

St Edmund's Catholic Primary School

The Drive, Godalming, Surrey, GU7 1PF

Inspection dates 17–18 December 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
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' attainment at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 is high, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- Children get off to a good start in Reception and make good progress. Pupils make outstanding progress in reading and mathematics across Key Stage 2 classes.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and these help them to make good, and sometimes outstanding, progress.
- Pupils enjoy reading and are taught how to sound out letters and words effectively.
- Pupils enjoy school and attend regularly because they say that 'teachers are nice' and they have good friends.
- Leaders' monitoring of teaching is regular and effective. This has helped to consolidate pupils' good achievement and the school's good overall effectiveness.
- The interim headteacher and the assistant headteacher have ensured that the good behaviour and good quality of teaching seen in the previous inspection have been maintained.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual and moral development exceptionally well; pupils have good opportunities to work together, participate in sport, music and art, and to develop their cultural understanding.
- Leaders engage extremely well with parents, and the school is a welcoming and caring place where pupils behave well and feel safe.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always use up-to-date assessment information to set work at precisely the right level for pupils or give pupils clear guidance about how to improve.
- Pupils often do not have enough opportunities to make improvements once their work is marked.
- Progress for a very small number of pupils with special educational needs is less strong than that of their peers.
- Pupils do not always reach the highest levels in writing.
- The school's self-evaluation, the governing body's objectives and action plans are not as closely aligned as possible.
- Current varied tracking systems make checking the progress of groups of pupils more difficult. The success of actions for performance management and in action plans is not always easy to measure.

Information about this inspection

- The school had half a day's notice of the inspection and the inspection took place over two days.
- Inspectors observed teaching in 17 lessons or part lessons in all of the school's classes. Some of these observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with pupils, leaders and managers, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors held informal discussions with parents. They also took account of 48 responses to the Parent View online survey, and 17 questionnaire responses from staff.
- They looked at pupils' work in lessons and also separately with the interim headteacher. Inspectors heard pupils reading and observed them in class and around the school.
- A wide range of school documentation was considered. This included: information relating to the attainment and progress of pupils and groups of pupils across the school; the performance management of staff; evidence of checks on teaching by the school; external evaluations of the school; the school's website; the school's action plans; minutes from governing body meetings; the school's self-evaluation, and behaviour records and safeguarding information.

Inspection team

Najoud Ensaff, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Peter Thrussell

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Edmund's Catholic Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British, with other pupils coming from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. There are few pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is just below average.
- There are very few pupils supported through the pupil premium, which is additional funding for pupils eligible for free school meals, those in the care of the local authority or those with a parent or carer in the armed services. In this school, it applies to pupils eligible for free school meals.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There has been a change to the Chair of the Governing Body and other members of the governing body since the previous inspection, and a few changes to teaching staff. The current interim headteacher will resume her role as assistant headteacher at the beginning of January 2014, when a new interim headteacher will join the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching to outstanding by ensuring that:
 - teachers always use up-to-date assessment information to provide work at precisely the right level for all pupils
 - the most able pupils are always challenged to reach the highest levels in writing
 - the least able and those with additional learning needs are always well supported and provided with accessible work
 - pupils are always given regular and clear guidance about how to improve and that pupils have enough opportunities to put this learning into effect
 - teachers and other adults move pupils' learning on quickly in lessons to more challenging work.
- Raise leadership and management to outstanding by:
 - aligning the school's self-evaluation, governing body objectives and action plans more closely so that the school moves quickly towards achieving its key priorities
 - improving systems for checking on pupils' achievement so that progress within years and for groups of pupils is easier to track and compare
 - making sure that the success of actions in action plans and for performance management of staff is always easy to measure.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children enter Reception with skills which are typical for their age, although a very small number enter with skills which are below those typically found, particularly in communication. They get off to a good start in Reception, and usually enter Year 1 with skills which are above average. In 2013, the proportion who achieved a good level of development was broadly average.
- Pupils make good progress during their time at the school, leaving at the end of Year 6 with attainment which is high in reading and mathematics. They make outstanding progress in reading and mathematics across Key Stage 2.
- Key Stage 1 pupils' skills in linking letters and sounds (phonics) are good and have improved. Their scores in the national test for linking sounds and letters were better than others nationally in 2013. Pupils' attainment is above average across all classes, with attainment in reading and mathematics which is stronger than in writing.
- Current assessment information indicates that progress across different years in writing is not always as strong as in reading and mathematics, and progress in some Key Stage 1 classes last year was as broadly expected, particularly in writing. The school has started to address this issue, so that progress this term for Key Stage 1 classes has improved, and the number of pupils on track to reach the higher level in writing has increased.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs generally make similar progress to other pupils. A few of these pupils who are supported through school action or school action plus make less progress because teachers do not always set work at exactly the right level.
- Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds generally make similar progress to others, but occasionally a few of these pupils make less progress than this. This is because they either have additional learning needs, which are not always well supported in lessons, or are new to the school and are still settling in.
- Most of the very few pupils supported through the pupil premium and the few who speak English as an additional language make at least expected progress, but occasionally a small number makes less progress than this because these pupils have additional learning needs which are not always well supported in lessons. The attainment of eligible pupils by the end of Year 6 is usually close to, or better than, that of their peers in reading and mathematics. Occasionally it is behind that of their peers by up to one term in writing, but their attainment in comparison to similar pupils nationally is generally at least in line or above.
- More able pupils generally make good progress so that they reach the higher levels in reading and mathematics, but they do not always make as much progress as possible, particularly in writing, because the pace of learning is not always brisk and they are not always challenged in their learning in lessons.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers create a positive climate for learning with pupils' art and other work well celebrated, and because positive working relationships between pupils and staff are established.
- As a result of good teaching over time, pupils make good progress across the school. They behave well in lessons and enjoy their learning.
- Most teaching takes pupils' needs and abilities into account well and provides pupils with effective opportunities to work at the right level. Progress in most lessons is good, with teachers making the purpose of learning clear and providing pupils with effective ways to measure how successful they are. This was seen in a number of lessons including Year 3 and Year 4 numeracy lessons, where work set was at the right level for pupils.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly. Comments in marked work celebrate pupils' achievements and sometimes guide pupils in their learning. Because this guidance is not as regular or

consistent as possible and pupils are not always given an opportunity to act upon the advice given, their progress is not yet outstanding.

- Where teaching is best, teachers use up-to-date assessment information, they consider pupils' needs extremely well and match work closely to their abilities and needs. For example, in a Year 6 literacy lesson, the most able pupils were provided with effective challenge and the least able with useful support so that they were able to produce high-quality poems. In addition, their behaviour and attitudes to learning in this lesson and in their personal development lesson which followed were outstanding because the teacher used incisive questioning to deepen their understanding.
- Occasionally, where teachers do not use assessment information effectively to plan their lessons, a few pupils make less progress because they are not moved on to more challenging activities quickly enough. A very small number of pupils with special educational needs are occasionally not provided with work which is at precisely the right level for them.
- Teachers promote pupils' spiritual and moral development very well as a result of the Catholic ethos in the school. An outstanding example of this was seen in a personal development lesson where pupils considered what made them happy and why. Their contributions were valued and celebrated in a beautiful book, and there was an audible sense of disappointment when time ran out in the lesson. Good opportunities to take part in paired and group work, as well as music, art and sport, help pupils' social and physical development to be promoted well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They have positive attitudes to learning and say that they enjoy attending school because of the friendships they have at school and because 'teachers are kind'.
- School records of behaviour and responses by pupils, parents and staff indicate that this good behaviour is usual for the vast majority of pupils.
- Pupils report that they feel safe at school because there are always people they can talk to and staff take care of them. They know how to keep themselves safe when travelling to school, cycling and when using the internet.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of how to keep healthy and safe because of topics covered in 'Ethos statement' personal development lessons and participation in 'Life Bus' activities.
- Attendance is above average and pupils say that they enjoy school because staff are approachable. There have been no permanent exclusions of pupils in the past few years.
- Behaviour around the school is good. Pupils are friendly and polite. Behaviour is not yet outstanding because in lessons where teaching is less strong, pupils do not always behave as well as possible and some pupils indicated that a few individuals have squabbles at break time over football or have fall outs which very occasionally spill into lesson time.
- Pupils understand different forms of bullying, such as physical, verbal, cyber and racist bullying. They said that bullying is rare and that it is handled well by the school. Almost all parents and carers who responded to the Parent View online survey indicated that their child felt safe at school and that their child was well looked after.
- Staff ensure that pupils are kept safe.

The leadership and management are good

- The interim headteacher and the assistant headteacher have quickly gained the confidence of staff so that previous good standards of education and the good overall effectiveness seen in the previous inspection have been well maintained.
- Leaders monitor teaching effectively, accurately identifying strengths and areas for development. These have helped to improve individual teachers' practice.
- Appropriate key priorities have been identified, and alongside relevant training on teaching

phonics and writing are helping the school to move forward.

- Light touch support from the local authority has helped the school to focus on raising the number of pupils on track to attain the higher Level 3 in writing at the end of Year 2 this year, and to look carefully at how evaluations for teaching are made.
- The school provides a broad and balanced range of subjects, which are well planned. Pupils are given lots of opportunities to participate in extra-curricular clubs, educational visits, acts of worship and residential trips which pupils enjoy greatly. These, alongside links with the parish, other schools and the local community, enhance pupils' experience and enjoyment and promote their spiritual, moral, social and physical development well.
- There are good systems in place to monitor pupils' progress and attainment, and they have ensured that by the time pupils reach the end of the key stages they have made good, and sometimes outstanding, progress.
- Different systems are used to check pupils' achievement within years and for groups of pupils, so comparing the outcomes of groups is not as easy as it could be. A very small number of pupils with special educational needs, who sometimes speak English as an additional language or are from minority ethnic backgrounds, as well as a few of the most able pupils, do not progress as consistently as they could, particularly in writing.
- While leaders ensure that pay progression is clearly linked to teachers' performance, targets set for performance management do not always have clear ways of measuring success.
- The school's self-evaluation is rigorous and identifies relevant and appropriate priorities, but these and the governing body's objectives are not as closely aligned to the school's action plans as possible, so that the school's overall effectiveness is not yet outstanding. There are some useful actions identified in the development plan, with named personnel and time deadlines set. However, how the success of actions in action plans will be measured is not always apparent.
- Leaders use the sports funding effectively to provide high quality training for teachers and to widen opportunities for pupils to take part in competitive sports. The positive impact of this spending on pupils' health and well-being is not yet evident due to the short time that this funding has been in place.
- The school is a welcoming and caring community. While there are a few differences in the achievement of a very small number of pupils and their peers, equality of opportunity is well promoted; the school values every child and does not tolerate discrimination of any kind.
- There are strong partnerships with the local parish and the local community, and engagement with parents is strong. The interim headteacher has supported another school's teaching of mathematics and teaching staff from other schools have visited the Reception class to see what a good learning environment looks like.
- Parents are very positive about their experiences with the school and the school website provides useful information for parents and pupils.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body supports the school well. Governors are actively involved in the work of the school, making at least one visit a term. An audit of governor training needs has enabled a schedule of training to be drawn up. Governors have a growing understanding of how well the school is doing in comparison with others in the country and a clear view of the quality of teaching in the school, its strengths and key priorities. They ask some searching questions of the school, for example about the achievement of pupils in writing and about the training needs of staff. The governing body oversees the school's finances well, so that, for example, sports funding is used effectively to increase opportunities for pupils. It has clear oversight of performance management of staff and of any rewards for good teaching and ensures that safeguarding meets 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

Unique reference number	125216
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	426625
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	206
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Eileen Hudson
Headteacher	Katherine Donlon
Date of previous school inspection	2 October 2008
Telephone number	01483 414497
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