

St George's Catholic Primary School

Thorneloe Walk, Barbourne, Worcester, WR1 3JY

Inspection dates 29–30 January 2014

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 make good progress and achieve well because teaching is good. Both teaching and progress in reading and mathematics in Years 3 to 6 are outstanding.
- Teachers typically adapt lesson activities carefully so they take good account of what pupils already know and can do.
- In many subjects, pupils' learning is enriched by a wide range of stimulating activities and experiences. Physical education is a particular strength.
- Pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to learning. Examples of excellent behaviour were observed. Pupils feel safe.
- There are positive relationships with parents, who support the school well.
- There is a strong ethos throughout the school. In particular, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well promoted.
- Senior leaders and managers are developing teaching and learning effectively. Their ambition to be outstanding is shared by the staff and the governing body.
- Any pupils at risk of underachievement are identified quickly and given extra support which enables them to catch up in their learning.
- The attendance of pupils is rigorously checked and followed up. It continues to be well above the national average.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, pupils' targets are not sufficiently challenging to promote rapid learning.
- In some lessons, teachers do not check carefully to make sure the work set is helping pupils to make rapid progress.
- Marking and feedback are not always used effectively to improve learning.
- Pupils' spelling is not securely good.
- Subject leaders and governors do not get enough first-hand information about pupils' achievement to be highly effective in their roles.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 13 lessons taught by nine different teachers, and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and a representative of the local authority. Two lessons were jointly observed with the headteacher.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at planning documents, monitoring records, data on pupils' progress and attainment, and pupils' work.
- The inspectors took account of the 54 responses to Parent View (the online questionnaire), one letter from a parent and the 17 responses to the staff questionnaire in reaching inspection judgements about the school.

Inspection team

David Shears, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Diana Pearce

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St George's Catholic Primary is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium, which is extra government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, in local authority care or from service families, is well below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported by school action is well below average. However, the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is broadly average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- A breakfast and after-school care club is available for pupils. The breakfast club is managed by the school and formed part of this inspection. However, the after-school care is managed externally and is subject to separate inspection.
- The school holds the Leading Parent Partnership award and has attained its fourth national Green Flag Eco-schools award.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make more teaching outstanding, particularly for younger pupils, by ensuring that:
 - teachers check carefully in lessons that all groups of pupils are making rapid progress
 - pupils are encouraged to check whether they have achieved their targets, so they can move on to more challenging work in lessons when ready
 - pupils make full use of their knowledge of the sounds that letters make when writing, to improve their spelling
 - teachers' marking and feedback consistently help pupils to improve their work.
- Strengthen the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - targets set for pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 are challenging and are rigorously checked
 - subject leaders have the skills they need for effectively checking the quality of teaching and learning in the areas they are responsible for
 - the governors extend their knowledge of pupils' performance so they can more fully challenge the school's leaders.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start with skills and knowledge that are below those typical for their age, particularly in some aspects of language development and calculation. They make good progress during their time in the school, and leave at the end of Year 6 with standards that are above national averages.
- Children make a positive start in Reception. They have opportunities to visit the school before starting and good links with parents are established. This means that children settle quickly into school. Some good examples were seen of children developing their skills. For example, more-able children were becoming confident in counting in tens and were being further challenged to count in fives and twos.
- Pupils in Key Stage 1 build on the progress made in the Early Years Foundation Stage. By the end of Year 1 their understanding of phonics (the sounds letters make) is above average. When they leave Year 2 their attainment is broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. For example, Year 2 pupils were observed making good progress in learning how to create a setting for a story using a variety of adjectives.
- In Years 3 to 6 the rate of progress increases, particularly in reading and mathematics where it is outstanding. Progress is also good in writing, but not as fast. This means that pupils leave at the end of Year 6 with attainment that is significantly above average in reading and mathematics, and above average in writing. During the inspection, pupils in Year 3 made excellent progress in finding factors of numbers.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. This is because they are well supported, both in class and when they are taught in small groups withdrawn from lessons. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make similar progress, as do those from minority ethnic groups. More-able pupils are challenged well, and by the end of Year 6 a good proportion reach the higher national curriculum levels.
- Only a few pupils in each year group are known to be eligible for extra support through the pupil premium, which is used in a variety of ways including one-to-one and group work in literacy and mathematics. Given the very small number of pupils involved, it is not possible to comment on their attainment compared to that of other pupils without identifying individuals. However, their progress in reading, mathematics and writing is consistently good, demonstrating the effective use of the funding.

The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils make good gains in their learning because teaching is effective. Teachers make sure lessons interest and enthuse pupils.
- Work is carefully matched to the capabilities of different ability groups, enabling good progress for all. Teachers use technology such as interactive whiteboards well to enhance learning, and pupils are used to working on laptops during lessons. Pupils say that work is set at the right level for them, and that they enjoy learning.
- Teachers display good subject knowledge and are skilful in finding ways to help pupils learn. Their use of questions to challenge pupils and make them think hard is a particular strength.

They enable pupils to carefully think through their reasoning for a particular viewpoint so that they can explain this to others.

- Teaching assistants are used well to support learning. Their work with different groups of pupils provides a good level of support and challenge as needed. Similarly, their questioning enables pupils to make good progress. The 'withdrawal' groups led by teachers are very effective in helping to accelerate pupils' learning because they are able to receive individual attention.
- The wide range of additional activities that extend and enrich the taught curriculum continues to be a strength since the last inspection, and pupils enthusiastically talk about how much they enjoy them. For example, during their time at school, pupils are able to start learning a musical instrument, plant trees, visit places of worship and enjoy theatre trips.
- The quality of teaching in reading and mathematics is good, particularly in Key Stage 2 where pupils make outstanding progress. The teaching of writing is improving well. However, pupils are not guided effectively to use their knowledge of phonics when writing and the result can be seen in too many spelling errors.
- While teachers typically enable pupils to make good progress, they do not always check carefully enough in lessons to see that all groups make rapid progress, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, and in writing.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, often with comments to encourage pupils. However, pupils are not consistently given clear and helpful tips on how to make their work even better, and even when such guidance is given, teachers do not always check that pupils have responded by correcting their work and learning from their mistakes.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The pupils themselves agree. They are aware that sustaining good behaviour is difficult for a small number of pupils, but they know that adults are there to help them. At break times pupils enjoying playing together. Similarly, they behave well around the school.
- Some outstanding behaviour was seen during the inspection, such as during an assembly where pupils learnt that 'actions speak louder than words'. The support given to an orphanage in Malawi was given as an example and prayers for the school are said. Pupils were encouraged to emulate this care for others throughout the day, demonstrating the importance that the school places on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils take an active part in the school through the eco-school group and school council as well as a variety of other roles, including pupils in Year 6 being reading buddies, helping to organise collective worship and giving support at lunchtimes.
- Pupils behave well in lessons, where they demonstrate the ability to work together as well as on their own. They have positive attitudes to their learning and listen well. However, they could sometimes make more progress if moved on to more challenging work more quickly.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils have a good understanding of what bullying is and are able to articulate the different forms in which it can happen, including physical bullying and cyber bullying. Pupils have had lessons about the importance of e-safety and know not to give anyone personal details. Although a few parents expressed concern about bullying in school, both pupils and staff say that it is rare and that, when there are any

problems, adults are there to resolve issues. Consequently, pupils feel safe in school.

- The breakfast club is enjoyed by the pupils who attend. Good manners and behaviour are encouraged, both while they are eating and when they are engaged in the wide variety of activities.
- Pupils attend school regularly, and leaders follow effective procedures to ensure that any absence is followed up. Consequently, attendance has continued to be well above the national average.

The leadership and management are good

- Senior leaders and managers have a clear vision for all pupils to make outstanding progress and attain highly, and this is shared by all staff. As a result there is a highly positive ethos where pupils feel cared for and are proud of their school.
- Effective meetings to talk about the progress of pupils, using carefully maintained records of pupils' progress and attainment, help the school to identify any who are at risk of underachievement. These pupils are given extra support in order to help them catch up in their learning. This is regularly monitored and adapted to ensure it continues to be successful.
- Teaching and pupils' skills in physical education are already good. The new primary school sports funding has served to improve this further both in lessons, for example by enhancing multi-skills teaching for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and by providing more sport-related activities beyond the curriculum.
- The school is successful in checking for any discrimination and removing it when identified. The wide range of activities and clubs matches pupils' differing needs and interests well, and this helps to ensure equality of opportunity for all.
- The school has positive relationships with parents and carers, the vast majority of whom are very supportive.
- The performance of teachers is checked carefully, and the resulting information used to inform decisions about pay. Although the governing body is informed well about pay decisions, senior leaders do not make the link between these and the quality of teaching clear.
- The targets leaders set for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and pupils in Key Stage 1 are not demanding enough to enable pupils to make rapid progress, and so the checks to see how well pupils are achieving are not as rigorous as in Key Stage 2.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of what the school does well and where improvements need to be made. While there is an overall plan for improvement, not all subject leaders have had the opportunity to develop their skills in checking the quality of teaching and the progress of pupils in their subjects.
- The local authority has not routinely given specific support for this good school. However, the new school improvement partner has a clear understanding of the school and is beginning to work well with leaders to support future development.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body is highly supportive and sees itself as being a partner with staff and parents to provide an effective education for all pupils. It has good links with parents. For example, a governor is appointed for each class and follows it through the school. Each year the governor writes to parents, informing them of their availability should they wish to discuss anything.
- The governing body has a clear understanding of how the pupil premium and sports funding are spent, but not how effectively the money has been used.
- Governors are well informed by the headteacher about pupils' progress and attainment and how they compare with schools nationally, but they are not able to analyse this information for themselves and so their checking of the most important areas for development is not as rigorous as it should be.
- They make sure safeguarding arrangements meet current national 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	116924
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	431547

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	206
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brian McGinley
Headteacher	Mike Painter
Date of previous school inspection	25 March 2009
Telephone number	01905 25841
Fax number	01905 27621
Email address	admin@st-georgescatholic.worcs.sch.uk

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