

# St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School

Claremont Road, Tamworth, B79 8EN

**Inspection dates** 3–4 October 2013

|                                |                      |             |          |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>   | Previous inspection: | Good        | 2        |
|                                | This inspection:     | <b>Good</b> | <b>2</b> |
| 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.

- Pupils are very happy and feel safe and well cared for at school. As a result, they work hard and achieve well.
- From starting points that are below those expected for their age, pupils make good progress throughout the school.
- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 has continued to rise, particularly in writing which is now above average.
- Teaching is usually good with examples of outstanding practice. Teachers have good subject knowledge and carefully question pupils to extend their understanding.
- School leaders, including governors, accurately measure the schools' strengths and identify where it could do better. They have used this information to secure improvements in the quality of teaching. As a result, pupils' achievement has risen.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school and demonstrate positive attitudes towards their learning.
- The headteacher provides strong and effective leadership. This has been important through a time of significant staff changes.
- Parents hold positive views about the work of the school and express high levels of satisfaction with the school.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In a few lessons, teaching does not challenge the more able sufficiently.
- Marking is good in English but not as effective in other subjects in helping pupils to improve.
- Pupils do not have sufficient time to reflect upon their learning and to respond to teachers' suggestions for improvement.
- Teachers do not always give pupils sufficient time to explain their learning.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons; four were joint observations with the headteacher or the deputy headteacher. In addition, the inspection team made a number of short visits to observe small group sessions.
- Inspectors attended a school assembly and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with staff, governors, pupils and a local authority representative.
- Inspectors spoke informally to a number of parents and carers as they brought their children to school.
- The inspectors took account of 42 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View); they also analysed 17 questionnaires received from staff.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's information on pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring documents and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Lucy Maughan, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Rosemary Barnfield

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is a smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium funding (which provides additional funding for pupils in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals and others) is average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils leaving or joining the school, other than at normal times, is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

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

- Improve teaching in school so that all teaching is consistently good with more that is outstanding by:
  - making sure that teachers plan lessons which consistently challenge the most able.
  - allowing pupils time to respond to marking, in subjects other than English, and to check their work against their individual targets.
  - providing opportunities for pupils to explain their learning more frequently.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children typically start in the Reception class with knowledge and understanding below the expected levels for their age. They make good progress during the year and the levels at the end of Reception are often in line with those found nationally.
- The school's results in the 2012 Year 1 reading check were above average and the results in 2013 were even better. The school has continued to improve the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) and pupils are grouped so that teachers and teaching assistants can target lessons to meet pupils' needs.
- Standards at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics are rising, particularly in writing.
- In 2013, results at the end of Key Stage 2 have risen year on year even with differences within each year group. Currently, the school's information shows that progress is better than that expected, especially in reading and writing.
- The work in pupils' books shows good progress in the development of their writing skills which has been a recent focus for improvement, especially for boys, whose standards had previously been lower than girls. Current information shows that this gender gap has now closed.
- Pupil premium funding is used well to ensure that pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals make progress in line with their peers. In 2013, pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 was on average four terms behind their peers in English and mathematics. However, in other year groups this gap has closed.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because their specific needs are identified early and well-targeted extra support provided to ensure that these are met.
- The achievement of pupils from ethnic minority groups is similar to other groups and is at least good. Those who speak English as an additional language also make good progress, because the school identifies their language needs early and draws on staff expertise to help their learning move forward.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good and on occasions it is outstanding. Senior leaders regularly check the quality of teaching and have high expectations of teachers' performance. This has led to increased consistency in the quality of teaching and has had a positive impact on pupils' progress.
- Excellent relationships exist between pupils and teachers. Teachers foster positive attitudes in the classroom, ensuring all pupils have equal opportunity to learn.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage benefit from a wide range of activities, both in the outdoor area and in the classroom, and from teaching that is lively and interesting. For example, during one lesson, children were thoroughly enjoying moving jelly around a tray with their hands. This generated excellent use of words and phrases to describe the sights, smells and feel

of the jelly.

- In the most successful lessons, teachers make clear to pupils what they are going to learn. Teachers' sharp questioning ensures that pupils learn quickly and probes and extends their understanding. For example, in a successful Year 6 lesson, the class teacher questioned pupils skilfully about their knowledge and understanding of the elements of persuasive writing. The pupils worked co-operatively to identify key features and produce their own high quality writing.
- In the majority of lessons, teachers plan carefully to match learning to pupils' ability. This generally works well, particularly for pupils with special educational needs, but in some lessons opportunities are missed to fully challenge the more-able pupils' thinking so that they are able to make as much progress as possible.
- Teachers use marking consistently well in English to guide pupils to improve. It is not always used effectively in other subjects. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to reflect upon their learning and to respond to teachers' suggestions for improvement.
- Pupils speak positively about the targets they are given to help them improve in English and mathematics; however the work in their books shows that opportunities are missed to link targets to their work to help pupils improve further.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Pupils' positive attitudes to learning, and to school in general help lessons to run smoothly. Pupils are keen and eager to learn and show a high level of respect to other pupils and adults alike. Pupils are notably polite and well-mannered. Only on rare occasions, when activities lack challenge, does pupils' concentration weaken.
- Virtually all parents who responded to the school' survey (Parent View) agreed that the school keeps their children safe.
- Pupils say that bullying is extremely rare and they are confident that, should it happen, it would be dealt with effectively by staff. Older pupils, in particular, have a good awareness of different types of bullying and understand how to stay safe when using the internet.
- Pupils take on responsibility and contribute to the school in a variety of ways, for example as house captains or as members of the school council or Eco-club. Pupils recently contributed to the design and completion of a school sensory garden which helps to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school works well with parents and carers to tackle potential attendance problems. Attendance levels have improved and are now above the national average. This reflects the fact that pupils greatly enjoy coming to school.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher knows the strengths and areas for development in the school. She has made sure that a good quality of teaching has been maintained despite a number of staff changes and pupils' good achievement has continued.
- Assessment of pupils' progress is accurate and leaders check on this regularly. Meetings to discuss the progress of pupils enable staff to focus on individual pupils' needs so that

appropriately targeted support can be arranged.

- Morale is high and team spirit among staff is strong. As a result, teaching and non-teaching staff work together as a cohesive team. This positive climate helps leaders to ensure that teachers at the start of their career and those new to areas of responsibility are constantly improving and are well supported.
- The school is using the new primary sport funding effectively to improve the quality and breadth of physical education and sport provision. The range of lunchtime and after-school sports clubs has been extended and professional coaches employed to improve pupils' expertise in different sporting activities. The school has identified ways of assessing the impact of this provision.
- Safeguarding procedures are secure. Checks on staff are made carefully and child protection systems are good with training up-to-date.
- The local authority has provided support for the school when required; the school has also accessed professional training courses which suit its needs.
- The curriculum is good. It has recently been improved by imaginative links between subjects that bring learning to life and provide pupils with opportunities to write at length about these topics. Excellent use of outside expertise enhances and enriches the curriculum. Close links to the church and the local community, contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors bring a wealth of professional expertise to the school and utilise these skills to ensure that leaders are supported well, yet also challenged accordingly. Governors' insight into how the pupil premium funding is allocated is well-informed and they measure its impact closely and make adjustments if necessary. They know about the quality of teaching and the progress that pupils make and understand how this may be used to justify increases in salary. The governing body ensures that arrangements for pupils' safeguarding meet the current regulatory 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

|                                |               |
|--------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | 124369        |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Staffordshire |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 427099        |

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                    |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 4–11                               |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                              |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 182                                |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                 |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Anthony Mason                      |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Jane Rowlands                      |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 23 September 2008                  |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01827 475860                       |
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