

St Wilfrid's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School

Murphy Crescent, Bishop Auckland, County Durham, DL14 6QH

Inspection dates 4–5 June 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.

- Pupils' achievement is good. Pupils make good progress. Standards have risen in Year 2 and Year 6.
- Teaching is good. It has improved rapidly and continues to do so.
- Pupils know exactly what skills they are learning and what they need to do to improve their work.
- There are many opportunities for pupils to enjoy exciting activities and to see the links between subjects.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They care extremely well for one another and say they feel very safe. Attendance is average.
- The school offers sensitive care and support and provides extremely well for pupils' highly-developed spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness.
- The headteacher and the governing body have a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and relative weaknesses. They have clear systems to check how well the school is doing.
- They have put plans in place which have resulted in improved teaching and ensured pupils make good progress. There has been a particularly successful focus on improving pupils' writing.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Recent improvements in the quality of teaching have not yet had time to ensure that pupils make outstanding progress.
- The quality of teaching how pupils learn how sounds and letters link together (phonics) is variable.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage the activities pupils choose for themselves do not always offer clear learning opportunities and sufficient challenge.
- Systems to check the progress of groups of pupils in different classes and over time are not yet fully in place or clearly enough understood by all leaders.
- When leaders check the quality of teaching they do not always make sure that any advice given about how to improve is acted upon.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors held meetings with staff, groups of pupils and the Chair and vice-chair of the Governing Body. The inspectors also spoke on the telephone to a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors looked at a range of evidence including the school's improvement plan; the school's data relating to pupils' progress; the work in pupils' books and the school's documentation relating to safeguarding.
- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in ten lessons taught by eight teachers. They listened to groups of pupils in Years 1 and 2 read. In addition, the inspectors made a number of short visits to lessons.
- The inspectors conducted one lesson observation jointly with the headteacher. They also observed the headteacher reporting back to the teacher on his findings regarding the quality of teaching, learning and pupils' achievement.
- Too few parents had responded to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) for their opinions to be published. However, the inspectors spoke informally with parents to take their views about the school.
- Seventeen staff completed questionnaires and the responses were analysed.

Inspection team

Gordon Potter, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Jane Beckett	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is an average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is well-above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- There are morning, lunch-time and after-school clubs which are run by school staff and external coaches and volunteers.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in English and mathematics.
- During the inspection the special educational needs co-ordinator and the Early Years Foundation Stage leader were on maternity leave. However, inspectors were able to talk to these middle leaders about their work.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to further raise standards and rates of pupils' progress, by:
 - sharing the good practice that exists in school of how pupils learn phonics so that all pupils are helped to make rapid gains in their early reading skills
 - ensuring that those activities which pupils choose for themselves in the Early Years Foundation Stage are sufficiently challenging and offer pupils clear learning opportunities.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management of the school, by:
 - refining the school's systems for measuring pupils' progress so that all leaders are clear about the progress groups of pupils are making in their classes and over time
 - ensuring that when leaders check the quality of teaching they make sure that teachers act upon the advice about how teaching can improve.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children start school with skills and knowledge that are well below those typically expected for their age. Good teaching helps pupils make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. As a result, more pupils than in the past are in line with the expectations for their age and have a good level of development when they enter Year 1.
- Progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage is not outstanding because the activities pupils choose for themselves do not always offer clear learning opportunities and sufficient challenge.
- Further good teaching in Key Stage 1 helps pupils to make good progress. Standards at the end of Year 2 are average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 are average in mathematics and reading. In 2013, pupils in Year 6 made good progress in mathematics from their starting points at the end of Year 2. They made the progress expected of them in reading. Standards were below average in writing. Too few pupils attained standards which were above expectations. No pupil made more than the progress expected of them.
- Pupils currently in Year 6 are on track to attain above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school has introduced plans which have been highly successful in ensuring that pupils across school are now making good progress in their reading and writing. There is an impressive focus on reading and using pupils' love of books to inspire their own writing.
- Phonics teaching is typically good. As a result, almost all pupils have a clear awareness of letters and the sounds they make and understand how this helps them to read words which are new to them. However, the quality of teaching of phonics is sometimes variable and a few pupils make slower progress as a result. The school has not yet fully shared the good practice that exists in phonics teaching in school.
- In 2013, the most able pupils attained above average standards in mathematics. However, too few attained above expectations in reading and writing. The most able pupils currently in Year 6 have been clearly identified and work is targeted to help them attain above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In 2013, most of the pupils supported by the pupil premium, including those pupils who were known to be eligible for free school meals, made the progress expected of them. However, too few of them did better than this. The extremely high proportion of eligible pupils both currently and in the past, most of whom also have special educational needs, means that the gap between those pupils and other pupils in the school has been wide. They were four terms behind other pupils in the school in reading and mathematics. They were only two terms behind in writing. This was because all groups of pupils had not done as well as they should in this subject.
- The school has recognised this issue and now has clear plans to improve the learning and check their progress of this group of pupils. Pupil Premium funding has been spent on programmes to develop reading and writing and providing extra time for one-to-one teaching, where this is necessary. As a result, eligible pupils currently make similar good progress overall as other pupils in school in English and mathematics. This ensures that the gap between those pupils and other pupils in the school is now narrowing in Year 6.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because of the good teaching and support they receive from teachers and highly-skilled teaching assistants.
- The school is very clearly focused on identifying any pupils who are at risk of falling behind and concentrates on ensuring that all pupils make at least good progress. This demonstrates that the school spends the pupil-premium funding effectively and clearly shows the school's commitment to promoting equal opportunities and tackling discrimination.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good over time in reading, writing and mathematics in all classes and for all groups of pupils. While there is evidence in pupils' work that they have made some extremely rapid short term gains in their learning, recent improvements to the quality of teaching have not yet had time to ensure that pupils' progress is outstanding over time.
- The work set helps pupils to learn well whatever their ability. Pupils know what skills they are learning and what they need to do to succeed in their work. Good marking, allied to clear targets, shows pupils how to improve and gives them time to act upon advice given. As a result, pupils make good progress.
- For example, in mathematics, pupils in Year 4 were helped to extend their understanding of how to multiply and do addition of money through having to solve real-life problems related to buying food. The work was challenging but they were helped to correct any misunderstandings about their work. They were able to develop their understanding of the steps to take to succeed and they made good progress.
- Good and increasingly rapid progress is made in writing by pupils across school. Their writing is based on the books they are reading together and the many exciting topics they learn. For example, in Year 3, pupils were learning how to build tension in their writing at the same time as developing their skills in using adjectives, adverbs and different lengths of sentences. They were clear about the skills they were learning, encouraged to plan their ideas and helped to think about how they could improve their own and others' writing.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils say that behaviour is good around school, during assemblies, in the dining hall and in their lessons. Where pupils are fully interested in their learning, their behaviour is outstanding. On occasions, though, their attention wanders when activities are less engaging.
- Pupils show maturity and enjoy taking on responsibilities. Older pupils look after younger children and pupils play securely and happily together. They are extremely polite to adults, show great respect for one another and are very proud of their school. They take great care to ensure that their own work is very neatly presented.
- They develop social skills through the many opportunities to learn together in the classroom, on the school's allotment, in school clubs and in sports activities with pupils from other schools. The school council offers ideas about how to recycle waste and how to help pupils play well together. It has offered ideas to improve the playground and the dining hall.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Parents and pupils are certain that pupils are safe and happy in school. There are robust procedures to ensure that this is indeed the case with all adults offering highly effective and sensitive care to pupils.
- Pupils feel very safe. They are very aware of different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying. They say that there is no bullying and they are able to solve problems between themselves or by asking their friends or adults to help them.
- The school's records show that instances of poor behaviour are rare. There have been no permanent exclusions. The very few pupils who find it difficult to behave well are extremely well managed by staff and their behaviour has improved rapidly as a result of a system of clear rules, rewards and sanctions.
- Attendance is average. It has improved for individuals and overall as a result of clear efforts by the school to check attendance and encourage pupils and parents to see the importance of coming to school. It is also because pupils feel extremely safe and enjoy their lessons, extra activities and visits. The attendance of pupils in Year 6 is above average as they clearly appreciate what the school does for them.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has a very clear view of the school's strengths and the areas where it needs to improve further. He has skilfully used the expertise of established leaders while developing new leaders who are keen to improve their effectiveness and put new ideas into action.
- There is strong teamwork and high morale and all teachers welcome taking on responsibilities and the accountability for their own classes and subject areas. As a result, the school is a caring, safe and lively environment which allows good learning to take place and which enables teachers and pupils to flourish and give of their best.
- The school improvement plan has appropriate areas for development, clear targets for pupils' attainment and progress and there are clear procedures to check its impact regularly. There is also highly effective ongoing training for all teachers. As a result there have been improvements to teaching, the curriculum and pupils' achievement.
- The headteacher and other leaders regularly check the quality of teaching. They understand what constitutes good teaching and judge it accurately. They are extremely clear in their feedback to teachers, who respect and welcome their advice. However, teaching is good rather than outstanding because leaders do not always check that their advice about how teaching can be improved has been followed up.
- The headteacher has a clear understanding of how to use data to measure pupils' progress and this has helped to improve pupils' achievement. However, new systems which will help leaders to have a clearer picture of the progress of different groups of pupils in their classes and over time are not yet fully in place. Some new leaders are still developing their skills of data analysis.
- Salary progression has been used well to improve teaching and raise standards because teachers are very clear that they will only be rewarded when their pupils have done as well as, or better than, they should have done.
- The primary school sports funding has been used effectively to develop competitive sports, to use coaches and teachers' own skills to develop expertise in teaching physical education and to introduce new sports such as hockey. Pupils say they enjoy their lessons, including the athletics lesson seen during the inspection, and teachers welcome the focus on developing their skills alongside the coaches. These are contributing well to pupils' physical development and well-being.
- While the school focuses on developing pupils' basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics, it also provides many exciting opportunities for pupils to broaden their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness through, for example, the study of religious education, geography, history and science and through a range of educational visits.
- The school welcomes the support and advice it receives from the local authority and from its education partners. This has helped to improve the quality of teaching and learning and the skills of school leaders in planning improvements and analysing data.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have rigorously reviewed their impact and now offer effective support and robust challenge to the school. The Chair of the Governing Body is very knowledgeable and is well supported by other governors who understand the school because they have clear areas of responsibility which they regularly check, through a programme of school visits. They have clear systems to check closely plans for the future, the quality of teaching, the achievement of pupils and the curriculum.
 - In addition they understand the arrangements to monitor teachers' performance and any rewards for good teaching. The budget is extremely well managed, including the use of additional grants accessed by the school's business manager. Governors receive clear information about how the pupil premium funding and the new primary school sports funding are allocated and are very knowledgeable about their impact. They ensure that the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities for safeguarding. All staff have been vetted and are trained appropriately to keep pupils safe and free from harm.

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	114262
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	442304

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	239
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bernadette Crooks
Headteacher	Simon Rudd
Date of previous school inspection	16 October 2012
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