

St Catharine's Catholic Primary School

Lower High Street, Chipping Campden, Gloucestershire, GL55 6DZ

Inspection dates 26–27 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	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 Year 6 is above national averages and has been so for a number of years.
- Pupils enjoy reading, and by the time they leave school read with confidence and fluency.
- Writing in different styles and for different situations by pupils is well developed.
- More-able pupils are set harder work so that they can achieve the highest levels, especially in mathematics.
- Lessons are planned to build on what pupils have learned before and teachers make sure the activities in the lessons are not too easy or difficult. This allows all pupils in the mixed-aged classes to make good progress.
- The behaviour of pupils in lessons is good and contributes well to their learning within school.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Safeguarding arrangements are well organised and meet statutory requirements.
- The headteacher has re-organised much of the work of the school, including the way support is provided for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. As a result, the progress of these pupils is much better.
- The governing body has been strengthened and governors now hold the school to account for the progress pupils make.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' skills in mathematics are not as well developed as other subjects in some year groups.
- Checking on the progress children make in the Reception class has not always been accurate.
- Pupils do not learn the sounds letters make quickly enough.
- Teachers do not always provide pupils with sufficient guidance on what they have to achieve in lessons and how they can make their work the best it can be.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed parts of nine lessons, most of which were jointly observed with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and other members, and senior and middle leaders. The inspector also met with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector listened to pupils read and scrutinised samples of their workbooks.
- A wide range of documents was examined, including the school's information on pupils' recent progress, as well as planning and documentation about checks on teaching, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding arrangements.
- The inspector also took account of the 76 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the views of staff through the 12 staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

David Hogg, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Catharine's Catholic Primary School is situated in Chipping Campden, which is often described as the quintessential Cotswold town. The school is much smaller than the average primary school and it draws most of its pupils from the town itself and the surrounding area.
- Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and those from service families) is well below the national average. There are no looked after children or children from service families currently attending the school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is broadly in line with the national average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- The current headteacher joined the school in September 2012, replacing the deputy headteacher who had held the role of acting headteacher for the previous two years.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is all consistently good or better by ensuring that:
 - pupils have sufficient opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in exciting activities
 - teachers provide pupils with clear targets that let them know what they are working towards and show them how to improve their work.
- Improve the effectiveness of teaching so that the pupils learn the sounds that letters make more quickly.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels by ensuring systems to check that children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage is robust and is carefully moderated to validate the assessments.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- St Catharine's is a good school, with pupils usually attaining well above the national average in all subjects by the end of Year 6. However, in national assessments in 2013, the school saw a dip in how well the pupils did both in terms of their attainment, although this still remained above national averages, and the progress they made between Year 2 and Year 6. School data indicate that this was indeed a dip and that outcomes this year will be better.
- Children join the school with skills that are typical for their age, but there can be a wide range of abilities within the Reception group. The children develop their skills well in most of the individual learning areas. However, some inaccurate checks on progress had been made in the past in writing and in using numbers which did not show how well children were actually doing. This affected the overall measure of the good level of development that children made, which was well below that seen nationally. The headteacher has responded quickly and brought in effective support and guidance from the local authority. The appointment of a new Early Years Foundation Stage leader has strengthened both teaching and assessment, so similar problems will not happen in the future.
- Pupils are confident readers by the time they leave school. Older pupils read widely and have favourite contemporary children's authors. Pupils lower down the school learn the sounds that letters make (phonics) and can use their skills when they come across unfamiliar words in stories, but pupils do not learn these sounds quickly enough. Too many pupils did not reach the expected level in the national screening check in 2012 and had to re-sit the following year before they were successful. The results from the national phonics screening check improved in 2013, with the proportions of pupils reaching the expected level now in line with the national average.
- Pupils' books show that pupils write with confidence and imagination and that their writing skills are securely developed. Currently, Year 6 pupils are producing an illustrated version of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. It is interesting to see the different perspectives some pupils had taken on their project, with the boys enjoying writing about the blood and violence and the girls writing at length about the romance.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics does lag behind that seen in reading and writing in some year groups. The school has identified the pupils who need additional support and is using booster and withdrawal sessions run by teachers in their own preparation time to help the pupils catch up. Pupils value these sessions and say it is typical of the efforts of the teachers who work to ensure all pupils have an equal opportunity to achieve.
- The progress made by disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is good and matches, or exceeds, that of others in the class. The improvements are due to the restructuring of the way support is delivered and how it is now integrated with classroom activities. In doing so, teachers have been given greater responsibility for how well all of their pupils are doing and are held more to account. Teachers and teaching assistants work more closely on planning and support is therefore more effectively deployed within the classroom.
- The number of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is too small to comment on their attainment without identifying individuals. However, many make progress at least in line with, and often better than, that of their classmates. Across the school the additional funding is very effectively used.

The quality of teaching is good

- Lesson activities engage and interest the pupils. Lessons are well planned and build on what pupils have learned previously; for example, in a Years 3 and 4 class, pupils could explain how the Celts used dyes to paint their bodies before battle. Pupils used appropriate blues and purples they had made from red cabbage leaves as a model for woad as they created their own portraits of Celtic warriors.

- Teachers provide basic guidance to pupils on what they are going to learn in a lesson. Pupils do not always have sufficient detail about what they are going to learn over a longer period of time to help them, including things that would make their work the best it can be as they are going along.
- Pupils' work, though, is well marked, with colour codes that inform the pupils of what they have done well and what to work on. Pupils act on the guidance and make the corrections promptly so they are able to make the necessary improvements.
- Activities in mathematics allow the pupils to practise their skills. The school has started to widen these activities to include more problem solving tasks so pupils have more real world activities.
- Classrooms are bright and welcoming, with pupils' work displayed on the walls of their classes and around the corridors.
- The teachers look to make sure the activities in the lessons are not too hard or too easy, so all groups are pushed to achieve. More-able pupils in the mixed Years 5 and 6 class are challenged with mathematics activities that are appropriate to secondary school students to maximise and push their learning forwards.
- The headteacher recognised the need to improve the quality of teaching and has done so with a well-planned programme of teacher training and development. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved and is now good. Pupils are now much better prepared for the next stages in their education, whether that be when moving into Year 1 from Reception or on to secondary school at the end of Year 6.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good and pupils feel well looked after and cared for. Pupils have a good understanding of personal safety and how to use the internet sensibly and safely, especially when playing games or using social media sites. The school uses the expertise from outside groups to develop the pupils' skills in other areas such as making sure they can safely ride their bicycles on the road.
- The behaviour of pupils is good and contributes very well to their learning. The relationships within the classes are very good and pupils and adults work well together. Humour is used well and pupils respond to the praise and encouragement from their teachers. The pupils are very honest and do say, though, that sometimes their behaviour is not as good when they are taught by supply teachers.
- Pupils say incidents of unkindness or bullying are very rare. They may fall out with each other, but normally make friends again quickly. They say their teachers will listen to them and help them with problems about their work and even are on hand to lend a caring ear if they are having problems at home.
- Pupils' behaviour around school at break and lunchtime is good. Pupils play well together and look to include others in their games. The school council organised for a buddy bench to be sited in the playground so those pupils who may be feeling a little down can go there knowing someone will come along to cheer them up and ask them to play.
- Pupils enjoy lessons and highlight a range of visits and activities that the school involves them in, including charity fundraising and musical events. The pupils have been involved with the Chipping Camden Music Festival, and last year raised £300 for a C Sharp key as part of the local community's efforts to purchase a Steinway D Grand Piano..
- Attendance is above the national average.

The leadership and management are good

- When the headteacher took over in September 2012 it quickly became apparent that areas of the school were not as strong as they should have been. Her analysis of the position of the school was shared with the local authority and support to help the school to rapidly improve was provided.

- Middle leaders now have a clearer role within school and actively support the work of the headteacher. They monitor planning and review the progress pupils make by looking at pupils' books and reviewing school-held data. They are increasingly involved in lesson observations to identify good practice and to provide support when necessary. There is drive and ambition amongst all staff to improve the school, and the skills of individual staff are now being used to model best practice and to support and develop colleagues further.
- The school now works closely with other schools in the cluster to check the accuracy of school checks on progress and to validate them. The systems to track the progress pupils make are more robust and enable senior and middle leaders to check how well groups of pupils are doing.
- The school now has well-organised systems for ensuring teachers' pay and opportunities for promotion are closely linked to how well pupils achieve. This has provided greater accountability for staff and responsibility for how well their pupils are doing.
- The impact of the actions taken by leaders demonstrates the capacity for further improvement. They have also ensured that there is no discrimination within the school.
- The subject range offered by the school is under review due to the changes that are due in 2014. The school currently provides a broad and balanced range of subjects and opportunities which looks to draw on the local area to widen the learning experiences of the pupils. School visits to the local silversmith and to science festivals in Birmingham provide memorable experiences as well as opportunities to learn back in the class. Art and music are strengths within the school. The school choir is of a high standard and boys are well represented within it.
- Through the subjects and activities provided, together with the values and beliefs of the school, the development of pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is well supported.
- Sports activities are encouraged. The additional primary sports funding available to the school has been earmarked to improve the quality of physical education teaching and pupil participation. The school has clear and considered plans to use this money and is in discussion about how to review the impact of their work. The school is currently using sports coaches to provide high-quality teaching and is due very soon to widen pupils' experiences with sports such as archery.
- Safeguarding and child protection arrangements are in place and meet statutory requirements. The school monitors the welfare of all of the pupils carefully.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is now much more effective in monitoring the work of the school and now holds the school to account more than it did in the past. Governors visit the school regularly and link governors are beginning to discuss and review pupil outcomes with subject leaders. As a result, they have a good understanding of the quality of teaching from direct observations, linked with reports from the headteacher and outside advisers. They understand the arrangements that link teachers' pay to pupils' outcomes. With a developing understanding of pupil outcomes, they discuss and review how well groups of pupils, such as those eligible for pupil premium funding, are doing. The governors keep a close eye on the school finances to make sure money is used carefully and are beginning to review other sources of funding such as the primary sports funding. Safeguarding arrangements are reviewed to ensure they meet statutory requirements and that they are effective in keeping pupils safe in school.

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	115705
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	441015

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	142
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Myra Whitehouse
Headteacher	Joanne Welch
Date of previous school inspection	10–11 July 2007
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