

Our Lady and St Edward's Catholic Primary School, Preston

Lightfoot Lane, Fulwood, Preston, Lancashire, PR2 3LP

Inspection dates

1–2 April 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.

- Pupils make good progress and their attainment is well-above average in mathematics, reading and writing by the time they leave.
- Teaching is good and some is outstanding.
- Teaching assistants are of a good quality and help to ensure that pupils, including pupils who need extra help, learn well.
- Very strong provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is at the heart of the school's success.
- Pupils say they feel very safe in school. They are a delight to talk with, their behaviour is outstanding and their attendance is well-above average.
- The governing body is effective and challenges as well as supports the school well.
- The highly experienced headteacher, fully supported by senior leaders, expects the best from staff and pupils; this has led to consistently good achievement by pupils over a number of years.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet outstanding.
- Marking is not consistently good across the school.
- At times the work the most able pupils are asked to do in some classes is not sufficiently challenging.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills well in subjects such as history and geography.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons or parts of lessons. Additional short visits to lessons were carried out to look at issues such as how well pupils get on with their classmates and their overall behaviour.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils chosen at random, with school council members, with members of the governing body and with senior staff. A telephone conversation took place with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and talked to them about the types of books they enjoy.
- Pupils' current work and assessments along with school documents were scrutinised.
- Inspectors reviewed 37 responses from parents to the online questionnaire (Parent View). Inspectors also talked to parents during the inspection.
- They reviewed the inspection questionnaires completed and returned by staff.

Inspection team

Geoff Yates, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Ian Wellens

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be supported by pupil premium funding is well-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.
- In 2013, the school met the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more pupils make excellent progress by:
 - making sure that the work set throughout lessons is well matched to the needs of the most able in all classes
 - ensuring marking is effective in all classes and helps pupils to improve even further
 - ensuring that, across the school, where appropriate, pupils are given opportunities to use their good writing skills well in subjects such as history and geography.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils achieve well and make good progress as they move through the school. Pupils really enjoy learning. One Year 6 pupil attempting a very challenging mathematical calculation remarked, 'I am really enjoying this type of work.'
- When they start school children have levels of skills typical for their age. They get off to a good start and quickly learn new skills. For example, they confidently use their skills in linking letters and the sounds they make in reading words such as 'chin' and 'thin'. The classroom and outdoor area are of a good quality in which children receive a good level of support from the early years staff. By the time they enter Year 1, their levels of skill are above average.
- In 2013, pupils reached above-average standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Years 2 and 6. This continues to be the case.
- The school's focus this year on the most able pupils in Year 6 achieving not just above but well above the expected levels is proving to be successful.
- Although the most able pupils reach above-average standards by the time they leave, in some classes the work they are asked to do is too easy. For example, pupils who have successfully completed an activity have to work through even more similar examples before undertaking more challenging work. This slows the pace of learning for the most able pupils.
- Progress in reading is strong. The number of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 check of phonics (early reading skills) is well above the national average. Older pupils say they get plenty of chances to read and find reading 'exciting and worth-while.' They talk confidently about the different styles of authors.
- There are some very good examples of pupils using their writing skills well in subjects such as history and geography. For example, in Year 2 as part of a study of the Great Plague, pupils were asked to write a diary entry, pretending they were Samuel Pepys. One child's diary included, 'They have fever. I hope I don't catch it because I want to continue righting (writing) in my diary.'
- The very small number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals means that any comparisons with other pupils cannot be made with any degree of accuracy. However, across the school these pupils achieve well and benefit from the way additional funding to meet their needs is used. Their progress and attainment in English and mathematics is similar to their peers.
- Pupils who are disabled and those with special educational needs achieve well. Work is set at the right level for them and, as a result, they make good progress from their different starting points.

The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils benefit from interesting activities that help them make good progress. These activities are not restricted to English and mathematics lessons but extend into subjects such as music, sport and art and design. Some teaching, evident not only from observations but from the work in pupils' books, is outstanding. Very good use is made of a visiting music specialist to promote music throughout the school.
- Parents are very pleased with the quality of teaching their children receive as are the pupils themselves. One pupil commented, 'If we need help we get it.'
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage children are provided with interesting activities such as acting out the story of Billy Goat Gruff in the outside area using toy figures and objects to develop their emerging skills. Throughout the school day staff ask questions carefully to check children's understanding and to extend their thinking. There are plenty of opportunities to build on children's interests and to broaden them.

- When teaching in the rest of the school is outstanding, pupils are very keen to explain what they are doing. For example, the most able pupils in a Year 6 class were rightly proud of the metaphors and similes they use in their writing. One pupil's writing included the line, 'Ponds are locked windows imprisoning frozen life.'
- When teaching is not as strong, the work set for the most able pupils does not provide sufficient challenge to enable them to do as well as they might.
- Reading is taught well across the school. Pupils are given good opportunities to extend their numeracy skills. However, while there are some good and outstanding examples of writing being used well in subjects such as religious education, history and science in some classes, this is not the case in all classes.
- Pupils' work is marked by teachers regularly. Where marking is a high quality it is clear from pupils' exercise books and from talking with pupils that they understand what they have done well and how they might do even better. However, at times marking is not as helpful in showing pupils how they might improve.
- Teaching assistants make an important contribution to pupils' learning across the school. They give plenty of support to pupils but also ask questions that lead pupils to work things out for themselves.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Pupils are extremely keen to learn and enjoy school. They are very polite and friendly. For example, pupils taking part in a music-making session involving drumming were rightly proud of what they achieved.
- Parents who completed the online questionnaire agree that their children are safe in school and very well cared for. One parent commented on the school's 'real sense of community'.
- Pupils' attendance is above average, indicating how much pupils like coming to school and the importance parents give to regular attendance.
- Pupils show a strong interest in what they are asked to do in lessons on trips outside school because the work is challenging and motivates them to try their very best. For example, a group of pupils were keen to talk to an inspector about what they had found out about the importance of re-cycling materials as part of a visit to a re-cycling centre.
- A scrutiny of records and observations during the inspection show that behaviour over time is of a high quality. Isolated incidents of unacceptable behaviour are dealt with well.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils have a very good understanding of how to keep safe and are very confident that any issues they raise will be dealt with promptly by the school. They have been active in supporting the school's attempts to improve the way parents park their cars outside school. They recognise dangers when using the internet and know how to avoid these problems. Pupils have a very good understanding of different types of bullying.
- There are many opportunities provided to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils raise money for a range of good causes and have positive views on the importance of helping those less fortunate than themselves. As one child commented, 'We should always think of others.'
- Pupils respond to the many opportunities for them to take on responsibilities in school. These include being playground buddies, school council members or leaders in the reading club for the school's youngest pupils.
- During the inspection Year 6 pupils were given full responsibility in leading an act of worship, linked to the theme of Holy Week, and attended by a large number of parents. Pupils' high quality speaking, reading, singing and acting skills carried out in a highly dignified and respectful way by the pupils will long be remembered by all who attended.

The leadership and management are good

- The school's leadership has correctly identified the school's strengths and areas for development. Leaders have an accurate understanding of how well the school is doing. The school's plans for bringing about further improvement are well judged.
- The headteacher leads by example and with the support of the leadership team has ensured pupils' needs come first in everything the school does. Consistently high expectations among staff and pupils have resulted in pupils continuing to make good progress.
- Leaders carefully check the quality of teaching. Teachers are expected to perform well. They are set high targets and strong performance is rewarded appropriately.
- Leaders ensure that no pupils, regardless of background or need, are denied access to anything the school has to offer. As such equal opportunities are a strong feature of the school. This is clearly demonstrated in the way that additional funding is used effectively, resulting in the small number of pupils who receive this funding achieving well.
- Child protection and safeguarding have a high priority. Leaders ensure that all requirements are met and that the building is a safe environment.
- The local authority sees this school as a good school and as such provides effective 'light touch' support.
- Middle leaders carry out their duties well and have a clear understanding of how pupils' skills in their subjects are developed as pupils move through the school.
- Pupils are provided with a curriculum that meets their different needs. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills well in subjects other than English. Pupils say how much they enjoy lessons, including music making and science. Pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is promoted very strongly across all subjects.
- Additional funding for physical education is used effectively to improve pupils' physical well-being. For example, during the inspection it was apparent that many pupils had taken up tennis and skipping to improve their physical well-being and enjoyed taking part.
- The staff and parent questionnaire responses show clearly that parents and members of staff think highly of the leadership and management of the school. One parent commenting on the headteacher being out in the yard before school said, 'She clearly knows the children and greets them by name. As parents, we think this helps to set the tone for the day.'
- **The governance of the school:**
 - All legal requirements are met. Members of the governing body bring a wide range of experience and expertise to their role. Governors not only support the school but ask challenging questions of it. Governors have a good understanding of how well the school is doing. They ensure that the systems to check the performance of teachers are thorough and they receive information about the quality of teaching, seeking assurance that salary levels are linked to performance. The governing body uses pupil premium funding effectively in making sure it has a good impact on eligible pupils. It has a good knowledge of how the additional sports funding is used for the benefit of pupils.

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	119579
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	439584

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	209
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Hilary Smith
Headteacher	Emma McGrath
Date of previous school inspection	19 March 2009
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