

St Amand's Catholic Primary School

St Mary's Road, East Hendred, Wantage, OX12 8LF

Inspection dates

4–5 December 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because:

- Pupils' achievement is not yet good enough as pupils are not making enough progress and reaching the standards of which they are capable in Key Stage 2, particularly in mathematics.
- Attainment at the end of Year 6 in mathematics remains below average and pupils do not make enough progress in the subject during their years in Key Stage 2.
- Teaching over time has not ensured that pupils make consistently good progress in mathematics.
- In some lessons teachers do not regularly check the progress being made by different groups of pupils. This means that sometimes pupils' mistakes are not spotted.
- Sometimes teachers miss opportunities for pupils to discuss their learning with each other.
- Pupils are not given the chance to respond to teachers' marking so they can improve their work.

The school has the following strengths:

- The recently appointed headteacher, supported by other school leaders and governors, provides clear and effective leadership. This is bringing about rapid improvements to the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where they make good progress.
- Pupils' progress in Key Stage 1 is good.
- The quality of teaching is improving. Much of the teaching seen during the inspection was effective.
- Pupils behave well. They feel safe in school, work hard and are keen to do well. Pupils' attendance is improving, and is above national levels.
- Parents and carers are very supportive of the school and how well it cares for their children.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed nine part-lessons, five of which were jointly observed with the headteacher. All classes and full-time teachers were seen. The inspector also listened to pupils read and looked at pupils' work.
- Meetings were held with pupils, staff, school leaders, governors and with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector spoke to a small number of parents and carers at the start of the school day. He looked at the 35 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. He also considered 12 staff questionnaires.
- The inspector looked at the school's plans for improvement, records of the quality of teaching, school information on the progress of pupils and at nationally published results. The inspector also looked at records of pupils' behaviour and attendance, and at how the school keeps pupils safe.

Inspection team

Mike Phipps, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is slightly higher than average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is slightly lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is slightly lower than average. The pupil premium is additional funding provided for children in local authority care, those known to be eligible for free school meals and children from service families.
- The very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their home language.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- An after-school club managed by school staff operates on the school site, and was included in this inspection.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2012 after a period of considerable leadership change and uncertainty. The assistant headteacher was appointed in September 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by making sure that:
 - teachers more regularly check the progress made by different groups of pupils in lessons, so they know what pupils understand and when they are ready to move on
 - pupils have the chance to respond to the advice given in teachers' marking on how to improve their work
 - opportunities are provided for pupils to discuss their learning with each other, so they are able to explore ideas about what and how to learn next.
- Make sure that all pupils make at least expected progress in mathematics in Key Stage 2, and an increasing number make more than expected progress, by:
 - using regular assessments of pupils' progress to identify those pupils who are falling behind in mathematics
 - providing a range of extra support and help for pupils who find mathematics difficult, so they can catch up
 - carefully evaluating which types of extra help and support are most effective.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Recent improvements made by school leaders have not yet had time to raise pupils' achievement in mathematics to consistently good levels. Year 6 pupils leaving the school in both 2012 and 2013 had made slower progress in mathematics than they had in reading and writing during their years in Key Stage 2.
- As a result of this slow progress, pupils' standards in mathematics by the end of Year 6 in the last two years were below national average levels.
- Pupils' standards of English grammar, punctuation and spelling in 2013 were below average.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to that of other pupils in school. They are supported in lessons by teaching assistants, who have a good understanding of pupils' individual learning needs.
- Pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium make similar progress to that of other pupils in the school. Funds from the pupil premium have been spent on additional staffing and on teaching-assistant support for pupils' reading. The gap in achievement between supported pupils and others is closing, but it is larger in mathematics than in reading and writing. There were not enough pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium in 2013 to comment on their attainment without identifying them.
- More-able pupils make progress which is similar to that of other pupils in the school. The proportion of pupils who reach the higher levels of attainment in mathematics is below average.
- Children join the school with skills below the levels typical for their age. They get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where they make good progress and catch up well. This is because the tasks that they are set are well matched to the ability of different groups of children.
- Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 because they are well taught. By Year 2 their standards in reading, writing and mathematics are slightly above national average levels.
- Pupils learn to read successfully. Recent improvements to the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) mean that pupils' understanding of phonics is now at broadly average levels. Pupils' standards of reading by the end of Key Stage 2 are average. Pupils enjoy reading, and by Year 6 can talk about their favourite books and authors.
- Pupils' writing skills develop well. Improvements made by school leaders to the curriculum mean that pupils are given a range of writing experiences, and the chance to write at length in different subjects. As a result, pupils' standards in writing are improving, and were above average in 2013.
- School data on pupils' progress and checks made in pupils' books indicate that pupils are now making better progress, particularly in mathematics, than in the past, but these improvements have not yet had time to make an impact on published results.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching over time has not been good enough to ensure that all pupils make consistently good progress in mathematics in Key Stage 2.
- In some lessons teachers do not regularly check the progress being made by different groups of pupils. In a mathematics lesson, for example, a group of Key Stage 2 pupils made some repeated mistakes in their work on fractions. These mistakes were not spotted by the teacher, who was working with another group of pupils.
- Sometimes pupils are ready to move on to more challenging tasks sooner than they are allowed to, because the teacher is not fully aware of the progress that all groups of pupils are making.
- In some lessons teachers miss opportunities for pupils to discuss their learning with each other to consolidate their learning and enhance understanding of what they have learned. In a

mathematics lesson, for instance, pupils in Key Stage 2 were not given the chance to discuss what methods and strategies they might use to solve a problem. This meant they were not actively involved when the teacher was talking to the whole class, and did not fully develop their problem-solving skills.

- Teachers' marking is frequent and detailed, and gives pupils clear guidance on how to improve. However, pupils are not routinely given the chance to respond to teachers' marking so they can improve their work.
- The quality of teaching in school is now improving rapidly. A number of teachers are new to the school. Much of the teaching seen during the inspection was good.
- Relationships between pupils and adults are warm and positive. In a science lesson, for instance, Key Stage 2 pupils greatly enjoyed being asked by the teacher to present their results in the style of a celebrity game show.
- In the best lessons pupils' work is very closely matched to the different abilities in the class. This was seen, for example, in an English lesson in which Key Stage 1 pupils made good progress in writing because the teacher had effectively set different levels of challenge for different groups.
- Pupils' responses to the work they are set are very positive. In a mathematics lesson, for instance, Year 4 pupils made good progress in using their times tables to solve number problems because the teacher made the activity fun, interesting and exciting for pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- All behaviour observed in class and around school was at least good. Pupils are respectful, and take good care of one another. They are polite, friendly and articulate.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They work hard in lessons, and are keen to do well. They enjoy answering questions and offering their opinions in class.
- Those pupils who spoke to the inspector said that they feel safe in school. They are taught to keep themselves safe. They have a good understanding of, for example, the potential dangers of fireworks or the internet.
- Pupils understand different types of bullying, for example cyber bullying and name calling, and say that bullying in this school is very rare. School records confirm this. If bullying did happen, pupils are confident it would stop when they told an adult.
- Pupils enjoy the rewards they get for behaving well and for working hard. Sanctions for poor behaviour are rarely needed. Pupils understand why it is important to work hard and behave well in school.
- Pupils' attendance is rising, and is above national levels. Very few pupils are persistently absent.
- All parents and carers who completed Parent View said that pupils behave well in school, are well looked after and feel safe. School staff also feel that pupils behave well.
- Pupils' behaviour and safety are not outstanding because, although the overwhelming majority of pupils behave well in lessons, a small number lose interest on occasions when lessons are not fully engaging them.

The leadership and management are good

- The recently appointed headteacher, well supported by other school leaders, provides clear and effective leadership. This is enabling rapid improvements to teaching and learning, and consequently to pupils' achievement in lessons.
- School leaders concentrated in the last academic year on improving pupils' literacy skills. As a result, pupils' rates of progress in reading and writing both improved.
- School leaders have recently taken effective action to improve pupils' attendance, which is now above national figures.
- Systems to manage the performance of teachers are now robust. Judgements are based on

pupils' progress, and are linked to teachers' salary progression. Teachers are held to account in regular meetings for the progress of the pupils they teach.

- Good leadership and management of teachers have effectively raised the quality of teaching in school.
- Parents and carers are very supportive of the school and its leaders. They appreciate how well the school cares for their children and keeps them safe. They told the inspector of the improvements that have been made to the school under the current headteacher.
- The school's creative curriculum provides pupils with topics and lessons which they find interesting, and which provide them with chances to practise their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills. A range of special events, visits, after-school activities and visitors enriches pupils' learning.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is developed well. Pupils learn to care for others, to work well together in class and to take on extra responsibilities as playground leaders, librarians or members of the school council.
- The school's caring ethos, in which each child is valued as an individual, means it is fully committed to equality of opportunity and to ensuring that discrimination is not tolerated.
- The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Teachers in charge of subjects and with responsibility for provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are effective, and are developing well in their roles as future leaders.
- Safeguarding procedures are followed closely and meet requirements.
- The after-school club provides pupils with a safe and stimulating environment at the end of the school day.
- Extra primary sports funding has been spent on specialist physical education teachers and external coaches who run, for example, a 'Wake and Shake' session early in the morning for pupils. This is successfully increasing pupils' participation in physical activity.
- The school has received valuable support from the local authority, particularly training on lesson observations, improving teaching and tracking pupils' progress.
- Improvements made under the current leadership team, its accurate evaluation of strengths and weaknesses and its good plans for improvement show that school leaders have strong capacity to improve the school further.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are very supportive of the school and some play a direct part in improving standards. For example, the Chair of the Governing Body has recently carried out training for teaching assistants in supporting pupils' learning in mathematics. Governors are well aware of the school's strengths and what it needs to do to improve. Some governors are frequent visitors to school. They have a good understanding of the quality of teaching, how good teaching is rewarded and how any underperformance is being tackled. Governors are involved in identifying the school's priorities for improvement and managing staff performance. A number of governors have been trained in using data, so they understand what data about pupils' performance tell them about how well the school is doing compared to schools nationally. They manage the school's finances well and know what extra funds, for example those from the pupil premium, are spent on and how this is helping pupils.

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	123224
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	426503

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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	118
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Katherine Oldham
Headteacher	Helen Ellery
Date of previous school inspection	5–6 October 2011
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