

# St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School, Langho

Whalley Road, Langho, Blackburn, Lancashire, BB6 8EQ

**Inspection dates** 5–6 November 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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 good because

- Pupils do not do well enough. Too few pupils make good progress. Not enough of the most-able pupils reach the high standards of which they are capable.
- Standards in mathematics at Key Stage 2 are not high enough. Progress in mathematics through Key Stage 2 is also not good enough.
- There is not yet enough good quality teaching to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress over time.
- Work is not always matched closely enough to pupils' needs and teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not consistently high enough, particularly for the most-able pupils
- Teachers do not always ask questions that challenge pupils and deepen their understanding.
- Teachers do not always ensure that pupils respond to their comments and suggestions for improvement.
- Leaders and managers do not ensure that school development planning is focused clearly enough on improving teaching and raising standards and achievement.
- Improvements introduced by the headteacher have not yet ensured consistently good teaching and achievement and have not securely demonstrated good leadership and management.

### The school has the following strengths

- Behaviour is good and pupils say they feel happy and safe in school. Attendance is high.
- The school provides a caring environment for its pupils.
- Pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs receive effective support and achieve at least as well as other pupils.
- The curriculum engages pupils well in their learning and is enriched by a variety of activities, trips and visits.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very well promoted.
- The headteacher and governors are committed to improving the school.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 20 lessons or part lessons, including one observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with school leaders and managers and with three governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body. Inspectors also met a representative from the local authority.
- Discussions were held with two groups of pupils and inspectors spoke informally to other pupils in lessons and during break and lunchtime.
- Inspectors looked at the work pupils were doing in lessons and in their books over time. They listened to pupils in Year 2 and Year 5 read and talked to them about their enjoyment of reading.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and examined a number of documents. These included data concerning pupils' current achievement, development plans and performance management information. Inspectors also looked at records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding arrangements. Minutes of governing body meetings and the school adviser's reports were also considered.
- Inspectors took account of 55 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) as well as three letters from parents. They also considered 15 responses to the questionnaires completed by staff for the inspection.

## Inspection team

Robert Birtwell, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
John Shutt	Additional Inspector
Juliet Demster	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Pupils are taught in nine classes from the Reception Year to Year 6.
- Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children looked after by the local authority and children from service families) is well-below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

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

- Improve teaching and learning so that they are consistently good or better by:
  - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve
  - making sure that teachers always ask challenging questions that deepen pupils' understanding
  - ensuring that teachers always check that pupils are responding to their comments and suggestions for improvement.
- Raise achievement so that more pupils make more than the progress expected of them and reach the highest standards by:
  - ensuring that teachers always plan work that is closely matched to the needs of all pupils and provides them with good challenge, especially the most able
  - improving pupils' standards and progress in mathematics so that they are at least as good as those in reading and writing.
- Improve leadership and management by making sure that leaders and managers at all levels, including governors, focus school development planning very firmly on improving teaching and raising pupils' standards and achievement.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because pupils do not make consistently good progress across the school. Too few pupils make more than the expected amount of progress at the end of Key Stage 2, and not enough of the most-able pupils reach the high standards of which they are capable.
- Most children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and understanding that are at least in line with those typical for their age. They make steady progress in the Reception class and join Year 1 with standards that are above those expected for their age.
- At the end of Year 2, pupils attain standards that are just below the national average in reading and writing, and just above average in mathematics.
- Pupils', including the most able, generally make the expected rate of progress in Key Stage 2. Standards at the end of Year 6 have been variable over the last three years. They have typically been above average in writing, broadly average in reading and below average in mathematics. In 2013, standards fell sharply due to issues related to the year group and were below average in all subjects. The proportion of pupils who made the progress expected of them was close to the national average in reading and writing, but below average in mathematics. The proportion of pupils who made more than the progress expected of them in reading, writing and mathematics has been below average for the last two years.
- The school's tracking information shows that pupils are now making more rapid progress in most subjects and year groups, but this has not yet had time to make up for previously weaker performance. Inspection evidence from lesson observations and work in pupils' books confirms this better picture. This is because teaching is improving.
- Pupils make steady progress in reading. Pupils say they read regularly and they have an adequate knowledge of phonics (letters and the sounds they make). However, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in the Year 1 national phonics check was below average in both 2012 and 2013.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs learn at least as well as other pupils in the school because their achievement is closely monitored and they are well supported. The school is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity so that all pupils make similar progress.
- Very few pupils in each year group are eligible for support through the pupil premium, but their progress is carefully monitored. They receive well-targeted support and their achievement matches that of other pupils. There are too few pupils to comment in detail on the standards they attain without identifying them.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because there has not been enough consistently good teaching to ensure that pupils make good progress and achieve well over time. While no inadequate teaching was seen during the inspection, neither was there any outstanding teaching.
- In lessons where teaching is less effective and progress is slower, teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve and do not ensure that work is closely matched to pupils' different needs and abilities. The most-able pupils in particular are not always given work that is challenging enough to enable them to reach the highest standards and make the best possible progress. This means that the pace of learning is not quick enough for all pupils to make good progress.
- In lessons where progress is slower, teachers typically ask questions that test and reinforce pupils' knowledge rather than challenging them to deepen their understanding.
- Where teaching is good there is a good level of challenge and a brisk pace to learning. Teachers use the information they have to plan work that is well matched to pupils' needs and abilities. Pupils are given opportunities to work independently or in groups and to actively investigate and

solve problems, and teachers ask questions that challenge and extend pupils' learning.

- For example, in a mathematics lesson, the most-able pupils were actively engaged in designing and drawing a scaled plan of their ideal bedroom, while other pupils were solving measurement problems which required them to convert from different units to reach the answer. The teacher used questioning very skilfully to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding and, as a result, they all made good progress.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and provide useful help and guidance about what pupils need to do to improve the quality of their work. However, teachers do not always check that pupils respond to, and follow, this advice.
- Teaching assistants work closely with teachers and are effective in supporting the learning of pupils who need extra help, including those who are disabled or who have special educational needs and the small number who are eligible for support through pupil premium funding.
- About one third of parents who responded to the Parent View questionnaire expressed concern about the quality of teaching in the school and over 40% were not happy with the progress their children are making. Inspection evidence confirms that teaching requires improvement in order to raise pupils' progress and achievement.

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

- Pupils behave well both in lessons and around the school. They have good manners and are polite to each other and to adults and visitors. School records show that there are very few instances of poor behaviour, and there have been no exclusions for at least the last five years.
- There is a calm, well-ordered and productive atmosphere throughout the school. Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance is high.
- Pupils feel very safe in school and cared for well. They know how to keep themselves safe in different situations including on roads and when using the internet. They showed a very good awareness of bonfire and firework safety as the inspection coincided with Bonfire Night.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the different forms bullying can take, including name-calling and cyber bullying, but say that it is very rare in school. They are confident that the school would sort it out quickly if it occurred.
- Pupils readily take on responsibility across the school in a variety of areas. For example, older pupils regularly help and assist younger pupils, the school council is active and pupils volunteer to help in the canteen during lunch. This makes a good contribution to pupils' strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- All parents who completed the Parent View survey thought that their children were safe in school and a very large majority thought their children were well looked after and that behaviour was good. Inspection evidence confirms this.

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

- Leadership and management require improvement as school leaders have not been able to secure consistently good teaching and good progress over time.
- Since her appointment, the headteacher has worked effectively to overcome some of the shortcomings. This has included ensuring that there is no inadequate teaching and that the majority of pupils are making at least the progress expected of them. The changes she has introduced mean that the school has a secure capacity to improve, but have not yet resulted in consistently good teaching or achievement.
- Leaders and managers at all levels, including governors, are keen for the school to improve. They have a good idea of where the school needs to do better, but school development planning is not focused clearly enough on the need to improve teaching and raise pupils' achievement, and not all staff are fully aware of this.
- Better systems to check on pupils' progress have been introduced. This information is used to

identify any underachievement and to provide pupils with extra help when they need it. As a result, there is no major difference in the performance of different groups in the school.

- Effective systems are in place to check on the quality of teaching. These identify where further development or support are needed. Training, coaching and mentoring are raising the quality of teaching and the majority of teaching seen during the inspection was good.
- Information about pupils' achievement is taken into account when making decisions about teachers' pay.
- Recently, and during the inspection, teaching has been disrupted by staff absence due to illness. This has affected the Early Years Foundation Stage in particular. A more stable and longer-term solution has now been found to address this problem.
- The curriculum is well organised to provide a range of learning opportunities for all pupils. There is a good variety of enrichment activities including sport, drama, music and cultural, trips and visits. For example, Year 6 pupils spoke enthusiastically about their recent residential outdoor pursuits activity. In addition, there are strong links with the local church. As a result, the curriculum promotes positive behaviour and makes a good contribution to pupils' strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school is using the new primary school sport funding successfully to improve the quality of physical education. The money has enabled the school to expand its work with the local sports partnership to provide specialist teaching on two afternoons a week, and to train school staff and improve the quality of after-school sports provision.
- The local authority has provided support in reviewing the performance of the school and that of the headteacher, and has provided good quality training for both staff and governors.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governance of the school has improved. Governors are now better informed about pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching and learning, and have been trained in the analysis and use of data. As a result, they have a sound understanding of how well the school is doing and where it needs to improve. They hold the school to account by setting ambitious performance targets for the headteacher and asking challenging questions. However, they have not concentrated explicitly and clearly enough on improving the quality of teaching and raising achievement. They make sure that pupils' achievement is considered when making decisions about teachers' pay. They know how the school's pupil premium funding is spent and the impact it is having. They make sure that the school's finances are soundly managed and that the school meets its statutory requirements, including those related to safeguarding.

## 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>	119642
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	426263

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>	269
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	A Corban
<b>Headteacher</b>	Janet Malone
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 November 2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	01254 247157
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