

Holy Innocents Catholic Primary School

Mitchell Road, Orpington, Kent, BR6 9JT

Inspection dates

24–25 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 because pupils are not making fast enough progress. From starting points that are typically those expected for their age, pupils' attainment is broadly average at the end of Reception, Year 2 and Year 6.
- Teaching is not consistently good across the school and as a consequence, pupils' progress is variable between classes and subjects.
- Activities for pupils to do on their own in lessons do not all make sure pupils practise new learning to build their skills quickly. Teachers' planning does not always make sure that pupils are set suitably challenging work to do.
- Leadership and management are not good because improvements to teaching and achievement have not been securely sustained since the previous inspection.
- Checks on the school's work lack sufficient rigour, particularly those to evaluate the quality of teaching. Senior leaders and governors have not focused sufficiently on the impact of teaching on pupils' progress over time. Improvement plans do not all have precise time scales and targets.
- The governing body is not sufficiently knowledgeable about the school's achievement data and the progress of different groups of pupils to be able to hold the school accountable for their work.

The school has the following strengths:

- The school is improving. Additional sessions for the most-able pupils help increasing proportions of them to reach above average attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics has improved since the previous inspection because leaders and managers have introduced new approaches to teaching mathematics that capture pupils' interest.
- The promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong throughout the school. Pupils are respectful of others and demonstrate caring attitudes.
- Pupils feel safe at school and behave well in lessons and around the school. They are keen to learn and attend school very regularly.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all year groups except Year 5, who were away on a residential educational visit. They observed 16 teaching sessions including four joint observations with senior leaders.
- Inspectors held discussions with groups of pupils, staff, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors listened to groups of pupils reading. They looked at work in pupils' books and the school's information showing pupils' progress.
- The school website, development plans and records relating to safeguarding were also checked.
- The inspection took account of 43 responses to the Ofsted online survey (Parent View), the school's own analysis of a recent survey of parents' and carers' views, and spoke to parents and carers informally. Inspectors also took account of 11 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Madeleine Gerard, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Michael Elson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Holy Innocents is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average. A smaller proportion than the national average speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported through school action is below the national average. A below average proportion is supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional government funding for looked after children, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and the children of service families) is below the national average. There are currently no looked after children or children of service families at the school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in one Reception class.
- Breakfast and after school clubs at the school are not managed by the governing body and were not included in this inspection. They are the subject of a separate inspection report.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to ensure that pupils make rapid progress across all year groups, by making sure that teachers:
 - match work closely to the learning needs of individuals
 - plan activities for pupils to do independently that help them to practise new learning and develop key skills securely
 - consistently make clear to pupils how to improve through marking and feedback, and encourage pupils to respond to teachers' feedback and comments.
- Improve leadership and governance by making sure that:
 - checks on teaching take account of its impact on pupils' progress and identify sharply the most important aspects that need to be improved
 - improvement plans have more detailed and precise targets to measure success with tight deadlines, and that progress is regularly checked against these actions to make sure the desired outcomes are being achieved
 - subject leaders develop their roles in securing further improvements within their areas of responsibility
 - the governing body develops its skills further to support and hold the school's leaders fully to account for the impact of their work.

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' progress through the school from their starting points is not rapid enough. Teaching over time does not make sure pupils make consistently strong gains in their learning. Consequently, by the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6 their attainment is only broadly average.
- Faster progress in some classes where teaching is better, additional sessions for the most able pupils, as well as pupils' positive attitudes to learning in all classes, are helping to raise attainment, particularly in mathematics. Mathematics-themed weeks and opportunities for pupils to make practical use of their mathematical knowledge in lessons have been effective. The most recent provisional national test results show more pupils reached above average standards in mathematics and reading than in the previous year.
- Teaching of early reading skills, including the sounds that letters make (phonics), has improved so that in the most recent Year 1 phonics screening check more pupils met the required standards than in the previous year's check. Daily reading for low-attaining pupils is helping to boost their reading. Older pupils develop positive attitudes to reading because staff encourage regular reading and the enjoyment of books.
- The progress made by disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs requires improvement. Additional support for these pupils in lessons, and in small-group and individual sessions outside the classroom, helps them to make similar progress to other pupils.
- The achievement of pupils from minority ethnic groups, including pupils who speak English as an additional language, is similarly inconsistent, and therefore also requires improvement.
- The school has used the pupil premium funding to target support for groups of pupils who may be falling behind in their work. In last year's national assessments at the end of Year 6, the gap between the attainment of pupils eligible for the pupil premium and that of their peers was narrower than that found nationally. Eligible pupils were one term behind in mathematics and reading, and less than a term behind in writing. In 2013, provisional results show that although eligible pupils reached average standards of attainment, the gap between their attainment and that of their peers increased, particularly in reading and mathematics. The achievement of pupils currently at the school known to be eligible for pupil premium funding requires improvement because their progress is variable between classes.
- Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with levels of skills and capabilities that are generally those expected for their age. They settle quickly into the Reception class and are happy because adults make sure routines and expectations are clear. Children's attainment is average by the time they enter Year 1 because the progress children make is not sufficiently brisk to raise their attainment above nationally expected standards.
- Specialist sports teaching, together with popular extra-curricular sporting and dancing clubs, helps pupils develop strengths in teamwork, a sense of fair play as well as positive attitudes to keeping fit and healthy.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because it has been too variable to ensure pupils achieve well. Although additional sessions in English and mathematics help more pupils to reach above average standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, teaching is not ensuring improved attainment for all pupils.
- Teachers' planning does not always identify the most appropriate work for pupils to do to help them to develop confidence in using new skills. The impact of independent work is diminished when it is not closely linked to the new learning introduced during whole-class teaching.
- Not all teachers pitch work in lessons precisely enough for the full range of pupils' abilities to make sure that all pupils are suitably challenged. When pupils are set fairly similar work to do

despite the range of abilities in classes, the pace of their learning is not as swift as it should be.

- In the Reception class, observations of children's progress are made but this information is not always used to plan tasks that build swiftly on what children know and can do already, to extend their learning.
- The quality of teachers' marking of pupils' work is variable. Marking in writing books often makes clear how pupils may improve in order to move up to the next level, but it is less consistent in mathematics. Teachers do not always make sure pupils act on their advice when they give feedback and make suggestions.
- Personal targets for pupils in English and mathematics are helpful and pupils are keen to take responsibility for checking for themselves that they are meeting them.
- Additional adults often contribute effectively to pupils' learning in lessons and help lower-attaining pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs to keep up with the others.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- This is a warm and welcoming school in which pupils are polite, friendly and feel safe. Caring attitudes are promoted strongly. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage play and learn well together, sharing resources and taking turns sensibly. Pupils from a variety of different backgrounds develop positive relationships. They acquire strong social skills and work well together in lessons and during pair work.
- Pupils' behaviour is good in lessons where their approach to learning is consistently positive. They listen attentively, work hard and persevere even when the work teachers set is not well planned to enable them to move on quickly in their learning.
- Around the school and at break time pupils behave well. Occasionally, pupils need to be reminded of the behaviour that is expected and respond quickly to any direction from teachers.
- They are confident there are few incidents of bullying. They say that there is sometimes some name calling or deliberately leaving pupils out of games, but they know that teaching staff will deal with any problems, as the school's records show.
- Pupils have a good knowledge of how to keep themselves safe from harm. Road safety awareness, bicycling skills and safe practices when using computers and information technology are promoted well and help pupils develop a sensible approach to risks.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and are very clear about the importance of attending school regularly so that valuable learning is not missed. Attendance rates have risen further since the previous inspection and are consistently above average.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Teaching is monitored regularly but feedback to teachers does not always identify clearly enough what they should do to improve the quality of their teaching to bring about rapid progress in pupils' learning.
- Leaders' checks on teaching have not always focused sufficiently on how successfully teaching is helping pupils make good progress in their learning over time. When evaluations of teaching quality are too positive, necessary improvements are not made quickly and consistently good teaching is not secured.
- Key priorities for action in whole-school improvement planning are appropriately selected to bring about improvements. However, some of the timescales are not tight enough and their success is not always clearly measured against improved progress and attainment for pupils.
- The headteacher and governors share a commitment to bring about improvements and work with the support of the staff. Attainment is rising at the end of Year 6 particularly in mathematics. The teaching of phonics has improved pupils' confidence in reading unfamiliar

words in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Together with securing high attendance rates and maintaining pupils' positive attitudes to learning and good behaviour, these strengths demonstrate the school's capacity to improve further.

- Some subject leaders are new to their roles and have not had time to drive further improvements within their areas of responsibility.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strongly promoted. Well-planned activities, visitors, visits and popular extra-curricular clubs broaden pupils' learning experiences and offer opportunities to reflect on values and moral issues. The school council organises regular charity fund raising events. Pupils learn about a range of cultures and beliefs, for example through faith week and specialist music teaching, so that equality is promoted and discrimination tackled.
- Over recent time, the local authority has not offered the school any support.
- The school is at the early stages of establishing plans to use the school sport funding to increase sporting opportunities for pupils, including enhancing sporting equipment and developing greater opportunities for participation in inter-school sporting competitions.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors visit the school more regularly to gain first-hand knowledge of its work. They know what the school does well and have worked closely with the school's leaders to tackle priorities for improvement. They attend relevant training for their roles and are confident to ask searching questions. However, their ability to challenge leaders and managers and hold them to account for the school's performance is limited because governors do not have a secure understanding of the school's performance data and how well the school is performing in relation to standards nationally. Governors have not been skilled in checking the reliability of the school's self-evaluations of teaching and pupils' progress in order to drive further improvements. As a result, governors have an over-positive view of some aspects of the school's work, including teaching.
- Governors take their role in managing performance seriously. They are developing systems to increase the rigour with which they make sure teachers' salaries are linked to teaching quality. Governors understand the uses to which the pupil premium funding is put and are checking how well pupils known to be eligible learn and make progress. However, they are not checking the extent that eligible pupils access additional provision through the funding. Governors ensure safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.

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	101661
Local authority	Bromley
Inspection number	425535

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	215
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kim Insley
Headteacher	Ryan Langford
Date of previous school inspection	3–4 November 2011
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