

St Bernadette's RC Primary School

Cookgate, Nunthorpe, Middlesbrough, North Yorkshire, , TS7 0PZ

Inspection dates 3–4 July 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		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Fully involving pupils in all aspects of school life is one of the significant strengths of this school. Pupils feel respected and valued. They are unfailingly polite, helpful and exceptionally well-behaved.
- Leaders and managers, including the governors, are very proud of the highly caring ethos. Pupils are fully prepared for their next steps because of an approach that supports all aspects of a child's development.
- Pupils make good progress from their starting points and by the time they leave the school, standards are consistently above average in both English and mathematics. The dip in pupils' progress in 2012 has been tackled effectively.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive very good support, which enables them to achieve well.
- Overall teaching is good. There is an increasing amount of outstanding teaching in school. Pupils are enthusiastic learners who enjoy lessons and actively contribute their ideas.
- The school has a strong role in both the faith community and the wider local community. Parents are extremely enthusiastic and value highly what the school helps their children achieve.
- The breadth of the curriculum and some of the experiences offered to pupils are outstanding. Pupils are encouraged to take part in a wide range of sporting activities and achieve considerable success.
- The relatively new leadership team is working effectively to improve teaching and learning. Achievement has returned to previous levels after the drop in 2012. Significant improvements have been made in how pupils use their reading, writing and mathematics skills in other subjects.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Progress is not yet consistently good or better across all year groups.
- Outstanding practice in teaching and assessment is not yet shared widely enough.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching in all classes and 15 lessons.
- An inspector listened to a group of pupils read.
- The inspectors looked at a sample of the work in pupils' books in all subjects to get a view of pupils' current progress and their progress over time.
- The inspectors took account of the 42 responses from parents to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and the most recent school questionnaire for parents. An inspector also talked with some parents.
- An inspector talked with a group of pupils about their view of the school and how safe they felt.
- Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body and five governors, staff and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors looked at a number of documents including the school improvement plan, data on pupils' progress and reports on teaching.

Inspection team

Nora Waugh, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Derek Sleightholme

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average sized primary school.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils 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 proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is much lower than average. In 2012, there were no pupils eligible for the pupil premium in Year 6. The pupil premium is additional funding for those who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- Fewer pupils leave or enter school except at the usual starting points than in most other schools.
- The school runs childcare before and after school.
- There have been several staff changes since the last inspection, including the appointment of a new deputy headteacher who took up post in January 2013.
- The school meets the government's current floor targets 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 and of assessment to secure pupils' consistently good or better achievement by:
 - sharing the outstanding practice evident in teaching across the school
 - ensuring that all staff make good use of the tracking data to identify any variation in pupils' progress
 - ensuring that assessment is used consistently well across the school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start in the Nursery class with skills which are typical for their age. Adults have high expectations and provide well-structured play activities to help children learn. There is a strong emphasis on developing skills that will help children to become readers and writers.
- This approach continues into the Reception class and by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, children have made good progress. This is seen in the confidence with which they discuss what they are doing and write as part of their play, using their knowledge of letters and sounds very well.
- This good progress continues through into Key Stage 1 and pupils achieve well. Writing has been a particular strength over the last five years.
- Pupils continue to make good progress overall throughout Key Stage 2, although there are some inconsistencies from year to year. In 2012, there was a slight dip in pupils' achievement in both English and mathematics. This has now been arrested and the trend in pupils attaining above average standards and progressing well has been re-established.
- The small number of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium, including those who are known to be eligible for free school meals, make similar progress and achieve similar standards to those of other pupils in the school. This is because of the additional support they are able to access if they are at risk of falling behind in their learning.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good and sometimes better progress. This is because of the very skilled support they receive from teaching assistants and the careful tracking of their progress. This, together with the good progress made by those pupils eligible for the pupil premium, reflects the school's commitment to promoting equality of opportunity for all pupils.
- Pupils' reading is very good throughout the school. Pupils read widely and enthusiastically for a variety of purposes including finding information. Older pupils confidently discuss their use of technology for this purpose.

The quality of teaching is good

- The school's motto is 'Love, Live, Laugh, Learn' and this successful promotion of the enjoyment of learning is evident throughout the school, whether it be Reception children going to France on a 'magic carpet aeroplane', pupils in the out-of-school provision finding frogs in the Peace Garden or Year 5 pupils studying poetry. Attitudes towards learning are extremely good.
- Lessons are prepared and organised well. Pupils settle quickly and concentrate on what they have to do, allowing teachers and support staff to work with groups without interruption. Support staff are used well and ensure that all pupils can participate fully.
- Relationships throughout the school are very good. Teachers enjoy what they are doing and have high expectations of pupils. Pupils listen carefully to adults and to each other.
- Teaching is good with an increasing proportion of outstanding teaching. Teachers are confident in their knowledge of what they are teaching. In the best lessons, questioning is used skilfully to challenge pupils' thinking, and pupils make choices as to how they approach tasks. In these lessons, all pupils learn very well.
- Most marking is thorough and helps pupils know what they need to do to improve their work. Usually, assessment is on-going and used effectively to identify when work has been successful and when extra practice is needed. As with teaching, the most effective assessment practice has not been shared widely enough and is, therefore, not evident in all classes, especially in Key Stage 2.
- English is taught well throughout the school. For younger pupils the emphasis is on developing children's language and early reading skills. An understanding of letters and sounds they make

(phonics) continues to be developed throughout the school. Older pupils are enabled to become mature and thoughtful writers. Handwriting is taught well from the start and pupils' good presentation of work is promoted effectively.

- Mathematics is taught well. Mental arithmetic skills are developed well. Teaching methods and resources have been introduced recently, which have improved pupils' understanding of basic mathematical principles.
- A strength of the school is the provision of wider opportunities which adds to pupils' academic achievement. The skills that pupils develop through participating in sport or while in the after-school provision add directly to their learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' personal development is outstanding. By the time they leave the school, pupils are mature young people who have thrived in a caring, family atmosphere where they know they are valued. Older pupils have significant responsibilities in school, for example, as 'Web watchers' updating the school website. Consultation with pupils happens regularly and allows them to be fully involved in the development of the school.
- A sense of belonging underpins this excellence. Pupils, staff and governors are proud to be part of the school community but are also very aware that they belong to the local faith community and participate actively in events in the diocese. There is also strong and very beneficial involvement in the local area and a very positive partnership with the nearby primary school.
- Behaviour is excellent throughout the school. The playground is designed particularly well to promote this excellence, with clearly defined areas to sit quietly and chat, play ball games or to look for wildlife.
- Pupils are clear they feel safe in school and say bullying does not happen. They are articulate about how to look after themselves and stay safe. Parents agree and are very enthusiastic about the school. The overwhelming majority would recommend it to others.
- Attendance has been consistently higher than the national average. There are strong systems in place to ensure that it remains good.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is both highly experienced and passionate about the school. Driven by the skilful leadership of the headteacher, the relatively new leadership team is ambitious and determined to move the school's overall effectiveness to outstanding. It is introducing new ways of working and sharing expertise with a determination to achieve the highest outcomes for all pupils.
- The leadership team's view of the school's performance is extremely accurate, identifies priorities that will continue to drive the school forward and is informed by the whole-school community.
- Leadership of teaching and learning is good. However, currently excellent practice is not shared widely enough across the school, which means that this aspect of leadership is good rather than outstanding.
- All staff access regular performance management and have targets related to their responsibilities and experience. They access appropriate professional development to support this. The quality of teaching is checked by a variety of activities, including regular observations of teaching and looking at pupils' work. The dip in outcomes in 2012 was thoroughly investigated and acted upon which has brought progress this year is back to previous levels.
- The school has had a recent focus on promoting reading, writing and mathematics through other curriculum subjects. This is proving successful at raising standards in both these skills and in other subjects.
- The school provides an excellent range of visits and activities to excite pupils about learning and to add to their experiences. The curriculum has been designed to appeal to pupils and work is

related very well to their interests and experiences, for example, the current Year 6 'Theme Park' topic. This is reinforced by the variety of activities from prayer groups to street dancing available at lunchtime and after school. As a relatively small school, the level of success in sport is highly impressive and helps to build both confidence and teamwork in pupils.

- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development remains outstanding. The school is rooted in its faith community with opportunities for reflection woven into everyday school life. The Peace garden allows pupils to sit and contemplate during breaks if they wish to. It is a highly inclusive school where pupils respect and understand each other.
- Extended school services are well-established and families value the flexibility offered by the breakfast and out-of-school care.
- The school values the effective support given by the local authority.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are enthusiastic about the school and many have been involved with it for a long time. As individuals they bring a range of skills to the benefit of the school. They believe strongly in a school fully integrated into its community. They are very well-informed about how the school is performing and when necessary offer rigorous challenge to the leadership team. They ensure that funding received through the pupil premium is used effectively. Their knowledge of the quality of teaching is enhanced by 'governor open days' and working closely with subject leaders. Governors are well-informed when making decisions about teachers' pay and are very proactive in matters related to finance, buildings and recruitment. They ensure that all statutory requirements including their requirements with regard to safeguarding are met.

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	111705
Local authority	Middlesbrough
Inspection number	412084

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	254
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Hogan
Headteacher	Mary Cobbold
Date of previous school inspection	1 April 2009
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