

# St Hedda's Roman Catholic Primary School

Egton Bridge, Whitby, North Yorkshire, YO21 1UX

**Inspection dates** 20 November 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- Pupils make exceptionally good progress from their generally below and often well-below average starting points.
- Most pupils reach above nationally expected levels in reading and mathematics at the end of Year 6. The standards reached in writing, while also above expected levels, are not quite as high.
- Pupils with special educational needs make excellent progress.
- Teaching is outstanding. Teachers plan lessons which enthuse the pupils who learn quickly.
- Pupils' work is marked diligently and teachers typically show where learning has been successful and where improvements should be made. However, in a few lessons pupils do not routinely have opportunities to respond to these suggestions.
- Pupils' behaviour is impeccable in and out of lessons. They work extremely hard and show a real enthusiasm for learning.
- Pupils say that bullying is very rare and that they feel very safe in school. Parents agree with this view. Pupils are exceptionally well cared for throughout the school.
- The school is extremely well led and managed. The very effective systems mean that all leaders know the school very well and ensure that the school runs smoothly at all times.
- Members of the governing body are extremely well informed about all aspects of the school. They know exactly how well it is doing and what it needs to do next to improve even further.
- Leaders at all levels show a very clear commitment and determination to continue to improve teaching and pupils' achievement.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed five lessons, one of which was a joint observation with the headteacher and one of which was a physical education lesson.
- Meetings were held with pupils from Years 5 and 6. Inspectors also held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body, school staff with leadership responsibilities and a representative from the local authority. They listened to pupils in Year 2 read.
- Inspectors took account of 10 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and eight responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed the school at work and looked at a range of documentation, including internal and external information relating to pupils' progress, their workbooks, school improvement planning and the school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its own performance. They also considered reports written by the local authority, documents relating to the management of teachers' performance, safeguarding and child-protection documents.

## Inspection team

Peter Eeva, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jan Lomas

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a much smaller than average-sized primary school.
- Pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes in the morning. In the afternoon they are taught in two classes.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is lower than average. 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 who are looked after by the local authority.
- 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?

- Further increase the rate of progress in writing by:
  - consistently providing pupils with opportunities to make the improvements that teachers suggest about how to improve their writing.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### is outstanding

- Pupils join the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge that are below or well below those typical for children of their age. They make very rapid progress in their knowledge, understanding and skills so that by the end of Key Stage 2, they reach standards in English and mathematics that are above average.
- Children in the Reception Year get off to an excellent start as a result of the caring environment, high quality teaching and the very detailed knowledge that all the adults have of individual children's needs. As a result, they make excellent progress from their below or well-below average starting points.
- Pupils continue to learn at a very rapid rate in Years 1 and 2. They read very well for their age and can decode new and difficult words with increasing confidence and accuracy. This very good start is built on as they move through the school so that by the end of Year 6 pupils read extremely well, particularly the more-able pupils.
- Pupils' mathematical skills are of a very high order and by Years 5 and 6 pupils are able to choose and use appropriate strategies to solve complex problems and some pupils are aiming to move on to the very high Level 6 work.
- Pupils write with imagination and use their developing skills in their topic work, adapting their writing styles to match a range of audiences and purposes.
- However, the rate of progress in writing is not as rapid as it is in reading and mathematics because pupils do not always promptly make the improvements suggested by their teachers in their feedback and learn how their writing could improve further.
- The very small numbers of pupils in each year make comparisons of attainment from year to year very difficult. However, the school's own data clearly show that all pupils make excellent progress particularly in reading and mathematics from their individual starting points. This was confirmed by lesson observations, scrutiny of work and hearing pupils read.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is very closely checked and reviewed regularly. When it is needed, carefully planned support, which very closely matches individual pupil's needs, makes sure that these pupils make progress that is similar to that of other pupils.
- The progress and attainment of pupils who are eligible for free school meals and supported by pupil premium funding achieve very well. School information shows that there are no gaps in attainment in English and mathematics between these pupils and others in the school. This is because the school knows them exceptionally well and can provide any extra help that is needed for them.
- The more-able pupils make similar excellent progress to reach standards that are above average with standards in reading and in mathematics being a little higher than the standard reached in writing.
- Equality of opportunity is central to the school's work and the school successfully removes any barriers to learning so that there is no difference in the achievement of different groups of pupils.

### The quality of teaching

### is outstanding

- The quality of teaching over time is excellent as shown by the outstanding achievement of pupils since the previous inspection. The school's own records and other evidence gathered during the inspection confirm that consistently high quality teaching is the norm.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is very strong and their very detailed understanding of each individual pupil's needs enables them to plan very interesting lessons which give the pupils opportunities to make very rapid progress. For example, in the Year 5 and 6 class pupils

enthusiastically gathered and sorted information about Anne Frank in order to write a biography.

- Teachers have very high expectations and make the activities they plan for pupils challenging. Pupils respond to these challenges willingly and feel a real sense of achievement. This has helped to instil in all pupils a love of learning that shows in all they do.
- Adults and pupils have very positive relationships which mean that lessons proceed without interruption and no time is lost for learning.
- Teaching assistants play a key role in helping some pupils to learn. They have a very detailed knowledge of what individual pupils need in order to learn. They use this information extremely well to help pupils overcome any difficulties which might slow their learning.
- The teaching of mathematics is consistently strong. Pupils learn the basic skills early in their school life and successfully build on these as they move through the school.
- Pupils read widely and often and say that they enjoy reading; both in school and at home. Older pupils read fluently with expression and attention to punctuation. They have favourite authors and books which they are quite happy to talk about with enthusiasm.
- Pupils write for a range of audiences and purposes and have a variety of exciting first-hand experiences to write about. Programmes to develop writing further are beginning to help pupils consolidate their basic skills. Teachers mark pupils' work frequently and acknowledge where pupils have been successful and make suggestions about how writing can be improved. However, pupils do not always have the chance to make these improvements promptly and so do not develop their writing skills as quickly as they might.

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

- Pupils behave impeccably both in and out of class and also when on visits. They come to school ready and eager to learn and are very attentive in lessons. They make an exceptional contribution to their own learning. Pupils are very confident, capable young people, keen to use every moment in school to the full.
- Staff have extremely high expectations of behaviour and these are shared by the pupils. All adults set excellent examples for pupils to follow and older pupils provide first-class role models for younger pupils.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about contributing to all aspects of school life. They willingly take on roles of responsibility such as being head boy or head girl and helping with acts of worship. They take these responsibilities very seriously and are conscientious in carrying out their duties.
- Pupils feel very safe in school and parents agree. They know how to keep themselves safe including when using the internet.
- Bullying is extremely rare. Pupils have a thorough understanding of different forms of bullying but almost no first-hand experience of it. As one pupil said, 'It's about as rare as a four leaved clover'
- Attendance has improved as a result of the school's thorough systems for checking on absences and pupils are eager to come to school. In the past it has been affected by some serious illnesses and travel difficulties in this very rural location. There is no persistent absenteeism and there have been no exclusions since the previous inspection.
- Pupils have an impressive range of after-school and lunchtime clubs and activities which they really appreciate. The school is using some of its primary school sports funding to make the teaching of physical education more effective and this, together with the popular sports activities is having a positive impact on pupils' physical well-being. Pupils really enjoy their physical education lessons and participation in sport out of lessons is high.

**The leadership and management are outstanding**

- The headteacher is extremely highly regarded by all those connected with the school. She balances a sizeable teaching load with leading and managing the school very effectively. Leaders at all levels know the school very well indeed and with the governing body share the headteacher's passion and determination to continue to improve pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching still further. They are far from complacent and continue to strive for excellence.
- A striking example of the headteacher's vision and the commitment of all for further improvement has been the redevelopment of an existing low standard building to create a very high-quality multi-purpose learning space.
- The school has rigorous systems for checking on pupils' progress and because each child is known as an individual, any pupil at risk of falling behind is quickly identified and given extra help individually or in small groups in order to help them catch up.
- There are rigorous and regular checks on the quality of teaching and learning. These provide accurate information about teachers' performance which is used to identify and share best practice across the school. Exemplary practice is also shared within the local cluster of schools which have formed a Teaching Alliance.
- The curriculum has been successfully developed to make sure that it meets the needs of all the pupils. Pupils particularly enjoy the Second World War topic.
- The development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is important to the school and, as a result, pupils' personal development is highly effective. Pupils develop into very independent, confident and eager learners who, by the time they leave Year 6, are more than ready for the next stage in their education.
- Safeguarding and child-protection policies and procedures meet current requirements.
- The local authority has provided a basic level of support which was increased during the short period when the headteacher was absent and which was much appreciated by the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors know the school very well. They visit it regularly and are kept very well informed by the headteacher. They bring a great deal of experience and a wide range of skills which they use to great effect. Governors monitor the school's performance rigorously and systematically and ask challenging questions to promote further development. They are highly ambitious for the achievement and welfare of the pupils. Governors are familiar with the Teachers' Standards and use them to help manage teachers' performance. They oversee the spending of pupil premium funding and are aware of the positive impact it is having on pupils' achievement. They are also involved in planning the spending of the Primary School Sports funding and in how its impact will be measured.

## 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>	121651
<b>Local authority</b>	North Yorkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	425984

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>	41
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr V McLaughlin
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs M Palmer
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 September 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01947 895361
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