

Haydock English Martyrs' Catholic Primary School

Piele Road, Haydock, St Helens, WA11 0JX

Inspection dates 24–25 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		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher's inspirational leadership and steely determination has galvanised staff and ensured that pupils achieve well and are back on track, after a difficult year, to attain well-above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave school at the end of Year 6.
- The exceptionally strong partnership between senior leaders and governors has secured improvements in both teaching and pupils' achievement since the last inspection.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Pupils are curious, exceptionally proud of their school and enjoy learning and playing with their friends. They appreciate their teachers; say that they are kind and that they help them to stay safe.
- Teaching is good overall and some is outstanding. Teachers ensure that learning is interesting and thought provoking, providing the right level of challenge for most pupils.
- The school's good curriculum and care, guidance and support have ensured that previous gaps in attainment between groups of pupils are closing quickly so that all groups of pupils make good progress.
- Pupils' reading skills are especially well developed. They are well-read, enjoy reading books from a wide range of authors and styles and make rapid progress.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school, which they say keeps their children safe, happy and engaged in learning.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Best practice in marking is not yet effectively shared among all staff.
- Pupils do not always have the chance to respond to detailed comments and feedback in teachers' marking or given time to improve their work.
- The most able pupils in Key Stage 1 are not always stretched to achieve their very best.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 19 lessons or parts of lessons, as well as the teaching of small groups of pupils and sessions aimed at helping pupils to learn to read. Two observations were carried out with the headteacher.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read from Years 2, 3, 5 and 6, and held discussions with pupils from across the school. Pupils' work in books was scrutinised during lessons and separately with the headteacher.
- Inspectors considered 38 responses to the online questionnaire Parent View, as well as the school's own information on parents' and pupils' views. Inspectors also took account of 32 questionnaires completed by members of staff.
- A meeting took place with a representative from the local authority's school improvement service and the school's independent consultant.
- Two meetings were held with five governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body.
- Various school documents were examined. These included: the school's review of its own performance; data on pupils' progress; external evaluations of the school's work; records of the school's checks on the quality of teaching; reports to the governing body; records of pupils' attendance, behaviour records; and safeguarding documentation.

Inspection team

Lenford White, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Marilyn Massey

Additional Inspector

Maureen Coleman

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is similar to that found nationally. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children that are looked after by the local authority.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- Since the previous inspection the school building has been refurbished to include additional teaching space, a new reception area and additional office space. During the inspection, building work was being carried out to create new classrooms for Years 3 and 6.
- A number of new staff have been appointed since the last inspection, including two newly qualified teachers. During the inspection, five teachers were not in school, three being on maternity leave, and some classes were reorganised due to staff illness.
- The school has been accredited with the Governor Mark.
- The school runs a breakfast- and after-school club, both of which are managed by the governing body.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more is outstanding by:
 - ensuring that the best practice in marking is shared across the school
 - making sure that pupils always have the chance to respond to comments in teachers' marking and are given time to improve their work
 - ensuring that tasks and activities provided for the most able pupils in Key Stage 1 always stretch them to achieve to the absolute best of their ability.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children enter Nursery with varying skills and abilities, some below average and others broadly average. However, the language and communication skills of the majority are below those expected for their age. Good teaching and interesting learning experiences in a caring, stimulating and well-managed environment ensure that most children make good progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage and are well prepared for their next stage of education in Year 1.
- Between Years 1 and 6, overall pupils make good, and sometimes outstanding, progress. Pupils' overall attainment by the end of Year 6 over several years has been significantly above average. This shows that they achieve well from their previous lower starting points.
- Disruptions to staffing and a larger than average proportion of pupils with special educational needs in Year 6 in 2013 led to a dip in standards to broadly average. Even so, most pupils made expected progress from their previous starting points and some did better than this. School data and inspection evidence shows that pupils currently in Year 6 are back on track to attain well-above average standards in reading, writing and in mathematics by the time they leave. Carefully targeted support for pupils of all abilities is helping to rapidly improve achievement, particularly in Key Stage 2, with more pupils making outstanding progress.
- The most able pupils achieve well, especially in Key Stage 2. Talented writers regularly produce extended pieces of writing, which are displayed around the school. Very able Year 5 pupils are pushed to achieve to the very best of their ability when working alongside their school-mates in Year 6. Although the achievement of the most able pupils in Key Stage 1 is now improving, these pupils are still not stretched quite enough, and could achieve even more.
- Achievement in reading is outstanding. Pupils read exceptionally well for their age. Pupils are exposed to a very wide range of books. They develop a real love of reading. Pupils who read for inspectors were exceptionally well-read, able to name a wide range of authors and writing styles. A well-structured and effective programme of teaching pupils to read by linking letters and sounds (phonics) across the whole school has helped to improve pupils' achievement in reading.
- Pupils make good progress overall in mathematics. Teachers' good subject knowledge, along with the practical problem-solving curriculum on offer enables pupils to achieve well. Additional mathematics sessions held before and after school have enabled the school to create a group of pupils working at the very high Level 6 attainment.
- Pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium make good progress. Although at the end of Year 6 in 2013, eligible pupils were about two terms behind their classmates overall, they made similarly good progress. School data and inspection evidence shows that gaps in the attainment of eligible pupils, including those known to be eligible for free school meals are now much narrower.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make at least good progress, in-line with their peers. The school promotes equality of opportunity well and, for example, ensures that any gaps between the attainment of boys and girls are no wider than those found nationally.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Pupils are curious and love learning. This is because activities are interesting and help pupils to develop the skill of enquiring. This was the case in a Reception class where children made outstanding progress in developing their understanding of the natural world while meeting Dylon's reptiles. Their behaviour was exemplary as they listened carefully, asked very sensible questions, and fearlessly handled a large snake, a bearded dragon, a blue-tongued lizard, and a giant Madagascar hissing cockroach.

- Well trained staff are enthusiastic and have very good subject knowledge. Tasks and activities are usually set at just the right level of challenge to ensure that pupils are both actively engaged and achieving to the best of their ability. The most able pupils in Key Stage 1, however, are not always provided with tasks and activities that enable them to work to the best of their ability.
- Recent training in phonics for teachers and teaching assistants is leading to improvements in achievement in reading across the school. Younger pupils, for example, develop their reading and writing skills more effectively as they are equipped with strategies to read unfamiliar words.
- Appropriate activities ensure pupils understand the importance of mathematics in problem-solving and in everyday life. This was the case in a Year 5 class where pupils skilfully used their knowledge of fractions to estimate the volume of fluid in a range of containers of different sizes, including perfume and shampoo bottles and ice-cream cartons. By the end of the activity, the most able pupils were able to convert their fractions into decimals and percentages and all pupils were able to assess how well they had done.
- Pupils learn in bright, lively and stimulating classrooms. Outstanding displays of well researched pieces of writing on, for example, the life of Dr Martin Luther King and Ancient Egypt exemplify pupils' achievement and commitment to doing school work in their own time. Clearly displayed information on class and individual pupil targets in mathematics and English help to ensure that pupils know what to do in order to improve their learning.
- Pupils are very clear about the standards that are expected of them when producing written work. Checklists in Key Stage 2 pupils' English and mathematics books on how this should be done ensure that work is well presented and of a very high quality.
- The best practice in marking is not yet shared effectively enough among staff. Pupils are not always given the opportunity to respond to the detailed feedback given to them on their work and to subsequently improve it and this sometimes hinders their progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. This includes during break times, when moving around the school and during lunchtime. Pupils are exceptionally proud of their school, and have an extremely positive attitude to learning. Pupils' behaviour in class is exemplary. They are always well focussed on tasks and work very effectively with their partners and in small groups, aiming to do their very best for themselves and their teachers.
- Pupils, staff and parents all agree that behaviour is always at least good. School records show that there are very few instances of pupils breaking the school rules and that behaviour is typically outstanding over time.
- Pupils are curious and thoughtful. They get on well and care about each other. This was demonstrated in a celebration assembly when pupils took great pleasure in applauding classes with the best attendance and great pride in receiving awards for their good work during the week.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils are adamant that bullying happens very rarely, if at all. They say that they always feel very safe and secure and that they are confident to talk to any member of staff, including the headteacher, if they have any concerns.
- Pupils have a really good understanding of prejudice-based bullying and know that it is wrong to treat anyone in a mean way because of how they look, or where they are from.
- Pupils have a particularly well-developed understanding of cyber-bullying. They know that this can occur through 'nasty texts', e-mails and messages on hand-held games. They know that they should browse the internet carefully and that they should always talk to parents or teachers if unsure about the safety of a website or link.
- Stay Safe Week, visits from Child Line, the police and fire-fighters all help to ensure that pupils' knowledge about safe and unsafe situations, and of dangers and risks, is highly developed. They know how to use roads safely, benefit from cycling proficiency training and discuss a range of issues, including stranger danger, through personal social and health-education lessons.

- Attendance is higher than it has been for a number of years, and is currently above average.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Ambitious and inspirational leadership by the headteacher helps to ensure that leaders, managers and governors successfully work together to create a school with a strong and vibrant learning environment in which all aspects of pupils' learning are catered for. Excellent relationships thrive between teachers and pupils and all staff work together to ensure that pupils' learning is both effective and memorable.
- Middle managers have a full understanding of the school's strengths and are fully involved in improving the quality of teaching and learning. They are well-trained and regularly share their growing knowledge with colleagues in school and in their neighbouring schools.
- Arrangements to check the quality of teaching and learning are highly rigorous. They are carried out by senior leaders who regularly observe teachers, scrutinise pupils' books to check on progress and seek pupils' views about their learning. Senior leaders are well aware that the quality of marking can improve further and are taking decisive action to ensure that best practice is shared across the school.
- Teachers are set challenging targets, all of which are linked to school priorities. A highly efficient system of support enables senior leaders to give teachers all the help that they need in order to ensure their success. This is seen, for example, in the improvements made in the teaching of phonics and the rapid progress now made by pupils.
- Subjects are linked together very effectively and are taught through a range of experiences involving artists and poets, and focusing on various themes, including 'Living History', 'World of Work', 'Leap into Literacy' and mathematics week. Pupils' preparedness to go 'the extra mile' is exemplified in the outstanding work they produce as 'awesome authors' and in their exemplary short stories and poems, collated in the school's forthcoming publication of pupils' writing.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Pupils care about each other and are passionate about each other's achievements. Pupils enjoy celebrating Chinese New Year, learning about Indian culture and playing musical instruments, such as the flute in Year 3.
- The curriculum is further enriched through a wide range of activities beyond lessons. These are delivered through a wide range of before- and after-school clubs, and include sewing, horticulture and rugby.
- The primary school sports fund is having a beneficial effect on pupils' health and well-being. It is used effectively to increase the range of physical education activities on offer to pupils, including judo and football, and to pay for transport to sporting events. The school is currently developing plans to ensure that teachers benefit more from coaching opportunities to improve their physical education teaching further.
- The school has an excellent relationship with the local authority which provides light-touch support in areas such as performance management. The school's independent consultant works with the school on a regular basis to, for example, help it to review teaching and learning and mentor new members of staff.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are exceptionally well informed. They have managed disruptions to staffing and extensive school building projects exceedingly well. They have an excellent range of skills, in education and finance for example, which they use to fully support the school and hold it to account. Governors have worked tirelessly to achieve the Governor Mark, which they say has helped them to be even more effective in their roles. They have endorsed plans which have helped to ensure that the well-above average standards attained by pupils at the end of Year 6 up until 2012 have been maintained in 2014.
 - Governors are familiar with performance data and know how well the school's performance compares with others nationally. They know that the quality of teaching is good and improving because they spend time in school and know staff and pupils well. They are well aware of teachers' targets and the effectiveness of teacher training, and ensure that they are rewarded

appropriately for their good work. Governors make sure that the pupil premium funding is used very effectively. They know that the small group teaching activities that it supports is rapidly closing the gap in performance between these pupils and their peers.

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	104818
Local authority	St Helens
Inspection number	444246

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	282
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brian Dooner
Headteacher	Karen Prescott
Date of previous school inspection	14 January 2010
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