next level in their learning.
- Teaching assistants are used effectively in lessons, often teaching disabled pupils and those with

a special educational need. These pupils make good progress in reading and mathematics. The relative lack of progress in their writing is partly due to the lack of specific written guidance in their books.

- Pupils from minority ethnic heritages, including those learning English as an additional language, make good progress. Some pupils arrive partway through their education with little or no English. They make swift progress due to good teaching, the school's culture of meeting the needs of all pupils and its excellent induction procedures.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The headteacher, her deputy and welfare team are scrupulous about using their knowledge about pupils and their families to help dismantle any barriers to learning as soon as possible. As a result, pupils feel safe, report that the school really takes good care of them and behave well at all times.
- Breakfast Club, run by the school's Parent Involvement Worker and Senior Supervisor, is effective in helping pupils start the day in a calm and positive way.
- Key adults help pupils talk through their problems and emotional difficulties, which is why those that have posted a slip into the Worry Box are so sure that they will be taken seriously and helped. Parents are pleased that their children are given such valuable support.
- Behaviour in lessons is good. The majority of pupils are polite and join in readily with class discussions, sharing their ideas well. A minority remain passive and do not offer their ideas in class, which limits their chance of progressing quickly in their learning. This aspect often prevents behaviour from being outstanding in lessons.
- Behaviour is outstanding in assemblies, when pupils are fully captured by what they are doing such as when waltzing in preparation for the Year 6 annual Tea Dance or when using tablet computers to find things out in lessons. These occasions have a strong influence on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils understand about bullying and how to deal with it, so they feel safe at all times. They say, correctly, that bullying, racist language and misbehaviour in lessons are rare.
- Despite their keenness to come to school, attendance figures are below the national average, which is another aspect that holds the school back from being outstanding in this area.
- Parents recognise the good behaviour in school. The opinions expressed on Parent View about children being happy in school, feeling safe and behaving well are most positive.
- Pupils are eager to take on responsibilities, which is typical of their positive attitudes towards the school. Older pupils act as buddies to younger children, while others are digital leaders, school councillors or house captains.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher possesses a strong conviction about pupils' success both academically and personally. She and the other leaders ensure that the school enables these ambitions to flourish, which is why staff and parents are so positive about what has been created in the last few years.
- Since the last inspection, for example, weak teaching has been eliminated and a full partnership with parents has been established. The school building has been redesigned to include, for example, better accommodation for children in Nursery and Reception, high-quality disability access and a media suite in which some exciting opportunities exist for using new technologies.
- Attendance reached the national average in 2011 but since then it has been below average despite some good initiatives to improve it. Levels are a little higher this year but analysis of attendance patterns lacks precision with regards to the exact groups of pupils that should be targeted for help.
- Senior and middle leaders know how well the school is doing and what could be done to improve

it. For example, they know that pupils funded by pupil premium monies could have done better in 2012. This year these pupils have made much better progress in reading and mathematics, leaving only writing as an area for improvement.

- The school's good curriculum contributes well to pupils' achievement. Their learning lacks breadth in the study of other faiths but nevertheless spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall.
- A comprehensive system of appraisal and performance management has been adopted, which is linked to the pay scales. Teachers state that they are helped in making improvements in their work because monitoring of their lessons is so constructive and the right kind of training is always available.
- The local authority supports the school well, providing just the right level of help for a school that they rightly judge as being good and improving.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors possess a very good knowledge of the school because many of them are so closely involved in it, almost on a daily basis. Moreover, the local partnership of Catholic schools gives them a wealth of training and opportunities for discussion. The school's finances are managed well. For example, the beneficial alterations to the accommodation stems from their vision and forward planning. Moreover, they understand the school's system for performance management and how teachers are rewarded and what is being done to improve teaching. Furthermore, governors fulfil their statutory duties and ensure safeguarding meets requirements.
 - The full governing body meetings run smoothly, which results in members having a clear understanding of how good the school is performing and what needs to be done next. They know how well year groups are doing but lack a precise knowledge about how well all groups of pupils are progressing.

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	107336
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	411991

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	250
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Fr Cannice McGinn
Headteacher	Mrs Katy Cox
Date of previous school inspection	24 February 2010
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