

St Swithun Wells Catholic Primary School

Hillcrest Avenue, Chandler's Ford, Eastleigh, S053 2JP

Inspection dates 11–12 September 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.

- Teaching across the school is good and this helps all groups of pupils to make good progress.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics have improved steadily over time and high proportions of pupils make at least good progress.
- Pupils behave well and are keen, enthusiastic learners ready to embrace all that their teachers provide.
- The school offers a broad, stimulating range of experiences for all, both in lessons and in wider aspects of learning, so that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership. She is very experienced and has a clear ambition to see the school improve further.
- Governors offer robust support and challenge to the school and do all they can to involve themselves in the daily life of the school.
- Parents and carers are highly positive about all that the school does for their children.
- Pupils are safe and well cared for at all times. They take full advantage of the many opportunities available to them to develop their personal and social skills.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Pupils do not yet have enough opportunities to work independently and the marking of pupils' work is not always used to best effect to help them improve.
- Assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage does not always show clearly pupils' achievement.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons including three joint observations with the headteacher.
- They spoke to parents and carers at the start of the school day and took account of the 63 returns to the online questionnaire (Parent view) as well as considering the 23 staff questionnaires submitted during the inspection.
- Inspectors examined pupils’ work across a range of subjects and for all year groups and spoke to pupils about their work and attitudes to learning. They listened to pupils read from different year groups.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other school leaders and governors to discuss different aspects of the school’s leadership and management.
- Inspectors analysed a range of documentation including school policies, pupil progress tracking data throughout the school, minutes of governing body minutes and safeguarding procedures.

Inspection team

Marion Hobbs, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

John Cavill

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Swithun Wells Catholic Primary is an average sized school that has seen a steadily growing population over the last few years.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and for whom English is not their first language has risen over the past three years and is now close to the national average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium has also risen over the past three years but is still below the national average. This is additional government funding provided for pupils eligible for free school meals, those in public care and those with a parent or carer in the armed services.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action is below the national average, as is the proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school manages a breakfast and after-school club.
- The school holds the Healthy Schools, Activemark and Artsmark awards.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, 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 to outstanding overall by ensuring teachers:
 - plan lessons with more opportunities for pupils to think, learn and work by themselves, thus promoting independent learning
 - use a consistent approach when marking pupils' work so that feedback enables pupils to use this information to improve their work.
- Improve systems for assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that records fully reflect all pupils' achievement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- A substantial proportion of pupils join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills below age-related expectations.
- Good teaching leads to good progress throughout the school. Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make good progress in the Reception class.
- Pupils of all abilities across all year groups achieve well. Work in pupils' books and the quality of learning in lessons confirm this good progress. The school's results in the Year 6 national tests for the past two years have been above average. School data and pupils' work seen during the inspection confirm that 2013 results are again above average.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because of the effective, targeted support they receive. Work is set at the right level to help them make progressive steps in line with their peers. Progress is equally good for pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and those for whom English is not their first language.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium make equally good progress as others owing to the good use of the funding the school receives to provide additional support. Individual or small-group support sessions are well led by teaching assistants and provision is checked closely by school leaders and governors to ensure that it is always appropriate and effective. As a result, the gap in achievement between those eligible for the pupil premium and other pupils has narrowed over time and they now attain at a similar level.
- Pupils make good progress in their reading. This begins with high-quality teaching of linking letters and sounds for younger pupils and continues as pupils move up the school with well-supported independent reading along with the use of stimulating texts in learning across a range of subjects.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is good across the school and all groups of pupils make good progress because of this.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work closely together to set high expectations in all classes. Their shared planning and delivery of lessons is effective in supporting pupils to deepen their understanding and develop their skills across a range of subjects.
- Questioning is strong throughout the school showing that teachers have good subject knowledge and are able to probe individual pupils to extend their thinking about their topics of learning. Pace is typically brisk and the positive atmosphere in classrooms supports good rates of progress for all.
- Reading, writing and mathematics are taught effectively and classrooms provide stimulating learning displays and learning environments to support good rates of progress for all.
- Teaching is not yet outstanding as a consistent and shared understanding of how to promote independent learning has still to develop fully across the school. Pupils are not always given enough opportunities to work on their own within lessons.
- Assessment is regular and accurate. However, there is not yet a consistent approach to the marking of pupils' work, in particular encouraging pupils to join in dialogue with their teachers about their work, so that they understand exactly what they need to do to improve further and/or move to a higher level. In addition, the assessment systems used in the Early Years Foundation Stage do not fully reflect the wide range of pupils' achievements.
- A wide range of effective teaching strategies is used by the school. This includes high-quality intervention work to support those pupils in receipt of the pupil premium, those who are disabled or who have special educational needs and those that teachers identify as benefiting from extra help. Homework is also set regularly to extend pupils' learning and thinking.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils throughout the school are keen to learn and enjoy all that the school provides for them.
- Behaviour and safety are not yet outstanding because pupils are not given enough opportunities to find things out for themselves and develop further their good behaviour for learning.
- Healthy lifestyles are promoted well across the school and a wide variety of physical educational experiences are provided that enthuse and excite all. Inspectors were lucky enough to see Year 3 pupils working with a Paralympian athlete visiting the school to run a workshop on Goalball. The message of 'dream big and anything can happen' was very well received and fits with the school's own inclusive ethos.
- There is very little disruption to learning in lessons and should this occur it is managed swiftly and effectively by the teacher or a teaching assistant. Behaviour is equally good for pupils attending the breakfast and after-school clubs.
- Staff, parents and carers are all highly positive about the school and all it does for its pupils. Incidents of any form of bullying, racist behaviour or any other derogatory comments are extremely rare.
- Pupils talk with confidence about feeling safe and well cared for at school. They understand different forms of bullying, including e-safety and potential risk such as cyber-bullying. They say that bullying does not occur at their school.
- Attendance over time is above average and pupils arrive punctually to school. Routines for prompt returns to lessons after morning break and lunch are well understood by all.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher knows her school well and, with a fully committed and experienced governing body, provides strong leadership that communicates high expectations and ambition.
- Teaching is good in all parts of the school. This is monitored accurately by the headteacher and linked to an effective performance management system that is linked closely to pupil outcomes and staff training needs.
- The school reviews its work robustly in self-evaluation activities, and actions are planned with care to ensure continuous improvement. Governors are closely involved in this process.
- The school is supported by a local authority adviser on a light touch basis to help drive improvement, for example in running whole staff training on an identified area of need.
- The range of subjects provides well for all aspects of pupils' academic achievement as well as their physical development and spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. Year 6 playing lacrosse and a whole school 'bedtime stories in our first language' are just two diverse examples of the richness of school life.
- School policies are thought through with care and ensure, for example, that pupils make at least good progress in literacy.
- School leaders and managers, including governors, are skilful in the way that they deploy pupil premium funding to support pupils' positive experience as learners and their good rates of progress in English and mathematics. The additional primary sports funding allocated by the government is also used wisely to broaden pupils' physical development opportunities through the appointment of a dedicated sports teacher and partnerships with local secondary schools.
- The school works in many ways to build links with parents and carers and these foster a community that is strong and supportive of any aspect of need.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body provides robust challenge and support to the headteacher and her team in all areas of the running of the school. They are knowledgeable about their work and take full opportunity of training provided by the local authority to support them in their roles. Governors have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and of school performance data and use this effectively when setting and reviewing targets with the headteacher and in tracking the annual performance management cycle. They immerse themselves as much as possible in the daily life of the school and make sure that they are available to talk with parents and carers in a range of situations. Governors are committed to continuous improvement, are involved in the recruitment of new members of staff and have ambition.

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	116383
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	426598

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	236
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Alina Sutherland
Headteacher	Miss Ursula Clark
Date of previous school inspection	13–14 October 2008
Telephone number	02380 266210
Fax number	02380 265273
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