

St Edmund's Catholic Primary School

Rosebery Street, Springhill, Birmingham, B18 7PA

Inspection dates 8–9 April 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	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.

- The school has made good improvements since the previous inspection.
- Children in Nursery and Reception make a good start to their school life and progress well.
- Good progress continues in Key Stages 1 and 2. Attainment by the end of Year 6 is now closer to average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Improvements to teaching are having a positive impact on pupils' progress. Teaching is good. There are examples of outstanding teaching.
- Teachers' feedback and marking promotes learning well.
- The school has a harmonious, positive and welcoming atmosphere.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and participate well in the activities provided.
- Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school.
- Procedures to ensure pupils are safe are effective. Pupils feel safe and very well looked after by adults.
- There is a good range of additional activities provided including clubs and educational visits.
- The executive headteacher, head of school and other key leaders provide strong leadership in promoting good achievement for pupils and developing teaching.
- Governors provide effective support and constructive challenge. They make a valuable contribution to the school's success.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, pupils do not know what they are supposed to be learning.
- At times, different groups of pupils find the work too easy or too difficult.
- The outdoor facilities in Nursery and Reception do not promote children's learning as well as the classroom facilities.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 16 lessons. Some of these were seen jointly with the executive headteacher and the head of school.
- Discussions were held with the executive headteacher, the head of school, staff, a representative from the local authority, two external advisers, governors and pupils.
- There were only six responses to the online survey, Parent View. The results of the school's own parent survey carried out in October 2013 with 75 returns were taken into account.
- Questionnaires from 13 members of staff were analysed.
- The inspectors examined school policies, information about pupils' attainment and progress, teachers' plans, pupils' work, safeguarding procedures and the school's development planning.

Inspection team

Derek Watts, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Mary Maybank

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- Pupils come from a range of ethnic heritages. Black African and Black Caribbean are the largest groups.
- A much higher-than-average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- A high proportion of pupils are supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils in local authority care, those known to be eligible for free school meals and other groups.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The number of pupils who join and leave the school part way through the year is much higher than average.
- The school is federated with another local Catholic primary school. There is one executive headteacher for the two schools. In each school there is a head of school. The two schools share one governing body.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by ensuring that teachers:
 - always make sure that pupils know what they are supposed to be learning
 - always set work at the right level of difficulty for different groups of pupils.
- Develop outdoor areas for children in Nursery and Reception to promote learning as well as that seen inside the classrooms.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the Nursery with knowledge, understanding and skills well below those expected for their age. Communication, language and social skills are often limited. Children make good progress in Nursery and Reception because of good teaching and effective support.
- Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2. Improvements to teaching have resulted in attainment by the end of Year 2 rising to average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Attainment by the end of Year 6 is affected by the high proportion of pupils who join and leave the school part way through the year. Many of the pupils who join the school have little grasp of the English language. The school's assessments show that pupils who start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and remain at the school until Year 6 make good progress and reach average standards by the end of Year 6. Taking all pupils into account, attainment by the end of Year 6 has been below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Year 6 attainment has improved from the low levels of three years ago.
- The high proportion of Year 6 pupils supported by the pupil premium in 2013 attained lower standards than the other pupils in the year group. These pupils were around 20 months behind the others. More recent assessments show that those supported by the pupil premium are making faster progress and are achieving as well as the others. Good teaching and support help ensure that these pupils make good progress.
- Pupils at an early stage of learning English make good progress. They receive well-targeted one-to-one support. Effective use of language by teachers and support staff and good discussion in lessons contribute to pupils' good progress.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because of good teaching and the effective support they receive from teaching assistants.
- In 2013, the proportion of pupils who attained the higher levels of attainment was below average, particularly in mathematics. More recent progress information shows that the most-able pupils are making faster progress. These pupils are usually given demanding enough work to do.
- Pupils make good progress in acquiring and applying speaking and listening skills. This is because they have good opportunities for to discuss their learning, express their opinions and present their findings to the class.
- Pupils enjoy reading and make good progress. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and pupils in Years 1 and 2 benefit from the regular and structured programme in the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make). In summer 2013, the results of the Year 1 phonics screening check were average.
- Decisive action has been taken to raise achievement in mathematics because this lagged behind reading and writing. Pupils are now making good progress. Pupils are also making good progress in writing. In Year 1, pupils used adjectives effectively in describing the characters of the book 'Handa's Hen'. Handwriting is well developed and by Year 2 most pupils are writing with a neat and joined hand. Pupils in Year 3 wrote interesting factual accounts about animals from the rainforest.

- Pupils develop healthy lifestyles and physical fitness through physical education lessons and the additional sporting activities provided.

The quality of teaching is good

- The school's drive to improve teaching has had a positive impact on pupils' progress. Teaching successfully engages the pupils and promotes good progress. In all classes, teachers have developed positive relationships with the pupils and manage them well. Classrooms are attractive and well organised.
- In Nursery and Reception, children are well taught and they make good gains in their learning. Children benefit from effective adult instruction in essential language, literacy and numeracy skills. They also have good opportunities to explore, investigate and be creative. However, the outdoor areas are not used consistently well to promote learning in the same way as is found in the classrooms.
- There are examples of outstanding teaching. For example, in Year 2, pupils were able to use punctuation correctly, including speech marks, as a result of successful teaching. They responded well to the challenging work set. Inspired by a colourful illustration of 'Palm Sunday', they wrote accurately about the crowd's reaction to Jesus as he entered Jerusalem. The teacher and teaching assistant provided first rate feedback to individual pupils to help them improve their work.
- In a highly successful mathematics lesson in Year 5, pupils made rapid progress in adding fractions by finding the common denominator. They used mixed numbers and fractions effectively. The challenging and demanding work engaged and motivated the pupils. Pupils were able to answer probing questions well and to assess how well they were doing.
- Pupils at an early stage of learning English receive well targeted guidance and support. One-to-one support is used well to develop pupils' language skills. The teaching of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is effective. Teaching assistants are well used and make a good contribution to pupils' learning.
- Pupils are set clear individual targets to guide their learning in reading, writing and mathematics. They know what they are working towards in order to improve their work.
- The marking of pupils' work has improved considerably since the previous inspection. Teachers provide encouragement and praise for good work. Constructive comments help pupils to improve. Pupils confirm that they find their teacher's marking helpful.
- Occasionally, pupils are not clear about what they are supposed to be learning because it has not been explained well enough to them. When this happens, pupils' rate of learning slows. At times, tasks set are too easy or too difficult for pupils and they do not learn as well as they could.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Children in Nursery settle quickly into the school because they are well prepared and a strong emphasis is placed on developing their social skills from the start. In Nursery and Reception, children enjoy the interesting activities. They relate positively to others and behave well.

- The behaviour of pupils is good. In Years 1 to 6, pupils show a keen interest in their learning. They are eager to participate in the activities provided. Their positive attitudes to learning and their good behaviour contribute well to their progress. In some lessons, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are exemplary. Just occasionally, pupils can be less attentive, restless and learning slows, especially when they are not sure about what they are supposed to be doing.
- Pupils show consideration and respect for others. They make good progress in their personal development and thrive in the school's harmonious community. Pupils have developed a good understanding of Christianity. They show a clear understanding of other major faiths.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. As a result, pupils feel safe at school and very well looked after by staff. When a group of pupils was asked if they were well supported by the staff, 'Definitely' was the unanimous reply. Discussions with pupils show that they have a clear understanding of bullying and its different forms, including name-calling and cyber-bullying. Pupils were confident that bullying is rare and that any incidents of unpleasant behaviour would be swiftly dealt with.
- The school's records show that incidents of unacceptable behaviour are not common place. A clear systems of rewards and sanctions are known and appreciated by the pupils.
- The school has effective procedures to monitor and promote good attendance. Attendance has improved and is now securely average.

The leadership and management are good

- The executive headteacher and the head of school provide strong leadership. They convey high expectations in raising pupils' achievement and teaching.
- Other leaders and staff share the senior leaders' ambition to improve the school. Team work is a strong feature of the school and staff strive to do the very best for pupils.
- Through regular and systematic checking, senior leaders and other key leaders have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and improvement areas. They use their findings well to bring about improvements. For example, since the last inspection there have been improvements to teaching, marking and pupils' progress. More recently there have been improvements in pupils' achievement in mathematics.
- The role of subject and other leaders has improved since the previous inspection. Phase leaders who look after different year groups lead the development of English and mathematics effectively. The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage and areas such as inclusion are also good. All key leaders are involved in checking performance and improving their areas of responsibility.
- Leaders place much emphasis on developing and improving teaching. Senior leaders, with effective assistance from external advisers, have improved teaching since the previous inspection. There have been particular improvements to checks on pupils' progress, teacher questioning, feedback and marking. There are good procedures for appraising the performance of teachers. Training and improvement targets are well linked to pupils' progress and to school improvement priorities. Effective training and support is provided to increase teacher skills.
- The school provides a good range of subjects and interesting topics for pupils to study. Pupils

thoroughly enjoy the additional activities, such as clubs and educational visits. The recently introduced primary school sports funding has been used to extend pupils' physical education activities. Specialist sports coaches are used well. They provide good teaching for pupils and have offered useful training for staff, for example in the teaching of gymnastics.

- The pupil premium funding is used wisely to provide eligible pupils with additional support. One-to-one tuition and other initiatives are having a positive impact on the progress of these pupils.
- The school is a harmonious community where all pupils are valued. All have full access to the activities provided and there are no signs of discrimination. The results of the school's parental survey carried out in October 2013 show that the vast majority of parents are pleased with the care and education provided for their children.
- Advisory support from the local authority is limited but the school makes good use of experienced external advisers.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Members of the governing body are enthusiastic, supportive and actively involved in the life of the school. They have clearly contributed to the school's improvement since the previous inspection. They show a very clear understanding of pupils' attainment and progress. Governors also have a good knowledge of the quality of teaching in the school. The clear overview that the governors have of the school's performance enables them to provide constructive challenge and hold school leaders to account. Governors are up to date on performance management procedures and ensure that promotion and pay awards are based on responsibilities and on the progress that pupils make. They keep a check on how the pupil premium funding is used and question the impact of the funding on pupils' progress. The governors have attended a range of useful courses to help improve their effectiveness. All safeguarding requirements are met.

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	103440
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	431679

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	226
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Margaret Dance
Headteacher	Mary O’Friel (executive headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	18 September 2012
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