

Saint Paulinus Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School

The Avenue, Guisborough, North Yorkshire, TS14 8DN

Inspection dates 26–27 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.

- This is a happy and caring school where pupils thrive and achieve well.
- Pupils' behaviour and the school's work to keep them safe and secure are both outstanding.
- Pupils say they feel very safe in school. They develop very positive attitudes to learning.
- From average starting points, pupils make good progress. By the end of Year 6, standards are consistently above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage settle quickly to school life and get off to a good start with their learning.
- Teaching is good. Teachers' excellent subject knowledge and varied learning activities ensure that pupils usually make good progress.
- Effective support for disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those who are eligible for the pupil premium funding helps them to keep up with their classmates and achieve well.
- The headteacher's inspirational leadership successfully sets a positive tone for the whole school, and the entire team works well together for the good of the pupils.
- Governors are knowledgeable and provide excellent support and challenge, which contributes to promoting school improvement.
- The headteacher, senior leaders, and the governing body have a clear understanding of what the school does well, have secured improvements in the monitoring and evaluation of pupils' progress and know where the school could be even better.
- Parents are strongly supportive of the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding, and a small amount requires improvement.
- At times, pupils are not given sufficient opportunity to practise what they have learnt, particularly in mathematics.
- Middle leaders are at an early stage in helping to drive school improvement.
- Pupils do not have the opportunity to improve their spelling and grammatical skills in subjects other than English.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons, two jointly with the headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made three short visits to observe pupils' learning in small group sessions. A Key Stage 2 assembly and a house assembly were also observed.
- Inspectors heard pupils from Year 2 and Year 6 read, examined the work in pupils' books, and observed pupils' activities in the dining hall and playground.
- Inspectors held discussions with a number of parents, the headteacher, other senior leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, members of the governing body, and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke informally to pupils in lessons and around the school, as well as having two more formal meetings with groups of pupils from Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- Inspectors examined a range of documentation, including minutes of governing body meetings, a summary of the school's view of its performance, the school's improvement plan, and documents showing how the quality of teaching is checked, the school's information on pupils' progress, teachers' plans and records relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors took account of the 58 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), three letters delivered to the school and 18 responses to the inspection questionnaire for staff.

Inspection team

Peter Bailey, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Lesley Richardson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises a part-time Nursery and a Reception class.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and speak English fluently.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported through school action is above the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2012.
- The school provides a breakfast-and after-school club, which are managed by the governing body.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has been granted an Academy Order by the DFE on the 5 February 2014, and the proposed conversion is on the 1 July 2014. The name of the Catholic Multi-Academy the school will be joining is 'The Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust'.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of teaching that is outstanding to raise pupils' achievement further by ensuring that:
 - pupils check, and understand how to improve their work before moving on to the next stage in learning, particularly in mathematics
 - pupils practise and improve their spelling skills and understanding of grammar in a wide range of subjects
 - the impact of teaching assistants on pupils' learning is further enhanced by accessing additional training, particularly in supporting pupils with specific needs, and the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make).
- Increase the effectiveness of leadership and management by continuing to improve the role of subject and phase leaders in supporting school improvement by ensuring they regularly check on the quality of teaching, identify outstanding practice and share this to help increase teaching skills.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with knowledge and skills that are typical for their age. In the safe and happy learning environment, children settle quickly. Good and sometimes outstanding teaching and the wide range of imaginative and stimulating activities they can choose from ensure that they enjoy learning and get off to a positive start in their school life. They make good progress and are well prepared for their next stage of learning by the time they enter Year 1.
- Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 1, with a stronger picture over time in reading and mathematics. However, progress in writing has not been as good. Leaders recognised this and have taken decisive action to tackle it. School data and work in pupils' books show that pupils' progress is now faster and by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are now above national expectations in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' phonics skills (linking letters and the sounds they make) develop quickly and pupils are able to apply these skills to help them read. In the 2013 phonics screening check, pupils exceeded the national average. However, teaching assistants do not have enough access to training that would help them better support the teaching of letters and sounds.
- Good progress is sustained in Key Stage 2. In 2013, the proportion of pupils making and exceeding expected progress was above the national average in mathematics and writing, and broadly in line in reading. The school has successfully implemented strategies to raise the profile and enjoyment of reading and pupils' progress is improving. This was evidenced when listening to pupils read with enthusiasm, and their keenness to talk about their favourite authors and books.
- By the end of Year 6, attainment is above national expectations in reading, writing, and mathematics. Pupils' attainment in spelling, punctuation and English grammar is not as strong, because there are few opportunities to apply these skills across other subjects.
- Work in pupils' books, supported by current school data, show that all groups of pupils in Years 3 to 6 are making good progress to achieve standards above expectations. The school's data indicate that the current Year 6 pupils are on track to reach predicted outcomes that are well above national expectations.
- From their starting points, pupils achieve well, including those eligible for the pupil premium funding, disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, and the most able pupils, because the school checks on pupils' progress rigorously and provides good quality extra support.
- The pupil premium funding is effectively allocated to improve achievement. School leaders have chosen to use some of this funding to provide extra help which includes one-to-one tuition and additional reading support for eligible pupils. The school's robust tracking systems closely monitor the progress of these pupils, and data show that this additional support is very successful in raising the achievement of these pupils. Pupils eligible for this funding do as well as other pupils in the school, as there are no significant differences in their progress and attainment.

The quality of teaching is good

- Most teaching is good, with some that is outstanding, and this enables pupils in all year groups to learn well and make good progress. Work in pupils' books shows that teaching has been good over time.
- Excellent relationships within the classroom ensure that pupils have a very good attitude to their work and learn new skills quickly and confidently.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, teaching is of a consistently good quality. A wide range of stimulating and imaginative activities, both in the classroom and outside ensure that children's

learning is good. In the Reception class, for example, in a topic on 'Snakes', the teacher's enthusiastic input, and highly effective use of pictures on the interactive whiteboard totally captivated the children from the word go. This set the tone for the very good learning that followed, in which children used a wide range and high level of descriptive words, such as 'camouflage'.

- The highly effective use of children's 'Learning Journals', books which record children's development, create excellent partnership opportunities between school and home, which powerfully support children's learning.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and usually plan effective opportunities for pupils to learn, containing a variety of activities to keep them interested. For example, pupils made good progress and enjoyed learning in a Year 6 mathematics lesson when they were asked to convert fractions to decimals, and then use the answers to relate to pages in the class reading book, in order to break a code and identify a spy.
- Teachers in all year groups use high quality assessment of what pupils already know in order to plan new learning for pupils of all abilities. Pupils know their targets and use them to focus on their learning and to monitor their own progress.
- Most teachers set work that gets the best out of pupils', including the most able. Tasks require pupils to use their existing skills and knowledge, but are sufficiently interesting and challenging to move their learning forward, so that pupils' progress is usually good.
- Sometimes teachers do not give pupils sufficient opportunity to practise what they have learnt so that it is fully understood, before moving to the next activity, particularly in mathematics.
- Learning and progress were rapid in a Year 6 lesson on the topic on 'Space' because the teacher used information and communication technology extremely successfully to support learning.
- Teaching assistants make a positive contribution to support the learning of all pupils, especially those who may need a little extra help. This effective support builds up pupils' confidence and enhances their basic skills, so they play a full part in the lesson and make good progress. However, teaching assistants limited access to training relating to pupils' specific needs and the teaching of phonics (sounds and letters), limits their ability to help pupils make even better progress.
- Generally, high-quality marking, which is informative and involves peer and self-assessment, helps pupils to improve their work. However, sometimes teachers' comments are not as helpful because they relate to what the pupils have done, rather than how work can be improved.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils' attitudes to learning are exemplary. They are enthusiastic in class and are very keen and eager to learn. The relationships in the classroom are excellent, pupils work well together and with adults.
- The school provides a nurturing environment where adults model positive relationships so that pupils thrive and grow in confidence. They respond extremely well to the school ethos, 'to help each other be the best person you can be'. One Year 6 pupil commented 'in school we can show our personalities, I can be me'.
- Pupils are acutely aware of the importance of good manners and treating each other with respect, they are polite and courteous at all times.
- Pupils say typically behaviour is excellent and there is no bullying. School records confirm that bullying of any kind is extremely rare. Pupils have a good understanding and awareness of the school's rewards system, which is implemented consistently by the staff, and is extremely effective in fostering good relationships and promotes a positive feel within the classroom. One Year 4 pupil commented, 'behaviour is good, it doesn't stop us learning'.
- Pupils play a significant role in the life of the school. They take on a range of responsibilities, such as house captains and members of the school council. Weekly house assemblies are led by Year 6 house captains and provide a role in developing reflection on issues of faith and morality. This has a powerful impact on building pupils' confidence and self-esteem.

- Pupils are excellent ambassadors for the school and are very well prepared for the next stage of education, both academically and personally.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Leaders make sure that pupils are safe in school. Entry to the premises is well managed and staff that are recruited are rigorously checked.
- Pupils say they feel exceptionally safe in school. They are fully aware of what might constitute potentially dangerous situations and know how to avoid them and have a very good understanding of the different forms that bullying may take.
- Attendance is well above the national average, and there have been no exclusions since 2012.
- The excellence of pupils' behaviour and their deep respect for each other testify to the outstanding quality of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- In questionnaires, all staff and an overwhelming majority of parents agree that pupils are happy, well behaved and safe at school.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides dynamic leadership. He is extremely committed and passionate in engendering a consistently positive approach to driving forward the school's improvement. His approach is infectious and sets the tone for the whole school. At its roots is the headteacher's unwavering determination to provide every child with a solid foundation for the future. Teamwork across the school is strong in pursuit of the headteacher's fundamental beliefs.
- The headteacher is held in high regard by the pupils, parents and staff. Comments on the all the staff questionnaires returned indicated a high level of confidence in the school's leadership. Staff morale is high. The school's leaders have an accurate understanding of how well the school is doing; leaders thoroughly evaluate the school's performance. They correctly identify the school's strengths and the right priorities for further development. For example, since the previous inspection, the school has raised pupils' attainment in mathematics effectively and it is now well above national expectations.
- The middle leadership team is relatively new and inexperienced. The roles and responsibilities of phase and subject leaders have not yet been fully developed. Consequently, their involvement in activities to raise pupils' achievement, such as conducting lesson observations and sharing good practice, is still quite limited.
- The process to check the quality of teaching is well structured, with links to pupils' progress and overall school targets. Teachers commented that they found the process supportive, with good opportunities in place for professional development.
- Systems to check on pupils' progress have been improved since the headteacher's appointment in 2012. Much more effective use is made of the information to set more demanding targets for pupils' progress and these are linked, with increasing effectiveness, to manage the performance of staff. The link between performance and salary progression for staff is clear and applied rigorously.
- The curriculum provides pupils with a wide range of learning opportunities both in and out of school, promoting both a high level of engagement and good achievement. The Key Stage 1 curriculum has recently been revised and 'learning zones' have been introduced to further involve pupils in their learning and improve pupils' progress in writing, spelling and grammar.
- The Catholic ethos is the driving force with all the school does. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very effectively.
- The school uses its primary sport funding well. It has been used to increase the scope of sports activities available to pupils during and after school and provide pupils with the opportunity to be coached by sports specialists and training to develop the teachers' expertise. A wide range of sporting opportunities is available to pupils after school. These are well attended and contribute to the pupils' health and well-being.
- Leaders and managers have successfully developed a mutually supportive relationship with parents, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

- Policies and procedures for safeguarding are exemplary.
- The local authority provides an appropriate level of support for this good school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is exceptionally supportive of the school; governors are knowledgeable, ambitious and approachable. They are highly committed and very well informed about the school. They use statistical information astutely to evaluate the school’s performance in relation to other schools nationally.
 - The governors play a critical role in challenging plans for improvement and setting rigorous targets for the headteacher.
 - They monitor teachers’ performance and pupils’ progress, paying particular attention to the progress made by pupils eligible for pupil premium funding. They are fully aware of the priorities for school improvement and monitor progress against the school improvement plan throughout the year. They continuously seek to further their own expertise by undertaking additional training in order to make them increasingly more effective in their role. School finances are managed effectively.

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	111681
Local authority	Redcar and Cleveland
Inspection number	431365

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	200
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michael Bayldon
Headteacher	Simon Geaves
Date of previous school inspection	6 March 2009
Telephone number	01287 637978
Fax number	01287 637978
Email address	st_paulinus_rc_primary_school@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk

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