

St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School, Bacup

Tong Lane, Bacup, Lancashire, OL13 9LJ

Inspection dates 2–3 July 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- The quality of teaching is too variable. Not enough teaching is consistently good or better. Best practice has not been used consistently enough to help improve the overall quality of teaching.
- Standards are below expectation in some year groups because there has not been enough good teaching to enable some pupils to make expected progress.
- Many pupils do not take sufficient pride in how they set out their written work. There are inconsistencies in pupils' handwriting, presentation and the amount of writing they produce.
- Leaders view of the school's performance is over generous because they have not paid enough attention to national data.
- The learning environment is untidy and uninspiring. There is too much clutter. Displays are of a poor standard, and are out of date.
- Children in the Reception class do not access enough of their learning outside the classroom.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders and governors have embraced the help and support of the local authority and this has brought about notable improvements in teaching, especially that of mathematics and in the standard of pupils' work.
- Children make a good start to school in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They respond well to a good range of stimulating activities and are curious about the world around them.
- Pupils feel safe in school and trust the adults to help them when they are worried about something or if they need some help.
- Pupils enjoy a good variety of exciting additional activities throughout the school year, including visits, visitors and a residential stay for Year 6.
- Effective therapeutic and emotional support for pupils and parents is provided through Place2Be counselling, which is on the school site for 2.5 days per week.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 18 lessons taught by eight teachers and support assistants, including joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made a few short visits to observe pupils' learning and to hear some pupils in the Reception class and Year 4 read.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders and managers, staff, members of the governing body, two local authority representatives and groups of parents and pupils.
- The inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at a number of documents, including: national assessment data and the school's own information about pupils' progress, planning and monitoring of teaching, safeguarding information, the minutes of the governing body meetings and samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors took account of the school's survey responses from parents, parents' comments received in discussion and by telephone, and the six responses to the inspection questionnaire for staff. No responses were recorded on Parent View.

Inspection team

Barbara Flitcroft, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Ian Wellens

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is higher than the national average. This is additional funding for those pupils 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.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, is below that found in most schools. The proportion supported at school action is lower than in most schools.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, including those who are learning English as an additional language, is below that found nationally.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club on site. This was included in the inspection.
- Pupils move into and from this school more often than they do in most schools nationally,
- There have been several staff changes and some long-term absences since the previous inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that all is consistently good or better, and promote pupils' good achievement by ensuring that:
 - lessons capture pupils' interests and provide sufficient challenge for all pupils, especially in reading and writing in Key Stage 1
 - teachers regularly check that pupils understand new learning and the tasks that have been set in lessons
 - children in the Reception class are offered purposeful activities that promote learning a range of skills through play in the outdoor area
 - teachers consistently help pupils to concentrate in lessons
 - pupils are encouraged to present their work in a neat and organised way in all subjects.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - rigorously evaluating the school's performance against national data and by comparing performance and provision with that in other schools locally
 - ensuring that weaker or less experienced teachers are supported and coached by the most able ones.
- Radically improve the quality of the learning environment by:
 - making it attractive, stimulating, clean and clutter free
 - ensuring that displays of children's work are changed often to keep their appearance fresh and of interest to the children, and to make certain that they relate to current topics of learning
 - providing an excellent model of punctuation in display titles or captions.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement. Although standards at the end of Year 6 are rising and achievement is improving, there is still too much variation in rates of progress in different classes.
- Children start in the Nursery class with knowledge and understanding below those expected typically for their age. The school offers good indoor activities across the Early Years Foundation Stage, with exciting outdoor learning for Nursery children. Reception children are not yet making enough use of the outdoor space to develop children's skills in all areas of learning. Nevertheless, children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that the gap between their levels and those typically found nationally has narrowed by the time they enter Year 1. However, children still leave the Reception class with skills that are typically below those expected for five year olds.
- The school's results in the 2013 Year 1 reading check were greatly improved from the previous year. This is as a result of the good phonics teaching which gets off to a fine start in the Nursery class. Standards at the end of Year 2 in mathematics are consistently broadly average which represents good progress from children's low starting points, however, standards in reading are below average and in writing are well below average indicating that progress is slower in these subjects.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 in 2011 were not as high as in previous years and dipped to well below the national average in English and mathematics. With the good support of the local authority the school has worked effectively to arrest this decline and as a result, standards at the end of Year 6 rose dramatically in 2012 and were broadly average.
- Attainment in the current Year 6 is higher than in 2012 and achievement is continuing to improve. However, attainment is still behind where it should be for pupils in some other year groups because there is not enough good teaching to boost their progress.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. Those pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium also make good progress, as a result of additional support carefully targeted by senior leaders. Although the attainment of pupils known to be entitled to free school meals was almost two years behind other pupils in 2012, this represented a narrowing of the previous gap in performance.
- The more able pupils are making expected progress overall. In most lessons, pupils are set suitably demanding tasks but this is not the case in all classes.
- Across the school, there is a lack of pride in the way written work is presented by pupils.
- Pupils have good access to books. They are enthusiastic readers who willingly read with a variety of adults around school. Some volunteers have trained in the Better Reading Partnership and this has meant that pupils read more often with an adult in school.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is not consistently good across all lessons, both over time and during the inspection. Teachers' expectations are not always high enough. Sometimes the content of the lesson is presented in a way which does not fully interest or enthuse the children.
- Teachers do not always check pupils' understanding in lessons regularly enough or use all available opportunities to improve pupils' skills.
- In some lessons, learning moves along at a good pace, but in other lessons the pace of learning slows after a good start. This is sometimes due to pupils chatting and becoming distracted.
- Teachers do not do enough to make sure that classrooms are attractive, stimulating and are neat and tidy. Displays are not used effectively enough to support pupils' learning. For example, they are not used to demonstrate the correct use of punctuation and do not always reflect topics

that are currently being taught.

- The best teaching enables pupils of all backgrounds and abilities to learn successfully during their time in the school. Where teaching is good, teachers plan lessons well, sharing with pupils what is to be learned and, in the very best lessons, telling pupils how they can judge successful learning for themselves.
- The teaching of mathematics is often good. This is because the work set is closely matched to pupils' needs and practical resources are used well help pupils develop mathematical understanding.
- Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning when instructed well by the teacher. They provide good support in class and also when they take groups of pupils out of class for specific help. They work well to meet the needs of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. This includes making sure these pupils are also given opportunities to work independently.
- Good use is made of resources, including information and communication technology, to motivate pupils and enhance their learning. Marking of pupils' work is mainly up to date and, in most cases, next steps in learning are indicated by the teacher with a response from the pupils. However, pupils are not rigorously encouraged to present their work in a neat and organised fashion.
- Teaching is particularly good in the Early Years Foundation Stage. In one good literacy activity in the Nursery class, pupils carefully followed a sequence of instructions with pictures and numbers on how to make a fruit salad. Their speech was encouraged and developed during the activity. The children also demonstrated that they were good at taking turns to mix the fruit salad ingredients together.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour on the playground and in most lessons is good. Pupils from different ages work well together and care for each other. Older pupils encourage younger pupils to play well together
- Most pupils respond well to the spiritual, moral, and social guidance they receive. They develop positive attitudes to life and learning. They have a clear sense of right and wrong and embrace new experiences enthusiastically. Pupils were keen to speak about their visit to a Hindu temple, even though this was some time ago. This shows that the visit has made a strong impression on these pupils.
- Pupils are encouraged to become responsible citizens. The school council help to fund raise and organise charity events. Members suggest ways of improving the school at their meetings. Older pupils provide good role models for younger ones.
- Pupils' behaviour is managed well in the best lessons by teachers and support staff. In a few lessons, some restlessness is seen, especially when the pace of learning slows down or the lesson content does not motivate the pupils. In more successful lessons, pupils were instructed to put down whatever was in their hands and face the teacher so their concentration was better.
- Pupils say they feel safe at school, and this is supported by the views of most parents. Pupils say there is no significant bullying and they are confident that, if any did occur, they could trust the staff to deal with it well. Pupils are knowledgeable about different types of bullying, especially regarding new technology. Pupils are confident to share their worries with staff because they trust them.
- The school makes sure that pupils know how to keep themselves safe and prepares them well for the future. Visitors such as the Police and road safety officers come into school to help the pupils to learn about safety.
- Attendance is average. School leaders work with the Education Welfare Service to promote the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- The work of Place2Be, a charity which offers counselling, has very much helped some pupils and parents to overcome anxieties. One pupil reflected, 'If the Place2Be wasn't here, I wouldn't be

able to put things right.'

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Pupils' achievements and the quality of teaching have not been consistently good since the previous inspection, therefore, leadership and management require improvement.
- Leaders' checks on the school's performance have identified some of the appropriate key areas for school development. However, leaders judge the school to be better than it is. This is because the school does not make enough use of national data and does not do enough to compare the quality of its work with other local schools.
- The quality of teaching is carefully checked by senior staff and subject leaders. Useful feedback from these checks focuses on improvements to raise the quality of teaching. Teaching is being strengthened, but not all leaders are developing the weaker teachers' practice at a fast enough pace. For example, weaker and less experienced teachers are not being mentored and coached by the best teachers in the school.
- Staff are motivated and demonstrate a shared sense of responsibility and commitment to improving the school further. There are clear procedures for checking the performance of staff. Training and targets are linked well to the school's priorities for improvement. Salary increases are linked to pupils' progress and staff responsibilities.
- The curriculum provides a stimulating and imaginative activities with opportunities for involvement in clubs after school. Pupils value their visits to interesting places, including a residential visit for Year 6. The headteacher has ensured these are affordable for all pupils and The Parents and Friends Association assist with the cost of the trips.
- Pupils enjoy meeting at the breakfast club and look forward to their healthy afternoon snacks at the after-school club. This is effectively managed by the school.
- The school has a strong ethos of care, inclusion and equality. It carefully identifies pupils' needs and offers support for these pupils to learn alongside their peers. However, improvement is needed to the way that the school promotes equality of opportunity because currently some pupils make better progress than others.
- Leaders and governors have worked diligently to form productive partnerships with parents. Governors' questionnaires to parents indicate that the majority of parents value and support the work of the school.
- The local authority has a clear understanding of the school's performance and, over the last two years, has provided appropriate support, which has resulted in improved standards.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The members of the governing body bring a broad range of experiences and skills to benefit the school. They now provide good support and challenge for leaders and managers to ensure school continues to move forward. The headteacher keeps the governors fully informed about school's performance and provides termly reports on pupils' progress data. Governors have a good knowledge of the local community that the school serves. They check that safeguarding is secure. They have a good understanding of school's previous inadequate standards and how the school has moved forward, as a result of strategies to bring about improvement. Governors have a sharp awareness of how school spends its budget and they check that that pupil premium funding is used effectively.

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	119662
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	405876

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	175
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Diana Doherty
Headteacher	Mike Richards
Date of previous school inspection	5 July 2011
Telephone number	01706 873123
Fax number	01706 872421
Email address	head@st-marys-bacup.lancs.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

