

St Maria Goretti Catholic Primary School

Gamull Lane, Ribbleson, Preston, Lancashire, PR2 6SJ

Inspection dates 15–16 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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.

- Whatever their start point at St Maria Goretti, most pupils make good progress because their differing needs are well met.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders, managers and governors have successfully tackled any weaknesses. As a result, there have been improvements in leadership and management, teaching and pupils' achievement and behaviour.
- By the time pupils leave school at the end of Year 6 most reach standards in English and mathematics that are similar to what is expected nationally for their age. A small minority of pupils reach higher standards.
- Pupils get off to a flying start in the Early Years Foundation Stage because of consistently good and better teaching.
- Overall, teaching is good. Pupils are keen to learn through a wide range of activities.
- Pupils' behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Pupils feel safe.
- Teachers and teaching assistants ensure that those who need extra help receive precisely tailored support. The school works well with a wide range of professionals beyond the school to guide and support pupils whose circumstances might put them at risk.
- The 'Rainbow Room' is a very well-staffed facility that provides a welcoming environment for pupils and their families.
- The school is well aware of its strengths and areas for further development. The inspirational headteacher has a clear view of how successful the school can be and expects the best from pupils and staff.
- Leaders and managers, including the governing body, have prioritised teaching, leading to improvements since the previous inspection.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching. Occasionally, pupils are not given enough time to work things out for themselves and deepen their understanding of what they are doing, particularly the most able.
- Teachers do not always adapt their lessons quickly enough when pupils find work too easy or too hard. Pupils are not consistently given time in lessons to correct their work.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed nine teachers and visited 15 lessons. In addition, the inspectors made a number of short visits to lessons and listened to pupils read.
- Discussions were held with: school staff; groups of pupils; senior staff and leaders with responsibility for a specific subject; parents; members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a wide range of documentation including safeguarding documents, the school’s procedures for gaining an accurate view of its own performance, its development plans, records of pupils’ standards and progress, documents relating to attendance and behaviour, and pupils’ work in their books.
- The inspectors took account of the 17 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the results of the school’s most recent survey of parent views. The 17 responses to the inspection questionnaire for staff were also taken into account.

Inspection team

Naomi Taylor, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Nina Heron

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Maria Goretti's is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium is much higher than that found nationally. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after by the local authority.)
- Since the previous inspection, the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language has increased and is now average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is higher than average as is the proportion of those supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- There is a higher than average proportion of pupils who leave or join the school other than at the usual times. The majority of pupils who join the school do not speak any English.
- The associate headteacher who was working with the school at the time of the previous inspection has since been appointed as the substantive headteacher. As a result, there have been a number of changes in staffing and new posts have been created.
- 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 the quality of teaching so that more is outstanding in order to accelerate further pupils' achievement in English and mathematics, by ensuring that:
 - there are enough opportunities for pupils, particularly the most able, to develop their own learning by providing opportunities to deepen their understanding, challenge ideas and find out things for themselves
 - when pupils find work too easy or too hard, teachers quickly adapt activities
 - teachers consistently allow time in lessons for pupils to respond to comments and to edit and correct their work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children settle well when they join the Nursery and Reception classes. This is as a result of very effective transition arrangements between school and home. Children quickly develop an understanding of how to play and learn well together. They demonstrate their understanding of right from wrong and show respect for each other and for the adults around them.
- Children start school with skills that are below, and for some well below, those typically expected for their age. Children do well in the Early Years Foundation Stage and as a result they are well prepared for learning in Year 1. In 2011, pupils' skills in reading, writing and mathematics were well below those expected for their age. Due to improvements in teaching reading, writing and mathematics, pupils now join Year 3 with numeracy and literacy skills that are close to national expectations.
- By the end of Year 6, standards reached are affected by the number of pupils who regularly join or leave the school other than at the usual time. Nevertheless, most pupils leave with skills in line with national expectations in English and mathematics, but not enough do better than this, especially in writing. Pupils from minority ethnic groups make good progress in English and mathematics by the time they leave school.
- Almost all pupils make the progress expected of them from their individual starting points in English and mathematics and the proportion making better than expected progress is similar to the national average and rising. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- The vast majority of pupils known to be eligible for support through pupil premium funding (used to employ a learning mentor and precisely targeted small group and one-to-one support) make good progress. This has successfully closed the gap between this group and other pupils. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs similarly make at least the same good progress as their classmates, and some better, because of timely and sharply focused help from teachers, teaching assistants and external agencies. Girls and boys alike and those who join the school other than at the usual times are now making equally good progress. Pupils whose first language is not English also make good progress. The most-able pupils are provided with the right level of challenge to help them make good progress too.

The quality of teaching is good

- As a result of the headteacher prioritising improvements in teaching and learning through training opportunities for staff, teaching is now consistently good throughout the school and some teaching is outstanding. This has led to improvements in the engagement and enjoyment of pupils in their learning resulting in improvements in achievement for all groups of pupils.
- In the best lessons, teachers and teaching assistants plan lessons really well together to ensure pupils are given work to get the best out of them. Consequently, pupils learn really quickly because they are given work which matches their ability and they are finding out things for themselves.
- An example of this was seen in Reception when the teacher read a letter from a very sad 'Billy Goat' to the children. They were encouraged to explore the feelings of different characters and when they were asked how they could make 'Billy Goat' happy, one child suggested organising a party for him. The children were encouraged to explore this idea, deciding on the food they would need to buy and what they would need to write on the invitations. Outstanding progress in developing communication and language skills was made during this session. There was an excellent balance of activities led by the adults alongside opportunities for children to experiment for themselves both in the classroom and outdoors.
- In a Key Stage 2 mathematics lesson, the teacher introduced using co-ordinates to plot the position of various objects using the 'x' axis followed by the 'y' axis. Pupils demonstrated their

understanding by plotting co-ordinates on the electronic whiteboard before moving quickly onto a range of different tasks to challenge their individual needs. Pupils were thoroughly enjoying finding out things for themselves, with the teacher and teaching assistants supporting their learning. Good progress was made and pupils' excitement in their learning was accelerated by the introduction of using this skill to find hidden treasure on an island.

- Occasionally, pupils are not provided with enough challenge in their work to deepen their understanding, explore ideas and find out things for themselves, particularly the most able, and this slows progress. When pupils find work too easy or too hard, teachers do not always adapt their activities quickly enough.
- Pupils' work is regularly marked but there is not always enough time in lessons for pupils to edit and improve their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave very well together and are polite and friendly towards staff and visitors to the school. With an atmosphere of mutual respect and compassion towards one another, many parents told inspectors how happy their children are at school. This is reflected in higher than average attendance. All of the parents who completed Parent View would recommend St Maria Goretti to other parents.
- Pupils say they feel very safe in school and this is reflected in responses from parents who told inspectors that behaviour is much better than it used to be, and is good. Pupils are successfully taught how to measure risks and why and how to choose good behaviour.
- A small minority of pupils exhibit challenging behaviour but the appointment of a Family Support Worker, Learning Mentor and the strong links with professional agencies beyond school contribute to supporting these pupils and those at risk of being vulnerable. The 'Rainbow Room' provides a nurturing environment for pupils and their families.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying and clearly know how to stay safe when using computers in school and at home. They say that bullying is rare at St Maria Goretti, but they would be able to talk to any adult if they thought that this was happening to them or someone else. Incident logs show that there have been very few incidents of poor behaviour since new policies and procedures were introduced by the headteacher.
- Pupils enjoy physical education and annually there is the opportunity to have intensive swimming tuition over a three-week period at a local secondary school. Additional funding for sport is being used to employ a professional dance company to teach ballroom dancing and dances from around the world to every class and teacher. During lunch with the lead inspector, a group of Year 4 boys talked animatedly about their enthusiasm for learning the cha-cha-cha and demonstrated some moves from their street dance. This experience contributes well to their social and cultural development while encouraging pupils to stay fit and healthy.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has a very clear vision for the success of the school and has led a number of positive changes since the previous inspection. Together with the senior leadership team, she has taken the initiative to provide training for teachers to help them develop their skills. This has led to improvements in the quality of teaching and learning and in pupils' performance.
- The headteacher has considerably strengthened the way in which teachers are accountable for their performance and does not allow staff to be rewarded unless they are successful in helping pupils to make at least good progress. The quality of teaching and the progress of pupils are regularly and accurately checked so that things can be put in place rapidly to address any concerns.
- The school has an accurate picture of its strengths and areas to be developed and because of

this the quality of teaching and progress of pupils are securely improving.

- The local authority effectively provides guidance for the school with 'light-touch' support.
- The curriculum has been revised to include creative curriculum themes, and now includes an emphasis on developing basic skills through topic work, which is already having an impact on pupils' enjoyment of learning.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and supports pupils to make a positive contribution to the school. Dance and art are central to the life of the school and provide first-hand experience of cultures across the globe.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - All members of the governing body are committed to continually improving this school. Governors ensure that the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities in relation to child protection and safeguarding; all staff have been checked for their suitability to work with children and trained appropriately to keep pupils safe. They have an accurate overview of what the school does. Governors are familiar with performance data and they know what the quality of teaching in the school is like. They ensure that teachers' appraisal and salary progression is linked to and dependent upon them meeting their targets. They check that staff make effective use of pupil premium funding and ensure all pupils have an equal opportunity to reach the standards of which they are capable. They ensure that the school rejects discrimination in all its forms.

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	119608
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	426156

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	171
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Walsh
Headteacher	Elaine Chambers
Date of previous school inspection	7 December 2011
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