

# St Brigid's Catholic Primary School

Frankley Beeches Road, Northfield, Birmingham, B31 5AB

## Inspection dates

5–6 November 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 make good progress and reach standards that are well above those seen nationally in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils have achieved well over time because teaching is typically good.
- Provision in Nursery and Reception is good. As a result children get off to a good start and make good progress from low starting points in the nursery.
- Lessons are well planned and purposeful, and teaching assistants provide good support.
- Pupils feel safe and enjoy being at school, as seen in the high attendance levels. They are well motivated, and their behaviour is regularly good and sometimes exemplary.
- The strong leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher has enabled good achievement to be maintained.
- Plans for improvement are effective, and all staff are committed to the school's success.
- Governors are very well informed and not only support but also challenge the school, ensuring it remains on an upward path.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching and in some lessons questioning does not always give teachers a clear picture of the progress different groups are making.
- Teachers do not ensure that pupils respond to the advice that marking gives them.
- Progress in mathematics is not so consistently good across the different year groups as progress in English.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes. They visited 23 lessons. Six of these were jointly observed with the headteacher or deputy headteacher. Inspectors also listened to a selection of pupils read.
- Inspectors held meetings with leaders responsible for special educational needs, the Early Years Foundation Stage, English and mathematics and the curriculum. They also met with members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation including the school's self-evaluation and school's development plans. They checked current assessment information, minutes of the governing body and records of the school's checks on the quality of teaching and learning together with anonymised information about performance management. They examined a wide selection of pupils' books from the previous year.
- Inspectors spoke with a group of pupils and informally with pupils around the school and at lunch times.
- At the time of the inspection there were 40 responses to the online survey (Parent View), which inspectors considered. Inspectors also considered the 28 responses to the staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Gavin Jones, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Dennis Brittain	Additional Inspector
Julia Spittle	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is broadly average. This is government funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, are looked after by the local authority or have parents in the armed forces.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well above the national average. The proportion who speak English as an additional language is, however, broadly average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, supported at school action, is below average, while the proportion with a statement of educational needs or supported at school action plus is above average.
- The school meets the government floor standard, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school hosts, supports and manages a breakfast club.
- There have been some recent changes in staffing.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

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

- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching and eliminate any teaching which requires improvement in order to continue raising achievement, by:
  - ensuring that pupils are given time to respond in detail to teachers' marking comments, to improve their work before starting new work
  - using high quality questioning more consistently to check progress and extend learning during lessons.
- Raise progress in mathematics so it is as rapid as in English in all year groups, by fine-tuning monitoring of teaching and learning in mathematics, taking specific action to accelerate progress where needed in every class.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- When pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6 they usually do so with standards well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. This has been the case for a number of years and only dipped for one year, anticipated by the school, because it was a year group in which some pupils were much lower attaining when they started in Key Stage 2.
- Children usually join the Nursery with skills, knowledge and experiences well below those for their age. Many have significant language problems. They make good progress, and results in Key Stage 1 national assessments are broadly average.
- Improved teaching of phonics (the links between letters and the sounds they make) has ensured that the percentage of pupils meeting national expectations in the 2013 Year 1 phonic screening check was average. Work in classes suggests that this teaching is still improving.
- Pupils are making good progress in their literacy and numeracy skills in Year 6 and are on track to maintain the schools well-above average levels of attainment in both English and mathematics. Pupils of all abilities, including the more able, make good progress.
- Pupils showed great enthusiasm when reading to inspectors with many being supported well by their families, reading at home. Guided reading lessons give good support not only to the quality of reading but also in raising pupils' interest in the written word through a range of activities.
- Achievement is not outstanding as progress in different year groups is not consistently rapid and sustained. There are minor differences in progress between classes in some year groups in mathematics. These are not always carefully tracked, although, overall, actions are taken to ensure that there is very little underachievement.
- Pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding benefit from good teaching. The additional funding has been used appropriately, for example to engage additional teaching assistants and provide booster groups where appropriate. At Key Stage 1 these pupils are at the same levels as all other pupils for English and only slightly below in mathematics, with the gap closing. At Key Stage 2 these pupils achieve better than similar pupils nationally but their attainment is about a term behind their own classmates. This gap, however, is closing fast as they make better progress.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar good progress to their classmates, as do pupils for whom English is an additional language. This is because their needs are met well by teaching and support staff.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is typically good with a small proportion that is outstanding and an even smaller proportion that requires improvement. Teaching enables pupils to make good progress and achieve well. In the best lessons teachers take a sharp focus on pupils' different abilities, for example providing the most able pupils with very well chosen additional challenges.
- Teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes is good. Teachers are skilful in judging when to intervene and to keep learning moving along briskly.

- The vast majority of lessons have a very purposeful feel, with little need of reminders about behaviour, as pupils are keen to learn. In an outstanding literacy lesson pupils were excited by the atmosphere created by the teacher and could not wait to get started on their firework poems, using a wide range of words about sound.
- Careful planning is a strong feature of teaching. Aims and objectives are made clear so that pupils know what they will learn and how to check their own learning.
- Teachers usually question pupils carefully but sometimes do not check to see that all groups are making rapid progress as the lesson proceeds. This applies particularly when pupils respond with their hands up and teachers select one pupil then move on.
- Teachers carefully collect information on pupils' progress and have termly 'tracking meetings' at which all pupils are discussed and any underachievement is quickly addressed.
- Teachers mark work regularly and carefully. While pupils themselves say that marking helps them improve, they do not always respond directly to the advice given to them, usually because they do not have enough opportunity.
- Throughout the school learning assistants provide good support. This ensures that groups such as those who receive pupil premium funding, pupils for whom English is an additional language and pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs, make similar good progress in their learning to that of their classmates.

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

- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and typically work hard. They are happy to share their learning with others in pairs, groups or with the whole class. Outcomes from this can be seen in the good progress pupils make in lessons.
- Behaviour is not outstanding because on some occasions, for example when they are not directly involved in answering questions, a few pupils lose concentration and their pace of learning drops. Even so they are not disruptive of learning and do not affect the learning of others.
- Pupils say they love school and feel very safe. They say that typically their peers behave well, although a small minority of parents disagree. Pupils have a very clear vision of what bullying is and are equally clear that it is virtually non-existent in their school. If they have any concerns they know that there are many adults who will help them.
- The provision of a well-ordered breakfast club supports the start of each day well.
- The school's 'nurture group' has a good impact on improving the behaviour and attitudes of pupils who are recognised as having behavioural issues.
- Previously average attendance has been tackled consistently over time by the leadership of the school. Attendance is now very high compared with the national average with the school one day recording 100% attendance across all classes earlier in the term.

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

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide determined and strong leadership. They are highly ambitious for further improvement and have a thorough and realistic view of what needs to be done to improve. They have created a good leadership team, all of whom are committed to the vision of success. The staff questionnaire illustrates that staff show a shared sense of commitment to continuous success.
- The usually rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the school's work ensures that teaching is checked regularly and is typically good. This is having a positive effect on pupils' achievement because results of monitoring are used to produce an all-encompassing development plan which is targeted, referenced to a time scale and to checks on its success.
- A range of leaders assist in the monitoring task, observing lessons, monitoring books, checking assessments and attending regular tracking meetings. The latter provides opportunities for leaders to see how well all pupils are progressing and to hold class teachers accountable for such progress. The school provides itself with a wide range of detailed assessment material with which to hold itself to account. However, checks on mathematics teaching have not yet resulted in consistently good teaching across every year group.
- Targets are set for teachers and they are reviewed throughout the year. They are closely linked to pupils' progress and teachers are only rewarded where performance merits it.
- The curriculum has been adapted and improved to make it more interesting and exciting for pupils. Subjects are linked together and a variety of trips and visitors bring topics to life. Inspectors witnessed a 'battle' between Harold and William, with some pupils creating a Bayeux tapestry while others made shields in readiness for the battle.
- The curriculum provides many excellent opportunities for pupils to develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally. This happens regularly during acts of worship, and during the opportunities given for pupils to share learning and to benefit from the cultural diversity of the school.
- Leaders make sure that everyone has an equal chance to do well and make good use of additional funding from government to support the needs of those eligible.
- The proposed additional funding for the promotion of physical education and healthy living is already being put into effect by the school. Members of a local Premiership football club take on football training, while another company provides for other aspects of the physical education curriculum. Class teachers attend these lessons so that they too might make gains in their own understanding. A former teacher, from the local secondary school, provides support for competitive sport both in and out of school time. This gives pupils additional sporting opportunities and avenues for healthy living.
- The local authority has 'light touch' contact with the school as it views it as successful. It makes itself available to support the school when required.
- The strong leadership, including the governing body, suggests that further improvements will be made.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is fully aware of the school's strengths and areas for development and are very ambitious for the school. They have a wide range of skills and have benefitted from good training. This helps them play a strong role in the development of the school. They understand

information on pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching and check carefully to see if the headteacher is doing all that is necessary to improve the school. They visit school regularly and appreciate information given to them by the senior leaders. They set challenging targets for the headteacher and ensure that good systems are in place to check teachers' performance. They make sure that teachers' financial rewards are linked closely to their performance. They understand the expenditure and results of the pupil premium and manage all expenditure well. They ensure that safeguarding meets statutory 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>	103432
<b>Local authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	427073

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	456
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Fr Jan Nowotnik
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rebecca Nash
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 November 2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 464 2364
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