

# St Clement's Catholic Primary School

Oxford Road, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 4NX

**Inspection dates** 30–31 October 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	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		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 a good school because:

- Not enough pupils make good progress or achieve well over time in reading and mathematics.
- Teachers do not always set work that challenges pupils to do their best.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities to work things out for themselves.
- Pupils are not given sufficient time to respond to marking, which is not used consistently to show them how to improve.
- The teaching of specific reading skills lacks precision and there are not enough opportunities for pupils to read widely in different subjects.
- Pupils' mathematical problem-solving skills are not developed well enough.
- The impact of leaders on achievement and teaching is not fully embedded. Checking of teaching lacks rigour in setting specific areas for improvement and in ensuring teachers respond to them successfully.
- Middle leaders are not sufficiently skilled in evaluating the school's performance, especially pupils' progress, and in taking action to bring about improvement.
- The governing body does not have well-developed skills in analysing and interpreting information about pupils' achievement in order for them to ask leaders searching questions about how well the school is doing.

### The school has the following strengths

- Leaders and governors are having a positive impact on raising achievement and improving teaching in writing.
- Pupils make good progress in writing.
- Behaviour is good and pupils' attendance is well-above average.
- Pupils have a good awareness of how to keep themselves and others safe.
- Many activities enrich the curriculum.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural and social development is promoted well.
- The care and welfare of pupils is at the heart of the school's work.
- Parents are supportive of the school and appreciate the way they are helped to be involved in their children's learning.
- Leaders and governors have sufficient capacity to make further improvements.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 13 lessons or parts of lessons taught by seven teachers. Two of these were joint observations with the headteacher and one with the deputy headteacher.
- Discussions were held with the Chair of the Governing Body, parents, staff, pupils and the school's educational consultant.
- The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at school documentation, including that relating to safeguarding, records of meetings of the governing body, assessment information and curriculum planning. Work in pupils' books and displays around the school were examined. The inspectors listened to groups of pupils read.
- Account was taken of the 36 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in carrying out the inspection. Account was also taken of the responses to a recent school questionnaire sent to parents to gain their views about its performance.

## Inspection team

Melvyn Hemmings, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Clare Daniel

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- St Clement's is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- There is a below-average proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium. The pupil premium provides additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children who are looked after.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- There has been high staff turnover during the last two years.
- The school has gained a number of national awards, including Artsmark, and holds Healthy School status.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is good or better by:
  - making sure that teachers always set work that brings the best out of pupils
  - maximising opportunities for pupils to work things out for themselves
  - making sure that marking is used consistently to show pupils how to improve and providing them with enough time to respond to it.
- Raise achievement in reading and mathematics by:
  - improving group reading sessions led by adults so they effectively focus on developing specific reading skills
  - increasing opportunities for pupils to extend their reading skills by reading widely in different subjects
  - improving pupils' ability to use their mathematical calculation skills to solve number problems in real-life situations.
- Improve leadership and management, including governance by:
  - rigorously checking the quality of teaching to provide specific areas for improvement and ensuring teachers respond to them successfully
  - extending the skills of middle leaders in evaluating the school's performance, especially pupils' progress, and in taking action to bring about improvement
  - improving the skills of governors in analysing and interpreting information about the school's performance.

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

- Children's skills on entry to school are generally below those expected for their age.
- From their different starting points, the proportion of pupils making expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics is close to the national figure. The proportion exceeding expected progress is close to the national figure in writing but below in reading and mathematics. This indicates that not enough pupils are making good progress over time in reading and mathematics and that achievement requires improvement. The results of national tests show this picture of achievement has been similar for the last two years.
- Attainment in reading is broadly average by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time pupils leave school. Teaching is effective in ensuring pupils enjoy reading and they talk with enthusiasm about their favourite books and authors. However, teachers provide limited opportunities for pupils to read widely in different subjects and this restricts them extending their reading skills.
- Attainment in writing and mathematics is broadly average at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. Leadership is having more impact on improving writing, which is relatively stronger than mathematics because teaching is now more effective. Pupils write imaginatively in a variety of styles, including poetry, to express their feelings and ideas.
- In mathematics, teachers ensure pupils have secure calculation skills across the four rules of number. They are not adept in using these skills to solve problems in real-life situations and this especially slows the progress of the more-able pupils.
- By the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, children's attainment is close to the national average.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make the same progress as other pupils because of the extra support provided to meet their specific needs.
- The teaching of pupils who are more able is not always effective because they are not always given work that challenges them and this limits their progress at times, particularly in reading and mathematics. As a result, their progress requires improvement rather than being good or better.
- The funding for pupils eligible for the pupil premium has been used well to provide small group and individual support to raise their attainment in English and mathematics. This has narrowed the gap in attainment between pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and other pupils in school. As a result, they make similar progress to other pupils and their attainment in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 is closer to that of other groups not supported by the pupil premium, being around two terms behind. This demonstrates the school's successful commitment to equality of opportunity.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Even though teaching is improving, there is not enough of it that is good or better and it is judged to require improvement.
- The work given to pupils does not always bring the best out of them and this slows their progress. There are too few opportunities for pupils to work things out for themselves, such as solving mathematical problems in real-life situations, without being directed by the teacher. Pupils are not given sufficient time to respond to marking, which is not used consistently to show them how to improve.
- Senior leaders have provided training to develop these aspects of teaching and improvements have been made, particularly in writing. However, inconsistencies remain and this slows pupils' progress. As one pupil commented, 'Sometimes the work is too easy and I don't learn enough.'
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, adults provide activities that are practical and based upon children's own experiences. There is a suitable balance between activities led by adults and those chosen by children.

- In Key Stages 1 and 2, when teaching is good, teachers explain new ideas clearly and confidently. They ensure that pupils are clear about what they are to learn and what they need to do to succeed. Expectations of pupils' behaviour are high and classrooms managed well so that lessons flow smoothly.
- Such teaching was evident in a mathematics lesson for pupils in Year 2 in which they made good progress in using a ruler to accurately measure a variety of objects. In this lesson, questioning was used effectively to extend pupils' understanding of measurement and to extend their mathematical vocabulary.
- Teaching assistants are generally deployed effectively to promote pupils' learning, especially disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium.
- Spiritual and moral development is promoted effectively in pupils who are encouraged to reflect on the wonder of the world around them and by high expectations of their behaviour. Social and cultural development is fostered by pupils being given opportunity to work collaboratively and to explore the traditions and beliefs of cultures different from their own.

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

- Pupils are considerate and supportive of each other in lessons and there is a welcoming and friendly atmosphere throughout the school. Pupils are polite, courteous and appreciative of the views and efforts of others. They say that some pupils do not always behave as well as they could do but teachers quickly deal with any problems.
- The views of parents, staff and pupils and a scrutiny of behaviour logs confirm that behaviour has been good over time. Pupils are aware of the different types of bullying, such as name calling and cyber bullying, and say any such occurrences do not happen. They are confident that any bullying would be dealt with promptly by staff.
- There is a good understanding among pupils of how to keep themselves and others safe. This is effectively promoted through the curriculum by activities that highlight the dangers associated with the use of roads, railways, water and the internet. Pupils know what to do if approached by a stranger and say that they feel safe in school at all times.
- Pupils show a love of learning in all subjects and especially enjoy working together to complete tasks. They concentrate for lengthy periods and persevere when faced with difficulty. Attendance is consistently well-above average and pupils arrive on time, which demonstrates their enjoyment of school.
- Pupils are proud of their school saying, 'It's like one big family where everybody looks after each other.'
- By willingly taking on a variety of responsibilities, including older pupils looking after younger ones at lunchtimes, pupils effectively add to the life of the school. School councillors carry out their responsibilities diligently and, in so doing, they give pupils a voice in how the school develops.

### **The leadership and management** requires improvement

- The school's leadership is securing improvements in pupils' achievement and in teaching. However, leadership and management require improvement because not enough teaching is good or better and insufficient numbers of pupils are making good progress and achieving well in reading and mathematics. The role of middle leaders is not fully developed and governors do not have a clear understanding of data related to pupils' achievement.
- Senior leaders and governors have worked well over the last two years to manage the high turnover of staff to minimise any disruption to pupils' learning. The headteacher is ambitious for the school and has a clear view of how successful the school can be.
- The management of staff performance and training of teachers and other adults has successfully

driven improvement in pupils' achievement in writing. It has been less effective in raising achievement in reading and mathematics. There is a clear link between the performance of teachers and their salary progression.

- The checking of the quality of teaching lacks sufficient rigour. Lesson observations are carried out regularly but lack precision in setting specific areas for improvement and in ensuring teachers respond to them successfully.
- Middle leaders lack sufficient skills in evaluating the school's performance and in taking action to bring about improvement. They do not keep a close enough eye on the progress pupils make to ensure all do as well as they can, especially the more-able pupils in reading and mathematics.
- The local authority has provided light touch support since the previous inspection. It rightly acknowledges that this needs to be increased in order to drive improvement more rapidly.
- New primary sport funding has been used successfully by leaders. As a result, pupils have an extra hour of physical education each week and their participation in after-school sporting activities has increased.
- Equality of opportunity and the tackling of discrimination are promoted well. The care and well-being of pupils is good. Parents are appreciative of this and the way the school involves them in their children's learning.
- The curriculum successfully promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It is enriched by a variety of extra-curricular activities and visits, including residential stays for pupils in Years 2, 4 and 6.
- Improvements made by leaders and governors over the last two years show they have sufficient ability to take the school forward.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors do not show a clear understanding of data relating to pupils' achievement and this limits their ability to hold leaders to account for the school's performance. However, they do have a sound understanding of how the funding for pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium is used to raise their achievement. The governing body is now better informed about the quality of teaching. Governors know how the management of performance is used to improve staff expertise, tackle under performance and reward good teaching. They ensure that safeguarding requirements are met. Governors manage the budget effectively.

## 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>	111320
<b>Local authority</b>	Halton
<b>Inspection number</b>	422517

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>	205
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Andrea Williams
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mark Parker
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 May 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01928 572129
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