

# St. Peter's Catholic Primary School

Lichfield Road, Bloxwich, Walsall, WS3 3LY

**Inspection dates** 22–23 October 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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.

- From low starting points all groups of pupils make good progress and achieve standards expected for their age in English and mathematics.
- Since the last inspection, teaching has improved from satisfactory to good with some that is outstanding. This is because teachers assess pupils' learning well and use this to plan their next steps in learning.
- Pupils are polite and courteous. Their good attitudes and behaviour contribute well to their good achievement. They say that they feel safe in school and know who to ask for help when it is needed.
- The determination and drive of the new headteacher have led to rapid change and improvement in the quality of teaching. Governors and staff share these ambitions and develop their skills to continue to raise achievement. Leadership and management are good.
- The school offers high quality spiritual, moral, social and cultural experiences and gives good attention to all aspects of pupils' development.
- The curriculum offers interesting and exciting experiences which are reflected in the motivating learning environment.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Detailed feedback and marking are not yet used by all members of staff to help pupils to know how to improve their work and so progress is sometimes slowed.
- Pupils are not yet confident to assess their own work against the targets set for them.
- The curriculum is not yet making enough links between subjects or fully employing new technologies to help pupils to learn together, with less reliance on the teacher.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons or part-lessons. Nine of these were joint observations with senior school leaders.
- Meetings were held with pupils, parents, staff, members of the governing body, and representatives of the local authority, and account was taken of 16 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Informal discussions took place with parents and account was taken of 26 responses to the online questionnaire Parent View.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including national assessment data, the school's own assessments, pupils' work, the school's development plan, minutes of governing body meetings, safeguarding information, leaders' reports and action plans.

## Inspection team

Lynne Bradbury, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Alan Jones

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The headteacher took up her post in September 2012.
- Most pupils are White British. Other children come from a wide variety of backgrounds.
- Children start school in the Nursery class in the September after they are three years old and then move into the Reception class the following September.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support from the pupil premium is in line with the average. The pupil premium provides additional funding for children in local authority care and pupils known to be eligible for free meals.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is in line with the average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or supported at school action plus is also in line with the average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment.

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

- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching by ensuring that:
  - staff consistently give pupils information about how they can improve their work and also the time to respond to these comments
  - pupils are enabled to take responsibility for assessing their own work against the targets set for them.
- Increase the links between the range of subjects studied in order to:
  - increase pupils' understanding and progress
  - develop in pupils a range of skills such as independent and collaborative work and the use of new technologies.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the Nursery with knowledge, skills and understanding which are generally much lower than those expected for their age. By the time they left the Reception class in July 2013, children made outstanding progress to standards that are close to what is expected. This happens because practitioners understand and track children's learning carefully and plan exciting activities within an exceptionally well managed indoor and outdoor learning environment.
- All pupils, including those who receive pupil premium funding, are disabled or have special educational needs, or speak English as an additional language make good progress. Most pupils achieve at least average standards of attainment by the end of Year 6 because of the high quality extra support offered.
- Progress and attainment in phonics (linking letters and sounds) are good and a high percentage of pupils have been successful in the Year 1 phonics check over the last two years.
- From the time pupils start school there is a strong emphasis upon reading. Throughout the school pupils talk excitedly about their favourite books and authors, and show a high level of understanding of what they read. Most pupils read fluently and confidently and are well supported to make good progress. There has been an increasingly effective partnership between the school and parents in supporting this learning.
- An increased focus upon writing through the school has meant that pupils make good progress and, by the end of Year 6, most achieve standards which are at least in line with those nationally. They write about exciting visits and experiences and examine punctuation and the use of language carefully. Marking has improved over the last two years but is not yet giving enough guidance for pupils to improve their work in all year groups.
- There is not always enough of a link between the subjects or use of new technologies and as a result pupils do not see the relevance of some of their learning in everyday life.
- Calculation skills are used well in helping pupils to solve problems. Sometimes, teachers direct this learning too closely and do not allow pupils to develop these skills independently or with partners and in groups.
- The pupil premium funding is used to provide small group work, one-to-one support, a study club, visits and activities beyond the school day. The school's tracking systems show that this is helping to improve the achievement of these pupils in all year groups. In 2012 these pupils were one term behind their peers in English and two terms behind in mathematics at the end of Year 6. In 2013, these gaps had closed.
- The extra funding for physical education has been used to provide specialist teaching which is also supporting the training of school staff.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good because teachers check carefully what pupils already know to build the next stages of learning through interesting and exciting work. This means that pupils acquire new skills and understanding confidently and quickly.
- Sometimes teachers use too much control over this learning and do not allow pupils to have enough active engagement, through discussion with partners or in groups, to develop their skills independently of staff. In these lessons the pace of learning slows down.
- In the outstanding lessons observed, pupils were actively engaged and showed the ability to support and challenge each other's ideas. In a lesson on time, pupils had appropriate equipment and worked at the correct level of challenge, discussing the ways that they were finding their answers. The teacher asked questions which encouraged pupils to investigate ideas together

and to solve problems.

- Teachers in the Nursery and Reception set up warm and encouraging relationships. Children come to school happily and learn confidently and rapidly in a safe and exciting environment focused on learning.
- Teaching assistant time is generally used well to support groups or individuals within the classroom or to deliver high quality extra teaching outside lessons.
- The work in pupils' books from this year and last year show the effect on achievement of good teaching over time which targets the learning needs of all pupils.
- The caring relationships with pupils and the focus on pupils bringing their best attitudes and behaviour mean that pupils work hard and develop confidence in their learning.

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

- Pupils are polite and courteous to each other and to adults, and show respect for each other's ideas, opinions and backgrounds.
- Their good behaviour and attitudes to their work mean that they are able to concentrate on learning and make good progress in their lessons, but they do not always have enough opportunities to work independently and collaboratively without the teacher.
- They understand how to stay safe, including when using modern technology.
- They understand the different forms that bullying can take and say that there is very little bullying in school. They know who to ask for help if they need it and they show care for each other in and around the school.
- Pupils play happily and safely and use the opportunities within the school grounds for investigation or quiet reflection.
- Disruption to lessons is rare and the school has good processes in place to support those who find it difficult to meet expectations at times. All pupils work hard to achieve rewards for good work and behaviour and staff use these to manage behaviour well.
- Case studies show that pupils in difficult situations are supported to achieve their very best.
- Pupils, parents and staff agree that behaviour is good in school and are proud of the recent changes including the exciting range of clubs, visits and experiences offered.
- All staff model high standards of respect and behaviour towards each other, parents and pupils in school.
- Attendance is above average and the school has good systems in place to follow up absence.

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

- The headteacher has brought a determined focus upon raising achievement across the school and this drive is shared by staff, governors, pupils and parents. All groups talk excitedly about the effect of the recent changes in making the school a more purposeful place to be.
- Rigorous monitoring and evaluation have been developed well so that all leaders are committed to holding the school to account for its work and setting up improvement activities. Governors judge the success of the school by the achievements of pupils and hold staff to account for these results.
- Planning future development is based upon a good understanding of what the school does well and where improvement is needed, and staff training grows out of these plans. There are clear expectations of the outcomes of all improvement activities.
- Carefully planned performance management targets take account of the career stage and training needs of all members of staff. More is expected of those on the upper pay scale and

there is a clear understanding of the link between pupils' achievement and salary progression. There has been determined action to address underperformance.

- The learning environment is motivating and supportive, and reflects some exciting learning across subject areas. Leaders are working to set up topics across curriculum areas so that pupils see greater links and real-life relevance in their learning. They are also planning for further use of new technologies to make the topics exciting and a source of development of independent learning.
  - Parents were keen to share with inspectors how happy they are with the extended opportunities for partnership with the school in order to support their children's progress.
  - Leaders have made sure that those pupils who are supported by the pupil premium funding make progress in line with their peers through small group support, one-to-one tuition and support for clubs and visits.
  - The school demonstrates a strong commitment to equal opportunities and to tackling all forms of discrimination, and this is effective in raising levels of achievement for all pupils.
  - Safeguarding policies and practice meet statutory requirements.
  - Good provision for pupils to develop spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is evident in all aspects of school life and contributes well to pupils' achievement and enjoyment in learning.
  - The local authority worked closely with the school during the transition period when the new headteacher was appointed.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - The governing body ensures that all resources including the pupil premium and the extra funding for physical education are effective in improving achievement for all pupils. They have undertaken extensive training so that they can evaluate school performance in terms of pupil outcomes, compared with national standards. Training has also enabled governors to fulfil their statutory duties effectively in terms of safeguarding and focused financial management. They use their knowledge of the school to challenge staff through a well-developed system of appraisal and an informed understanding of the quality of teaching which links with the pay structure. They demonstrate high ambitions for the further development of the school.
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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>	104234
<b>Local authority</b>	Walsall
<b>Inspection number</b>	426956

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

<b>Type of school</b>	All-through
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	203
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sheila Smith
<b>Headteacher</b>	Debbie Bierne
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2–3 February 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01922 710872
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