

St Anne Line Catholic Junior School

Wickhay, Basildon, SS15 5AF

Inspection dates 27–28 February 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		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Attainment rates are rising. Pupils make good, and improving, progress as they proceed through the school.
- Pupils achieve well in English and mathematics. Writing is especially strong but reading and mathematics are improving to match it.
- Teaching is good with some being outstanding.
- Attendance has improved and is now above average.
- Behaviour is outstanding. Pupils' expectations of their own and the behaviour of others are very high. They have very positive attitudes to learning.
- Pupils feel safe and their parents agree that they are very well looked after.
- The promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong.
- The partner headteachers have been effective in raising achievement and the quality of teaching.
- Subject leaders are working well to improve subject areas using their clearly defined roles.
- Governors know the school well and offer good levels of challenge and support.
- The school has the capacity for sustained improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A small amount of the teaching requires improvement.
- Some marking, especially in mathematics, does not provide enough guidance about how to reach the next levels.
- Teachers do not always review the activities on offer quickly enough to maintain a high level of challenge.
- Teachers are occasionally inconsistent in their checks on pupils' understanding of what they have been taught.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 19 lessons taught by 10 staff. Three joint observations were carried out with the partner headteachers. Inspectors also observed a variety of activities the school offers to support individuals and small groups of pupils.
- The inspectors held meetings with the partner headteachers, members of the governing body including the parish priest, staff, a representative of the local authority and two groups of pupils.
- In planning and carrying out the inspection, inspectors took account of the 43 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), the school’s own surveys and responses to an inspection questionnaire from 42 staff. An inspector spoke to parents in the playground before school.
- The inspectors observed the school’s work. They also looked at the school’s improvement and development plan, data on pupils’ attainment and progress, records of the monitoring and evaluation of teaching, a wide range of policies and procedures, and the school’s arrangements for the safeguarding of children.
- Inspectors attended assemblies. They carried out a scrutiny of pupils’ work jointly with subject leaders and members of the senior leadership team.
- An inspector listened to pupils reading.

Inspection team

Michael Sutherland-Harper, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Angela Podmore	Additional Inspector
Susan Sutton	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized junior school.
- The school is part of a local federation with three neighbouring Catholic schools, the Basildon Catholic Collegiate Trust.
- Pupils from minority ethnic groups make up more than half the school's population. The largest group in the school are White British pupils who make up slightly less than half.
- An increasing number of pupils whose first language is other than English or who are from minority ethnic groups are joining the school. About a third of the pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is below the national average. This is additional government funding for particular groups of pupils, including those known to be eligible for free school meals and those in the care of the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There are two partner headteachers, one recently appointed (September 2013) to ensure succession planning. The senior of the partner headteachers has provided support to other local schools, sometimes in an executive headteacher role.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the amount of teaching and learning which is outstanding and thereby raise pupils' rates of progress by:
 - checking on pupils' understanding by creating more opportunities for them to provide a review of what they have learned in lessons
 - reviewing the level of stimulus provided by activities and increasing it whenever necessary, and more quickly, to consistently maintain pupils' very positive attitudes to study
 - ensuring that all marking provides pupils with clear guidance about how to reach the next levels, especially in mathematics
 - insisting on more extended responses from pupils to the guidance given in marking so that they demonstrate clearly that they are taking their own efforts forward.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils enter the school with attainment broadly in line with national averages.
- The school does its own checks on pupils' abilities when they join the school. These show that reading skills are not as consistently well-developed as writing. Development and application of mathematical skills, especially use of fractions and application of basic skills in unusual contexts, is another area which the school is working successfully to promote.
- Pupils make increasingly rapid progress as they move up the school. This is due to refined procedures to check their progress and a sharper focus on the progress of both individuals and groups over time, including through increased analysis of data on pupils' achievement. Current data indicate that more pupils are now making up to four levels of progress in all skills. Very positive pupil attitudes to learning are a contributing factor in the increased rates of progress.
- Achievement in English is good. A more intensive approach to reading through, for example, the daily reading scheme and further training last year for staff on the links between letters and sounds (phonics) has led to good attainment in reading by the end of Year 6. Writing skills, which are significantly above average for many pupils, have developed well because topics are presented through materials which make pupils interested and more involved with the subject.
- Attainment in mathematics is a whole school focus to ensure that it stays at the high levels currently seen in reading and writing. Revised groupings in Year 6 allow work to be set at the right level for all pupils including the most-able pupils. A small group in Year 5 has also been identified for further support to maintain the upward movement in progress rates.
- Pupils make good progress in reading because the school provides a growing amount of reading materials related to pupils' interests. Pupils are encouraged to read a variety of books in school and at home. Older pupils support younger pupils as 'reading buddies'.
- Achievement in literacy and numeracy is supported well because the school has taken care to enhance these skills in other subjects. For example, science books contain passages of extended writing about the topics covered and emphasise accurate use of scientific language. Mathematical skills are reinforced by assessing how much historical events impact on parts of the population and in measuring the layout of pupils' allotments as part of personal, social and health education.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium make good progress according to the most recent school data. The gap between the performance of eligible pupils and others in English and mathematics is closing quickly. It was about two terms in English and in mathematics in 2013 but has since reduced. Progress rates are rising. Staff are now able to set work at the right level because they regularly check pupils' progress. Their approach to supporting pupils is more consistent. These good progress rates were acknowledged in a recent letter from the deputy prime minister.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are progressing well. They are effectively supported in class by both teachers and teaching assistants. Close liaison with parents and outside agencies means that pupils' needs are accurately identified and quickly met.
- The needs of pupils who have English as an additional language or who are from minority ethnic groups are well met. Their needs are identified quickly. Support, often close and individual, is

put in place and regularly monitored to ensure that they have the same opportunities as other pupils. They achieve in line with other pupils.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good. It is not outstanding because a small amount of the teaching requires improvement and not enough is outstanding. In a few lessons, pupils do not have enough opportunities to demonstrate their grasp of what they have learned. Sometimes, they are not able to move onto harder work quickly enough when they have completed the initial activities.
- Joint observations conducted with the partner headteachers resulted in agreed grades. No inadequate teaching was seen during the inspection.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They model what is expected and set high standards which lead to good progress because of the pupils' co-operative attitudes. Teachers think carefully about how to present the work in ways which will appeal to pupils and stimulate a response. In a Year 5 English lesson, pupils reacted enthusiastically to excerpts from the film, 'Cool Runnings' about the Jamaican bobsleigh team. They produced extended sentences using a range of new words which managed also to convey the dramatic nature of the film.
- Teachers use their knowledge of pupils' progress to set work at the right level for the more-able pupils.
- Reading, writing, mathematics and communication skills are delivered effectively. Teachers and teaching assistants work together to check on pupils' understanding and reinforce the different skills. A Year 6 guided reading session led from pupils' reading to presenting the key points by writing well-defined paragraphs.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well taught. Teaching staff are provided with comprehensive information about pupils so that their needs can be fully met in the classroom setting. Their work is closely monitored. Support is supplemented by links with outside agencies whenever additional input is needed.
- Books are marked regularly and with increasing consistency to follow the school policy. Regular homework is set. Presentation of work is of a high standard. Marking acknowledges the positive aspects of pupils' work in order to encourage their efforts. However, and especially in mathematics, marking does not always give clear guidance about how to reach the next steps. Where guidance is given, pupils are encouraged to respond to the comments but responses like 'yes' and 'OK' do not always demonstrate their mastery of the next step requested.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Behaviour within lessons is excellent in terms of both conduct and attitudes to learning. Pupils take responsibility quickly for their own learning and have no hesitation in working with others to help them improve. The improvement in behaviour over time is such that pupils said to have behavioural problems are not easily identifiable in any class. Good behaviour attracts rewards.
- Pupils feel that behaviour is always good and frequently better. Members of the school council spoke clearly about their part in helping to maintain high standards. Parents who responded to

the online survey or who were spoken to during the inspection feel that behaviour is always at least good. All policies relating to behaviour are clear and up to date.

- Pupils' behaviour around the school and in the playground is of a very high standard. They are polite, considerate and prepared to take on responsibility as 'playground friends'. This care for others ensures that everyone has equal opportunities to thrive and that there is no discrimination of any kind. Expectations are reinforced by the 'St Anne Line Way' code and by the school's emphasis on the United Nations' 'Rights Respecting Schools Charter' which has been implemented across the school.
- Differences are celebrated and all pupils are encouraged to be aspirational. In an assembly during the inspection, pupils were treated to a variety of world dance styles delivered by their fellow pupils. They watched intently and realised how everyone has talents which can be developed.
- Pupils say that bullying is rare. They are aware of the different forms that bullying may take, for example, via the internet, because they have been taught how to stay safe on line and in a range of contexts. 'Anti-bullying ambassadors' go out into the playground with teachers to ensure that all is well. Pupils state that there is always an adult to whom they can turn with any problems and that problems will be quickly resolved because of the way each individual and their needs are known.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils were quick to report that there was 'no access where you're supposed not to go'. Detailed policies are in place to address all aspects of safety and child protection. Parents and pupils alike feel that pupils are safe. Case studies demonstrated the high impact of the school's procedures to keep individuals safe.
- Attendance has improved and is now above average. Persistent absence is reducing over time and is in line with similar schools. Exclusions have reduced and are now rare. There have been no permanent exclusions since 2009.

The leadership and management are good

- The two partner headteachers are working together effectively to raise attainment, progress rates and the quality of teaching. The school improvement and development plan has addressed these areas with increased rigour. The results are now apparent in improved achievement and teaching. In addition, the headteachers have ensured that behaviour is consistently of the very highest standard. The arrangement of partner headteachers is designed to ensure seamless succession and to build on the very effective work done by the senior partner headteacher to take the school forward initially.
- Subject leaders have expanded and well-defined roles with more responsibility now for monitoring and evaluating progress in their subject areas and assessing the quality of teaching. They know that they are accountable for raising performance rates. This common understanding has resulted in rising attainment and progress in all subject areas.
- The range of subjects on offer is constantly tailored to meet the needs of pupils and their starting points and takes their interests into account. Provision is flexible and, wherever possible, links to what is happening in the outside world so that pupils are fully prepared for transitions to next schools and beyond. Links with the local high school are strong to help with the development of subject skills. The school is actively preparing for the implementation of the new curriculum.

- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. The school code, the 'St Anne Line Way', is based on the spiritual guidance provided by the saint. Pupils are encouraged to be imaginative in lessons and this contributes to their very positive responses. They have a strong sense of right and wrong and are relentless in offering support to fellow pupils. Understanding of others is increasing rapidly in this multi-cultural community. For example, the school recently took part in the local Sri Lankan community rice harvest festival.
- Sports premium funding has been used to provide both a specialist teacher of physical education and a teaching assistant trained in this subject area. The school has developed its work in gymnastics, in which it is already a leader, and with local secondary schools so that pupils maintain their skills in sports. The wide range of clubs and activities on offer enhances provision and helps to keep pupils fit and healthy.
- Procedures for managing the work of staff have been tightened. Staff are held responsible for pupils' progress. Staff targets are linked precisely to continually improving progress rates and the quality of teaching.
- Good links with parents are reinforced by the newsletters which provide 'everything you ever needed to know.' The school works continually to develop its interaction with the local community, in which it sees itself as a core element. Increasingly detailed information is provided to parents to help promote learning. Parents spoken to during the inspection, and who responded to the online survey, were very supportive of the school.
- The local authority has infrequent links with the school. The expertise of the senior partner headteacher has been called upon to help with the development of a number of local schools. Most recently this has been with the three other schools within the Basildon Catholic Collegiate Trust.
- Safeguarding meets all current requirements. Training for staff and governors is regularly reviewed and updated.
- The capacity for sustained improvement is strong. The senior partner headteacher worked clear-sightedly to set up succession planning aimed at maintaining high quality results. The school improvement and development plan sets sharp, achievable priorities. Self-evaluation is accurate. Governance is good and improving. Subject leaders' roles are developing well.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is good. Governors are supportive of the school and knowledgeable as a result of their regular visits including to observe classroom teaching. They have a good understanding of data following training on this aspect and use it to monitor the progress pupils make, for example through the impact of pupil premium funding. They ensure that management of staff performance, including for the headteachers and teaching assistants, is rigorously reviewed and that good teaching is identified and rewarded. Numerous opportunities for staff training exist. Governors are determined that the school will continue to improve year on year. They monitor its work closely and challenge anything which is less than good.

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	115156
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	431245

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	266
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michelle Castle
Headteacher	Martin Larrett & Nathalie Watson
Date of previous school inspection	19–20 May 2009
Telephone number	01268 470444
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