

# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Chapel Street, Devonport, Plymouth, Devon, PL1 4DJ

**Inspection dates** 25–26 September 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
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 requires improvement. Sometimes, work is too easy and tasks are given too much time to complete and this slows pupils' progress.
- Overall, pupils' progress is average rather than good. Pupils are capable of making more progress in mathematics and English, particularly writing. In the recent past learning has been disturbed by poor behaviour on too many occasions.
- Leaders have not held teachers to account to ensure that the quality of teaching in lessons is consistently good or better.
- As a consequence of not having a governing body, governance has been inadequate. Statutory duties were not met last term.

### The school has the following strengths

- There is some good teaching. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
- Staff and the new governing body are determined to improve the school.
- Pupils say they feel safe. There is a calm atmosphere in school and pupils respond very well to all staff.
- The curriculum makes an excellent contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils learn to care about each other and they say it is alright to be different at St Joseph's.
- Pupils have good opportunities to take part in sport within the curriculum and in extra-curricular activities. This makes a good contribution to their physical well-being.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed all classes and all teachers, nearly all were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, she listened to pupils read and looked at their work around the school and in books, including work from the last academic year.
- The inspector took account of the 17 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- The inspector held discussions with pupils, members of the senior leadership team, governors, a consultant working with the school and a representative from the Diocese of Plymouth.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' current progress, monitoring documentation, records relating to performance management and safeguarding, check on how well the school is doing and improvement planning.

## Inspection team

Steffi Penny, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school and it is in the process of expanding its school roll.
- Overall there are more boys than girls, with some year groups more uneven than others.
- There are five classes of which Class One has children in the Reception Year, Class Two pupils in Year 1, Class Three pupils in Years 2 and 3, Class Four pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5, and class five pupils in Years 5 and 6.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium varies in each year group and overall is slightly higher than the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for pupils who are looked after by the local authority, those known to be eligible for free school meals and those with a parent in the armed services.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus is double the national average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is around average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is much lower than other schools, and most pupils are of a White British heritage.
- There is an increasing proportion of pupils learning English as an additional language, most of whom are at the very early stages of learning English and are in the youngest two year groups.
- There was no governing body from June 2013 until September 2013. The newly formed governing body have not yet elected a chairperson.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' learning and progress.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in order to raise pupils' achievement in mathematics, and English, writing in particular, by ensuring that:
  - the marking of pupils' work is consistent across the school and that the quality of this is consistently good so that pupils know what they need to do to improve and how they can move to the next step in their learning
  - pupils are expected to produce work that is neither too easy nor too difficult and ensures that all groups of pupils make rapid progress
  - information given to pupils about what they are going to learn in the lesson is specific, more challenging and increasingly encourages their independence.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - that the governing body speedily acquires an elected chairperson and effectively carries out its statutory duties
  - the governing body makes sure that the school and external agencies act swiftly and effectively to support those pupils and their families who are most vulnerable due to their circumstances
  - whole-school targets are precise and measurable, and timescales are set to encourage rapid improvements in aspects of the school's, and particularly pupils' progress, and the quality of teaching.
- An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### Requires improvement

- Although pupils make good progress in some lessons, slower progress is made in others. As a result, there are too many small groups of pupils whose progress is not fast enough, including those who are more able. Throughout the school, boys generally perform better than girls in mathematics, but particularly in Year 5. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs generally make good progress from their starting points.
- School data show that at the end of the Reception year an average proportion of the children achieve a good level of development and are ready for more formal learning. However, in 2013 none of the children learning English as an additional language reached this measure.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1, pupils have daily lessons to learn about the sounds that letters make (phonics) and these contribute well to developing their reading skills which are above what is typical for their age throughout the school. Nevertheless, in 2012 more pupils passed the phonics screening test than in 2013.
- School data show that in 2013 although most pupils made at least average or better progress in mathematics and reading at the end of Key Stage 1, a minority did so in writing speaking and listening. The school has rightly identified and targeted writing as an area that requires significant improvement throughout the school, especially in Years 4 and 5.
- In 2013, school data show that an improvement has been made in the standards reached by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2. In particular, those pupils who had the lowest attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 made good progress and all reached the expected standards for their age in mathematics and English. More-able pupils did not demonstrate their abilities by sitting the Level 6 test.
- At the end of Key Stage 2 school data show that pupils for whom the pupil premium provided support attained lower standards, by around a term compared with other pupils in the school. However, this gap in performance has reduced from over two terms when the pupils were in Year 4. In the 2013, end-of-year assessments conducted by the school show the average attainment for pupils across the other year groups shows that the progress made by these supported pupils is generally better than others not entitled to the funding. The average standards they reached in reading were about the same, in writing better and slightly lower in mathematics.

### The quality of teaching

### Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because although some pupils make good or better progress in their learning not enough of them do. Pupils are not always told in enough detail what they are expected to achieve in lessons and sometimes the work is too easy so their progress is limited.
- The first day of the inspection was a mathematics themed day. Activities in all the lessons seen were designed by teachers to make clear links to the pupils about the purposefulness of mathematics as part of daily living. Although the themes used by teachers made the lessons interesting, in some of the parts of the lessons seen progress was not good enough for some pupils.
- Where the quality of teaching is not good too much time is allocated to a simple activity and/or all the pupils are asked to complete exactly the same task, with the same amount and type of information to complete it. On these occasions not enough attention is given when planning the lesson to build upon what individual pupils already know and can successfully do.
- Some of the teaching and learning seen during the inspection was of a good quality because all the pupils were given tasks that made them think hard and the teachers and other adults used

the allotted time wisely.

- Good use is made of other adults in lessons. Teachers and assistants work seamlessly together to support pupils' learning, including sharing how well the pupils had completed and understood the work that they were given.
- Feedback from marking is not consistent across different classes and subjects. At its best, marking is clear and tells pupils what they have done well and shows them what they need to do to improve. More opportunities are needed for pupils to respond to the feedback on their work by correcting it or demonstrating that they have learned how to improve it.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils

### Requires improvement

- Behaviour is not yet good because in the lessons where the quality of teaching requires improvement, pupils sometimes lose interest and do not pay attention as well as in other lessons. Also, in the recent past, learning was disturbed by the extreme behaviour of some pupils too often.
- In the best lessons, where the pace of learning is rapid, pupils are highly motivated and support each other's learning, for example when working in pairs or small groups. However, too often pupils are over-reliant on asking adults for help or to explain what they need to do, even when they are provided with good quality written instructions.
- A small number of pupils have emotional or medical difficulties which affect their behaviour. There were two fixed-term exclusions last year, and none in the previous five years. There have been no permanent exclusions. The school has received external support for some pupils and has increased the support for these pupils during the school day.
- Pupils are polite, considerate and generally support each other. The school provides a sensible range of organised activities at lunchtime, which pupils often initiate and participate in enthusiastically. Older pupils support younger ones by acting as prefects and buddies.
- The school council has used its funding wisely and is keen to make sure that school lunches are tasty and nutritious.
- Pupils are aware of the different types of bullying and said that it rarely happens. When children fall out with each other they have great confidence that adults will help them sort things out quickly. Consequently, pupils feel safe and happy in school.
- Pupils have good attitudes to school and their broadly average attendance shows that most attend school regularly. Attendance is monitored closely and the school does not sanction holidays in term time to the detriment of pupils' education. Punctuality is good.

### The leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- The leadership and management of the school require improvement because there have not been enough improvements to teaching to ensure that pupils consistently make good progress. Leaders have not held teachers to account rigorously enough for the progress pupils make and there has not been sufficient appropriate support to ensure that all groups of pupils make at least good progress.
- The leadership and management of the school have been considerably strengthened by the special educational needs coordinator joining the senior leadership team. An experienced educational consultant has just started working with the school. Combined with the formation of a new governing body, the school now has the capacity to move forward.
- Staff who are new to the school have been carefully and considerately inducted by more established teachers and assistants. Because of this they have started with a good knowledge of the children that are in their class, and built good working relationships with other school staff.
- Records of interventions and the support given to the most vulnerable pupils have improved. However, the school is aware that more robust recording is needed and that it needs to be

better shared with the new governing body. Interim policies and procedures for safeguarding pupils, in the absence of a Chair of the Governing Body, are adequate.

- Systems to track the progress made by different groups of pupils are being refined so the school has good information to use to target resources to help pupils, such as disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. There has been a thorough evaluation of the effect of the school's spending of the pupil premium funding. Writing has been the focus for those pupils entitled to the pupil premium and this has ensured improvements in their writing standards across the school.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity, and pupils new to the country and those with English as an additional language are carefully supported to help them become fluent in English.
- The broad curriculum, with a good range of sporting and arts activities, makes an excellent contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school provides good opportunities for pupils to have learning experiences beyond the classroom on educational visits and using local amenities during the school day. For example, Class One has a weekly visit the Devonport Library and older pupils have the opportunity to take part in residential activities.
- The new primary school sport funding is being very effectively used to enhance the quality of teaching in physical education (PE). PE teaching provided by a qualified sports coach ensures that pupils have PE sessions that contribute very well to their physical well-being. The high quality of this work is most clearly demonstrated by the vast array of trophies in the entrance hall, won by a large proportion of the pupils in the school.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- There was no governing body from June 2013 until the start of the autumn term. Although attempts to secure governance were made by members representing the local authority and the Plymouth Catholic Diocese, they failed. Consequently, governance of the school has been inadequate and statutory duties relating to governance have not been met. These include the challenge of the use of the pupil premium funding by the school and ensuring that performance related pay is linked to the outcomes for pupils. Most of the school's policies and procedures have not been kept up to date.
  - A new governing body has been formed, although a few vacancies remain including the election of a chairperson. Due to the lack of recent governance, there is a lot of work for governors to do, including receiving appropriate training, in order to update and sharpen the school's policies and practice.
  - The governing body is aware that it would be easy for it to become overwhelmed by the task ahead. In order that the governors do not get distracted, and so that they focus on things that are the most important, they need to set out a clear concise action plan. In the first instance it is imperative that the new governing body makes sure that, when needed, the school and external agencies act swiftly and appropriately to support those pupils and their families who are most vulnerable due to their circumstances.
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## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	113491
<b>Local authority</b>	Plymouth
<b>Inspection number</b>	429782

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary Aided School
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	140
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	None
<b>Headteacher</b>	Brendan Gill
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 July 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01752 563185
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