

Our Lady and St Werburgh's Catholic Primary School

Seabridge Lane, Clayton, Newcastle, ST5 4AG

Inspection dates

19–20 March 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 achieve well and standards are above average in reading and well above average in writing.
- Teaching is good overall and some is outstanding. Teachers use questioning well to make pupils think and they plan lessons that motivate and interest pupils. As a result, progress in reading, writing and mathematics is good.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have identified the correct priorities to continue to improve the school.
- The governors are dedicated and highly effective. They make a strong contribution to school improvement.
- Pupils have excellent manners and behave extremely well around school and in the playground. They have good attitudes to learning which help them to make good progress.
- Pupils like school, feel safe and secure and feel valued as individuals. This is reflected in their well-above-average attendance.
- The improvement in the teaching of phonics (the sounds letters make) is having a positive impact on the progress pupils make in reading and writing.
- The staff are dedicated, enjoy their work and are keen to do their best for the pupils.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils do not apply their mathematical skills enough in other subjects or use what they know about numbers to solve problems.
- The presentation of work and handwriting of some pupils is untidy.
- Senior leaders do not always analyse and use data about pupils' progress as effectively as they could to improve pupils' achievement.
- In some lessons, the work for the most able pupils is too easy and they are not moved on to harder learning quickly enough.
- Leaders' guidance to teachers is not focused enough on how pupils could make faster progress. Leaders do not always go back quickly or regularly enough to check their recommendations have been acted upon.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 14 lessons or parts of lessons, three of which were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspectors heard a sample of pupils read, looked at past and present work in pupils' books, and observed morning playtime and lunchtime activities.
- Meetings were held with the senior and subject leaders, groups of pupils, a representative of the local authority and three members of the governing body.
- Twenty responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were analysed, along with the responses made to a recent school survey. Inspectors talked to parents and carers before and after school and considered 16 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspection team looked at a number of documents including: the school's self-evaluation and planning for improvement; records of the quality of teaching; information on pupils' current progress and achievement; records relating to punctuality and attendance; and the school's safeguarding information.
- During the inspection, inspectors asked additional questions designed to ascertain the school's view of the impact and effectiveness of local authority services to support school improvement. This will contribute to work being carried out by Ofsted to assess the use, quality and impact of those services.

Inspection team

Rachel Howie, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Susan Hickerton

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium funding (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those in local authority care) is much lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic heritages is well below average. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion of pupils supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have been in post since September 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and ensure pupils make faster progress by:
 - ensuring teachers plan for pupils to use their mathematical skills in a range of subjects and provide more opportunities within mathematics lessons for pupils to use what they know to solve problems
 - moving pupils, especially the most able, on to harder work within lessons as soon as they are ready
 - ensuring that pupils' work in books is well organised and neatly presented.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - making sure that the guidance provided to teachers, after checks are made on the quality of teaching, is precise and focuses on how to improve progress for different groups of pupils
 - ensuring that leaders check more rapidly and rigorously that teachers follow the guidance they have been given
 - ensuring that information about pupils' progress is analysed and presented succinctly and is used to identify how well groups of pupils are achieving over time.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Attainment at the end of Year 2 has been rising steadily for the last three years and, in 2013, was well above average in writing, mathematics and, particularly so, in reading.
- At the end of Year 6 in 2013, attainment in writing was well above average, in reading was above average and in mathematics was in line with the national average. Almost all pupils had made the progress expected of them. The proportion of pupils who made more than expected progress in reading and mathematics was below the national average. Information that school leaders have about pupils currently in the school shows that an increasing proportion of pupils are now making more than expected progress in these subjects.
- Children join the school with skills and abilities that are typical for their age. Although there was a dip in attainment at the end of Reception last year, children are now making good progress in Nursery and Reception as a result of good and sometimes outstanding teaching, and are on track to be well equipped to start Year 1.
- In the most recent screening check for phonics (the sounds that letters make), the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard was above the national average, which is an improvement from the previous year. This is because the teaching of phonics has improved. Some older pupils who did not benefit from this good phonics teaching do not have clear strategies to help them with their spelling. This is currently being addressed.
- Pupils of all ages talked to inspectors enthusiastically about reading, identifying their favourite books and authors. Teachers ensure that pupils have a range of opportunities to practise their reading skills at school and encourage pupils to read regularly at home.
- There are too few pupils in the school who are eligible for pupil premium funding to make a reliable comparison between these pupils and their classmates. However, school tracking information shows that almost all eligible pupils make at least the same progress as, and in some cases better progress than, other pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress from their different starting points. This is because suitable support and appropriate learning activities are provided.
- School leaders have recognised the importance of ensuring the most able pupils are provided with challenging work. However, this does not always happen in all classes in all subjects. Not all of these pupils are making the progress of which they are capable.

The quality of teaching is good

- The overall quality of teaching is good and there are some aspects that are outstanding. The work in pupils' books mirrors this picture and matches the school's own judgements about the quality of teaching.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work well in partnership within the classroom to support pupils to make good progress. Teaching assistants also provide effective support outside lessons for individual and groups of pupils who are at risk of falling behind.

- Teachers and teaching assistants ask good questions that require the pupils to explain their thinking. They are persistent in asking probing follow-up questions that require pupils to think carefully and deeply. This promotes good learning and ensures that pupils develop their speaking and listening skills throughout the school.
- Pupils want to learn new things and relish the opportunities that teachers provide for them to learn in a variety of ways. This helps them to make good progress and fosters an increasingly positive attitude to learning. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Year 6, the teacher took the class into the playground with their chairs to learn about coordinates. As a result of the high level of engagement of pupils and the skilful questioning of the teacher, when the pupils returned to class, they were ready for more challenging work than the teacher had prepared so she skilfully adapted the tasks accordingly.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. For example, in a mathematics lesson for a group of more-able pupils in Year 6, the teacher skilfully taught them about scatter graphs to a very high level of understanding. As a result, pupils made outstanding progress.
- Not all lessons, however, provide sufficient challenge for all pupils. In some lessons, pupils, particularly the most able, are not moved on to harder work quickly enough and continue to complete work with which they are already confident. This reduces the amount of progress they make in each lesson.
- Classrooms are well organised and provide a stimulating environment in which pupils learn. They include a range of colourful and informative displays designed to provide pupils with support when they are working on their own. For example, in one of the small group teaching rooms, the displays provide pupils with helpful information about punctuation marks, how to spell tricky words and how to form letters correctly. Not all pupils take a similar pride in their own work and, in some classes, workbooks are scruffy and handwriting is untidy.
- A new marking policy has been recently introduced. It is currently being used most effectively in writing where pupils are given precise guidance about the next steps to take and pupils make the necessary improvements.
- Pupils have a wide range of opportunities to practise their writing skills across the curriculum. Phonics, spelling, punctuation and grammar are taught well and pupils are expected to use these skills in all their writing. This has ensured that attainment at the end of Year 6 has been consistently well above average. Opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills to solve problems, both in mathematics lessons and in other subjects, are less well developed.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Parents and pupils agree that the school is a safe place. Pupils of all ages spoke knowledgeably to inspectors about how to keep themselves safe in different situations, for example, when crossing the road, when cycling and when using the internet.
- The pupils who spoke to inspectors understood that bullying can take a number of different forms and knew the difference between this and name-calling. Older pupils were very mature in their discussion with inspectors about this. They were absolutely certain that bullying does not occur and said that, if it did happen, it would be taken very seriously by the adults in school.

- Pupils enjoy coming to school and are enthusiastic about their learning, and this is shown in their punctuality and well-above-average attendance. They come in promptly from the playground and settle to their learning quickly.
- The behaviour of pupils is good. The atmosphere within the school is calm and purposeful. Behaviour around the school and in the playground is very good. Playtimes are well supervised and are lively and sociable. Behaviour in lessons is also good, and pupils are usually attentive and focused. Occasionally, they become distracted and lose concentration but quickly return to the task after a reminder from the teacher.
- Pupils display impeccable manners without any adult prompting, for example, holding doors open, offering to help visitors and staff and initiating polite conversations with adults. In lessons, they are supportive of one another, value each other's ideas and opinions and praise one another spontaneously. They show all staff members the same degree of respect. This is, in part, because all adults have high expectations and are good role models for the pupils.
- Pupils take pride in their appearance and were keen to talk to inspectors about a new uniform for physical activity that is currently being considered by the school council.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, senior leaders and governors have a clear vision for the school based on an accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses. Staff and parents are very supportive of this vision. This was evident from the overwhelmingly positive responses from the staff survey, Parent View and the school's own survey of parents.
- The new headteacher has successfully maintained the strengths of the school but is under no illusion that there are improvements to be made. He is leading the school with dedication and enthusiasm.
- School leaders have used the sport funding (provided by the government to all primary schools) to provide additional sports clubs after school. This is enabling more pupils to participate in physical activity. Sports coaches are supporting the teaching of physical education and helping teachers to develop their expertise in this area. The impact of this work has yet to be evaluated.
- Teachers with additional responsibilities are effective in their roles. For example, the English subject leader has been successful in ensuring that the teaching of phonics has improved and pupils now make good progress. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader is new to the role. She is ambitious for the area she leads and is focusing on the correct priorities. She is receiving effective support to enable her to lead this area of school well.
- The curriculum provides pupils with a variety of interesting and exciting experiences in a range of subjects. Specialist teachers for music, French and physical education help pupils to make good progress. A good range of after-school clubs, for instance growing club and baking club, supplement the curriculum well. Regular creativity weeks are planned. Recently, these have focused on famous scientists, Shakespeare and world cultures. These, the regular trips and visitors to the school and the charity work undertaken make a strong contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils' spiritual development is particularly strong because this is an integral part of the curriculum and school life. Pupils are encouraged to be individual and creative in lessons and express their feelings and opinions. For example, in the classroom for Year 2, a vibrant and well-

used display enables pupils to express how they feel and why.

- The headteacher has a sophisticated system for tracking how well pupils are achieving. Staff are very knowledgeable about the levels that individual and groups of pupils are achieving. The headteacher is now becoming more focused on tracking the progress of pupils. However, information about this is not presented clearly enough and is too complicated. This is preventing leaders and governors from easily and effectively checking the impact of actions to improve achievement for different groups of pupils.
- School leaders make regular checks on teaching and provide advice for teachers on how to improve. However, this feedback is not sufficiently focused on how different groups of pupils can make faster progress in lessons. In addition, leaders do not go back and check quickly enough if their advice has been followed.
- Since the appointment of the new headteacher, the local authority advisor has provided a good level of support and challenge to the school. Her work on ensuring that leaders are aware of the importance of scrutinising information about pupils' progress more closely has been particularly effective. The reports provided by the advisor are helpful and the recommendations are consistent with findings of the inspection team.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governance is outstanding. Governors provide excellent support and challenge to school leaders because they are extremely knowledgeable about the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have recently been awarded the Governor Mark in recognition of the processes and procedures they have in place to enable them to be fully involved in school improvement. Governors have ensured that the format of the headteacher's report provides them with sufficient information about the quality of teaching and the standards that pupils are achieving. Governors have developed their own action plan which runs in parallel with the school development plan. Regular review of this document enables them to hold the school to account and also to reflect on how they can improve as governors. They keep a close watch on the finances and ensure money, including the pupil premium funding, is allocated and monitored appropriately. Governors understand that teachers' pay is linked to their performance and level of responsibility and, together with the headteacher, are rigorous in ensuring that all safeguarding procedures meet current 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	124367
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	441269

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	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	216
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Antony Carter
Headteacher	Ben Grove
Date of previous school inspection	17 October 2006
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