

St Wulstan's Catholic Primary School, Great Harwood

Rushton Street, Great Harwood, Blackburn, Lancashire, BB6 7JQ

Inspection dates 2–3 July 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 are making good progress in all Key Stages. Their skills in reading are particularly well developed.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils are confident and outgoing, and make friends easily. They feel safe, play and work well together both inside the classroom and at break times. Their conduct and manners around school are good.
- Teaching is usually good and sometimes outstanding. Pupils enjoy their lessons and have access to good resources and skilled teaching assistants who support their learning well.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and those who are supported by the pupil premium make progress equal to that of their peers.
- Leaders and managers have secured good improvements in the quality of teaching and learning and in pupils' achievement.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is provided for well, and pupils report they feel safe and happy at school.
- Governors are well informed, have high expectations and have managed finances and staffing well through a time of change as they moved to federation status.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet outstanding, because some lessons do not challenge the most able pupils to achieve all they are capable of, particularly in writing, mathematics and in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- During the recent significant changes in leadership, the performance management system has not been as robust as it has been in the past.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 13 lessons, and looked at pupils' books in all years and across subjects.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, the governing body, a representative of the local authority and with groups of pupils.
- Inspectors took into account the 11 responses to the online questionnaire Parent View.
- Inspectors took account of a wide range of documentation, including assessment data, minutes from meetings, policies and safeguarding documents.
- The linked on-site pre-school did not form part of this inspection.

Inspection team

Rebecca Lawton, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Dave Blackburne

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a smaller than average primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is slightly above average, and the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is also slightly above average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for those pupil known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportions of pupils supported by school action, school action plus, and those with statement of special educational needs are all lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic heritage is small, and the proportion for whom English is an additional language is also very small.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Since the last inspection, the school has entered into a hard federation with another school, Our Lady and St Hubert's Primary. A single governing body now functions across the two schools.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To improve teaching so that more is outstanding, and therefore, raise pupils' achievement by:
 - increasing the level of challenge for the more-able pupils within lessons, particularly in writing and mathematics
 - increasing the opportunities for pupils to undertake long pieces of writing in all subjects.
- To improve leadership and management by:
 - further refining the new tracking and monitoring system in the Early Years Foundation Stage to enable the planning of activities that better match more-able children's needs
 - making performance management systems more robust and more closely linked to pay.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- In previous years, children have consistently started school with skills and abilities below those expected for their age. However, this year, the Reception age children started with skills in line with those typically expected for their age.
- Progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage is normally good. This year, using a new tracking and assessment system, final reported levels of attainment have been slightly harsh and do not look as favourable, although the children have in fact made good progress and achieved well.
- Particular cohort and staffing issues led to a significant dip in attainment in Key Stage 1 in 2012. Good progress has since resumed and good levels of attainment are now being achieved, which are broadly in line with national averages for reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2.
- Pupils read widely and often, and report that they enjoy reading. This is reflected in their reading attainment levels, which are high in all Key Stages. The national phonics check indicates that pupils in Year 1 are already well above average in their reading skills. In Year 6, this year pupils' final standards in reading is predicted to be above the national average.
- Progress in Year 3 this year has accelerated, because pupils have closed the gap in attainment that occurred last year. In the other years progress is uniform, and overall pupils make good progress across Key Stage 2. Attainment at the end of Year 6 is above average in English and mathematics. It is predicted to be above the national average this year.
- The few pupils who have special educational needs and those supported by the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, make good progress which is at least equal to that of their peers. They are well supported by additional resources and the current gap of around two terms between their attainment and that of other pupils in the school is closing. Some pupils have already closed the gap completely in reading in Key Stage 1 and in mathematics in Key Stage 2. The school is committed to equality of opportunity for all pupils.
- The proportions of pupils making and exceeding expected progress in each year group has significantly increased, and is ensuring the pupils are well prepared for the next stages of their education.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is usually good and sometimes outstanding. In the best lessons, teachers use the good relationships they have with pupils to explore topics in depth and use good questions to shape tasks to ensure all pupils make good progress.
- Teachers use resources well, and pupils are encouraged to work independently. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, a group of pupils used laptops in one corner of the room, while another group wrote diary entries and yet another group tasted exotic fruits, all learning new 'describing words' yet in different ways within the same lesson.
- In some lessons, the more-able pupils are not being stretched as far as they are capable, particularly in mathematics and writing. Tasks given to them are not always consistently challenging them to reach the levels they could potentially manage, or produce the amount of work of which they are capable. There are too few opportunities for pupils to complete longer pieces of writing in all subjects.
- Teachers create positive learning environments, where pupils are supported by all adults and have access to additional support where it is needed. In the best lessons, tasks are clearly focussed to enable pupils to assess and monitor their own progress and learning and they are fully involved in managing their own success.
- Additional one-to-one and small group support for those pupils who are identified as having specific needs have a positive impact. Many of these pupils close the gaps in achievement that

have been identified quickly and return to class back in line with their peers.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are usually positive, and low-level disruption is uncommon. Pupils report that they enjoy school and make friends easily. Several lessons were seen where pupils worked in mixed-age groups without fuss and good relationships had been formed with different friends across different classes.
- Those parents who responded to the online questionnaire Parent View were positive about behaviour and safety. All of the respondees would recommend the school.
- There were few well-founded concerns by staff or pupils, and logs of incidents in school showed that poor behaviour is rare and is dealt with effectively when it does occur.
- Pupils' conduct around school is generally good, and behaviour in lessons is managed consistently well.
- Pupils report that they feel safe and well looked after, and could give examples of how to report any incidents of poor behaviour or bullying. They were well informed about the different types of bullying, and were able to describe good ways of keeping safe, including online. They reported that they had confidence in the school's ability to tackle any issues that may occur.
- Attendance has dipped from previously very high levels, but remains above the national average.

The leadership and management are good

- After a considerable period of turbulence within the senior leadership team, which did impact on pupils' achievement, the school has secured improvements which have resulted in a return to previous good levels of progress.
- Teaching is now improving, and plans for further improvement are focussed on correctly identified areas of weaker practice. Recent strategies have had a positive impact and have turned around areas of the school's work identified as weaknesses to the extent that they are now strengths of the school, for example, pupils' attainment in reading.
- The school's view of its own performance is good, although improvements still need to be made to the evaluation of achievement data to ensure that a clear picture of pupils' progress and attainment can be communicated to all staff.
- The systems in the Early Years Foundation Stage which track and monitor children's progress are not yet embedded or efficient. Current pilot projects are using new systems which do not yet sufficiently collect assessments of children's skills on entry to the Reception class. The system is not efficient in tracking children's progress during the year. This makes it difficult for teachers to plan tasks to ensure all who are capable, especially the more able children, make progress towards reaching the higher levels of the new Early Learning Goals.
- The provision for the development of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Extra-curricular trips and events, as well as regular collective worship and a daily focus on manners and conduct, support pupils to reflect regularly on their own skills.
- Safeguarding procedures meet requirements.
- The local authority has provided additional support to the school during the transition to federation status, and during the appointment of an executive headteacher for the two schools.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors manage finances and staffing closely, although performance management systems have been in transition during the recent leadership turbulence and are not as robust as they have been previously.
 - Governors are monitoring the spending of the pupil premium funding and are in the process of tracking its impact on pupils' pastoral as well as academic development.

- Governors are well-informed, and access a wide range of information to compare the school's progress. They are ambitious for the school and for the federation, and are developing new systems with additional rigour in response to the changes in leadership and governance structures.

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	119646
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	411938

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	171
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Eileen Hayes
Headteacher	Mark Proctor (Acting Headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	23 June 2010
Telephone number	01254 884533
Fax number	01254 877154
Email address	head@st-wulstans-greatharwood.lancs.sch.uk

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