

St Jude's Catholic Primary School, Wigan

Worsley Mesnes Drive, Worsley Mesnes, Wigan, Lancashire, WN3 5AN

Inspection dates 11–12 September 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

- Achievement requires improvement. Not enough pupils make good progress. Too few of the most-able pupils attain the high levels of which they are capable.
- There is not yet enough good quality teaching to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress over time.
- Work is not always matched closely enough to pupils' needs, and teachers' expectations are not consistently high enough, particularly for the most-able pupils.
- Pupils are not always given enough opportunity to think, learn and work independently.
- Improvements introduced by the headteacher have not had sufficient time to ensure consistently good achievement and to securely demonstrate good leadership and management.
- Governors have not always held the school to account as effectively as they should have done.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher and school leaders have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and what needs to be done to secure further improvement. A strong focus on improving teaching is leading to an acceleration in pupils' progress.
- Pupils' performance is carefully monitored and this is helping to improve teaching and raise achievement.
- Pupils who need extra help are well supported.
- Pupils behave well and say they feel safe in school.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well.
- The headteacher, governing body and the local authority are working closely to improve the school as quickly as possible.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons or part lessons, including one observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with school leaders and with three governors, including the vice-chair of the governing body. Inspectors also met a representative from the local authority and the school's National Leader of Education partner.
- Discussions were held with two groups of pupils and inspectors spoke informally to other pupils in lessons and during break and lunchtime.
- Inspectors looked at the work pupils were doing in lessons and in their books over time. They listened to pupils read and talked to them about their enjoyment of reading.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and examined a number of documents. These included data concerning pupils' current achievement, development plans and performance management information. Inspectors also looked at records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding arrangements. Minutes of governing body meetings and the local authority reports were also considered.
- Inspectors considered 13 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and spoke informally to parents as they brought their children to school. They also took into account 14 responses to the questionnaires completed by staff for the inspection.

Inspection team

Robert Birtwell, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Nina Heron

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Pupils are taught in eight classes from the Nursery to Year 6.
- Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children looked after by the local authority and children from service families) is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The headteacher took up post in January 2012.
- In the past year there have been a number of staff changes and absences.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and learning so that it is consistently good or better by:
 - making sure that teachers and teaching assistants give pupils more opportunity to think, learn and work independently
 - sharing existing good practice more widely across the school, and by providing more opportunities for teachers to observe outstanding teaching in other schools.
- Raise achievement so that more pupils make more than expected progress and more attain the highest levels by:
 - ensuring that teachers' expectations are always high enough so that work is sufficiently challenging and carefully matched to the needs of all pupils, particularly the most able.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that governors become more active in holding the school to account for pupils' attainment and progress.
- An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because pupils do not make consistently good progress across the school. Not enough pupils make more than the expected amount of progress. Not enough of the most-able pupils reach the high levels of which they are capable.
- Most children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and understanding that are below those typical for their age. They make steady progress in the Nursery and Reception classes and join Year 1 with levels of attainment which are broadly as expected for their age.
- At the end of Year 2, pupils attain standards in reading, writing and mathematics that are just below the national average.
- Pupils make the expected rate of progress in Key Stage 2. This includes the most-able pupils, who make progress at a similar rate to other pupils. In 2012, pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 was well below average in English and below average in mathematics. Preliminary results for 2013 show a similar pattern of attainment but an improvement in the proportion of pupils making the expected rate of progress in reading, writing and mathematics from their starting points. However, too few pupils made more than expected progress.
- The school's detailed tracking information about how well pupils are doing shows that pupils in all year groups are making more rapid progress in all subjects. This is confirmed by lesson observations and work in pupils' books and is because the quality of teaching is improving.
- Pupils make steady progress in reading. Pupils say they read regularly and they have a sound knowledge of phonics (letters and the sounds they make). However, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in the Year 1 national phonics check was below average in 2012 and is likely to remain so in 2013. Staffing changes are already leading to improvements this year.
- Pupils supported through the pupil premium funding receive small group and personalised support whenever it is needed. In national tests in 2012, the attainment of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals was similar to that of other pupils in the school.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make progress in line with other pupils because they are well supported and their achievement is closely monitored. The school is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity so that all groups of pupils make similar progress.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because there is not enough consistently good teaching to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress and achieve well over time. However, the quality of teaching is improving and the majority of teaching seen during the inspection was good. There is no inadequate teaching in the school, nor is there any outstanding teaching.
- In lessons where progress is slower teachers do not have high enough expectations of how much pupils can achieve. Teachers do not always ensure that work is matched closely to pupils' varying needs and abilities, especially for the most-able pupils. In these lessons, the pace of learning is not quick enough, and the work pupils are given lacks challenge, particularly for the most able and does not provide enough opportunity for them to reach the highest levels and for pupils to make good progress.
- In some lessons pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to think, learn and work independently.
- The quality of marking and assessment has improved. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and provide useful help and guidance about what pupils need to do to improve the quality of their work, and there is evidence that pupils respond to this advice.
- Where teaching is good there is a good level of pace and challenge. Work is well matched to pupils' needs and abilities and pupils are given opportunities to work independently or in groups

and to actively investigate and solve problems. For example, in a science lesson, pupils were investigating the characteristics of different types of food and greatly enjoyed sorting foods into different groups and putting these together to form a balanced diet. The teacher used questioning very skilfully to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding and as a result, they made good progress.

- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved. There is a good balance between activities directed by adults and children making their own choices, and between indoor and outdoor activities. Learning is purposeful and appropriate for children's varying levels of development. As a result, they make steady progress.
- Teaching assistants work closely with teachers and are usually effective in supporting the learning of individuals or small groups of pupils who need extra help. Occasionally, however, they can give pupils information or answers too readily rather than encouraging them to work things out for themselves.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour is good both in lessons and around school. They are well mannered and polite to each other and to adults and visitors. School records show that there are few instances of poor behaviour, and that the school reacts appropriately and effectively on the rare occasions that pupils misbehave.
- The school has a calm, well-ordered and positive atmosphere. Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance is improving. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and say that they want to do well. They have good relationships with their teachers and behave well in lessons, even when the pace of learning slows. As a result, lessons typically proceed smoothly and without interruption.
- Behaviour is managed consistently and positively throughout the school. Individual pupils with behavioural difficulties are supported in a caring and nurturing way. There is clear evidence of improvements in behaviour and achievement for such pupils.
- Pupils have a good knowledge of different types of bullying including name-calling and cyber-bullying. They say that there is little bullying in the school, but are confident that it is sorted out quickly if it happens.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school and are well looked after, and almost all parents agree. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in different situations, including when using the internet and when crossing roads.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement. The difficulties the school has experienced in changes to teaching staff and the leadership have slowed school improvement, but now all staff are eager to ensure that they contribute fully to improving pupils' achievement.
- As a result, leaders have not been able to secure consistently good teaching and good progress over time, and governors are not yet as actively involved in holding the school to account as they might be.
- Since he took up appointment the headteacher has worked very effectively to overcome some shortcomings. This has included ensuring that there is no longer any inadequate teaching and that the majority of pupils are making at least the progress expected of them. The changes he has introduced mean that the school has a secure capacity to improve, although they have not yet had time to impact fully. As a result, leadership and management cannot yet be judged as good.
- Self-evaluation is accurate and realistic and the school improvement plan rightly has a strong focus on further improving teaching and raising achievement.
- Systems to check pupils' progress have been made more rigorous. This information is used to

identify any underachievement and to provide pupils with extra help when they need it. As a result, there is no major difference between the performance of different groups in the school.

- There are effective systems in place to check the quality of teaching. These identify where further action or support is needed. Training, coaching and mentoring are raising the quality of teaching and accelerating pupils' progress.
- Although there is good teaching in the school, there are not enough opportunities for teachers to share good practice, or to observe outstanding teaching in other schools in order to influence improvements.
- Information about pupils' progress is taken into account when making decisions about the pay of teachers and teaching assistants.
- The curriculum is well organised and provides a good range of learning opportunities for all pupils. It is enhanced by a wide range of sport, drama, music and cultural activities, trips and visits. For example, the school choir is shortly to take part in a televised *Songs of Praise*. As a result, the curriculum promotes positive behaviour and makes a strong contribution to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The local authority has acted effectively in partnership with the headteacher to provide additional support for the school in conjunction with a National Leader of Education. This extra training, advice and support have helped to increase the effectiveness of leadership in improving the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement over the past year.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The role played by the governors has improved since the last inspection. They are now better informed about pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching and learning. They have undertaken training to keep themselves abreast of developments, but their understanding of pupil performance data is not as developed as it might be. They are beginning to hold the school to account more effectively by asking more searching questions, but recognise that they need to become more active in this area. They would welcome an external review of governance. They make sure that pupil performance is considered when making decisions about teachers' pay. They know how the pupil premium funding is spent but are less sure about the impact it is having. They make sure that the school's finances are well managed and that it meets its statutory duties, including those related to safeguarding.

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	130384
Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	426162

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	198
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mildred Edwardson
Headteacher	Stephen Barrant
Date of previous school inspection	15 September 2011
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