

St Edmund's RC Primary School

Queen Street, Little Hulton, Worsley, Manchester, M38 0WH

Inspection dates 17–18 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Based on their different starting points, too few pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 make the rate of progress expected of them in their writing.
- The proportion of pupils, especially boys, who reach the level expected of them in writing, is too low. Not enough pupils reach higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The quality of teaching, although improving, is not yet consistently good throughout the school.
- Pupils' behaviour requires improvement because a small minority still do not attend school as well as they should.
- Leaders do not use the data they have about pupils' progress, quickly enough or in sufficient detail, to analyse precisely the impact of their actions on groups of pupils.
- Governors do not build sufficiently on the information given to them by leaders to assess for themselves the impact of leadership on raising achievement.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders have a shared, clear vision for the school. They have built a culture of 'no-excuses' and are being increasingly effective in eradicating underperformance.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders have steadily improved the quality of teaching. Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is now consistently good and progress in reading is good throughout the school.
- The support given to disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good, and is closing the gaps in achievement between them and their peers effectively.
- Pupils feel very safe in school. They are proud of their school and communicate their views expertly when talking to visitors.
- The recently introduced family support worker is highly valued by parents.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 18 parts of lessons taught by 11 teachers.
- The inspectors listened to pupils read and looked at pupils' exercise books along with samples of their work displayed on walls around the school.
- Discussions were held with representatives of the governing body, a representative of the local authority, a representative of the diocese, senior leaders, middle leaders and other staff.
- In order to help gain an accurate view of the school's performance, inspectors looked at a wide range of information and documentation provided by the school, including: information about behaviour; progress data; the school's self-evaluation of its effectiveness; the school action plan; external reports of the school's progress; governing body minutes; and records of pre-employment checks made by the school.
- Inspectors spoke with two small groups of Year 4 and Year 3 pupils. They also spoke with individual pupils during their lessons and at playtime and lunchtime. Inspectors also spoke with several parents at the end of the school day.
- The inspectors took account of the 17 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- No staff questionnaires were returned for inspectors to analyse.
- During this inspection, inspectors asked additional questions designed to ascertain the school's view of the impact and effectiveness of local authority services to support school improvement. This information will contribute to work being carried out by Ofsted to assess the use, quality and impact of those services.

Inspection team

Drew Crawshaw, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Yvonne Brown

Additional Inspector

Clare Nash

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- A high proportion of pupils are supported by the school at school action. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is well above the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- Since the previous inspection, a high number of changes to staffing have taken place, including the employment of five newly qualified teachers to replace teachers who have left. Leaders have recently appointed three new teachers to replace those leaving at the end of summer 2014.
- In 2013 the school did not meet the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' achievement and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching as a means of accelerating progress so that all pupils, particularly the most able, the less able and boys, reach the highest levels they are capable of, by:
 - ensuring all teaching is at least consistently good across the school
 - ensuring teachers follow assiduously the school's marking policy so that all teachers' marking of pupils' work contributes effectively to pupils' progress
 - ensuring all teachers plan effectively for, and deliver, lessons which are interesting, relevant and are neither too hard nor too easy for any pupil
 - raising expectations in writing in all subjects so that the proportion of pupils reaching the highest level of attainment is similar to that expected in all schools.
- Improve the behaviour of pupils by:
 - providing more opportunities for all pupils to take responsibility for their own learning
 - raising the profile of pupil voice as an integral part in the development of the school
 - ensuring an appropriate and balanced mix of sporting and non-sport related activities is available for all pupils both indoors and outdoors at lunchtime and playtime.
- Improve leadership and management of the school by:
 - increasing the level of detail in which leaders analyse data about the progress of specific groups of pupils
 - building leadership capacity by ensuring all leaders have extremely clear roles and responsibilities and above all clear lines of accountability
 - ensuring governors are proactive in forming an independent view of pupils' progress by gathering information about the school from a wide range of sources
 - conducting an external review of governance to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved
 - conducting an external review of the school's use of the pupil premium in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' progress across Key Stages 1 and 2 overall, but particularly in writing, is not yet rapid enough. Too few pupils make good progress from their different starting points.
- By the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, too few pupils have reached the higher levels of which they are capable because their learning has not been extended sufficiently over time. The school has not been successful in closing the gap between the most able pupils and their peers in similar schools nationally, in reading, mathematics and especially in writing. However, the school's own data, verified by the local authority and moderated in partnership with leaders in other good and outstanding schools, show that attainment by pupils currently in Year 6 is likely to meet government floor standards for 2014.
- By the end of Year 6, the attainment of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, along with pupil-premium pupils, is in line with that of their peers in reading and mathematics, and typically about half of one term behind in writing. This gap varies throughout the school from being nil or better in some classes, for example in writing in Year 2, to one and a half terms behind in others, for example in writing in Year 3. Leaders are aware of this inconsistency but, because they are not using the data they have about progress to analyse the impact of their interventions in enough detail, not all of their actions are effective in raising the rate of improvement.
- Children begin school with skills well below those typical for their age. Adults are deployed effectively by the Early Years Foundation Stage leader in a well-resourced area. As a result, children settle quickly and make good progress. The school makes effective use of a specialist training package designed to develop the speech, language and communication skills of children. Consequently, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development, by the time they leave the Early Years Foundation Stage, is above that expected nationally.
- The structured approach used by the school to teach letters and sounds (phonics) to the youngest children, along with the teaching of reading to the older pupils, is effective. Children observed by inspectors were typically engrossed in their daily routine of reading. Children in one group were positively beaming when they were successful in placing emphasis on key words in a story that they were reading out loud. Without exception, children and pupils in all year groups attain levels in reading at least in line with those of their peers in other schools.
- Attainment in writing is not yet consistently good. The school's own data show that while most pupils attain at a level expected of them, a significant minority do not, for example pupils currently in Year 5 along with boys in general throughout the school. Inspectors' scrutiny of pupils' work, in their books and on display around the school, confirmed this as being a result of missed opportunities, either to use the school's marking policy effectively or to raise expectations by insisting on high standards in all writing.
- The progress made by disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good. The recently appointed special educational needs coordinator ensures that support for these pupils is effectively targeted but does not become a substitute for high-quality teaching in the classroom. As pupils move through the school, the gap narrows between those with disabilities or special educational needs and those without; consequently, the number of pupils in need of additional support reduces. The school's attempts to ensure all pupils are treated equally are effective.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Inspectors agree with leaders' accurate assessment that teaching is not consistently good in all areas of the school. As a result, pupils' progress, particularly in writing, across Key Stages 1 and 2 has not been fast enough since the previous inspection.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Based on the low starting points of this group of children, there is an appropriately strong emphasis placed on the development of

communication skills from the beginning. Teachers and other adults in this area make effective use of every available space, particularly in the indoor area, to provide opportunities for children to interact and learn. For example, in the mud kitchen children use role play to develop their communication skills, shopping list templates to write on and cook books to read. Leaders have rightly identified that they could do even more to promote the learning of the youngest children by making even better use of the outdoor space.

- Since the previous inspection, teachers have worked effectively with a range of external partners including a local leader of education, specialist leaders in education, educational consultants, officers of the diocese and officers of the local authority. The large majority of teachers have embraced higher levels of expectation and responded to training and feedback. The quality of teaching by these teachers has improved, for example with good questioning to help pupils work out for themselves how to solve mathematical problems; consequently, rates of progress have accelerated.
- The teaching of writing across the school, particularly that of boys, although improving, is not consistently good. A small minority of teachers do not follow closely enough the school's marking policy as a means of insisting on high standards of writing in every subject and, as a result, the rate of progress slips.
- The large majority of teachers, however, effectively model good writing, for example by using samples of good practice, and make use of interesting topics which inspire all pupils to write at length. This could be seen on display in classrooms where pupils had written detailed accounts about the natural history of the Amazon rainforest. Another example was in an English lesson in which the teacher inspired pupils to extend their writing, through her expert reading of a piece written by a pupil in the class. Leaders are aware that this good practice needs to be embedded throughout the school and could be improved still further to stimulate boys' writing.
- The rate of progress made by pupils in mathematics has improved since the previous inspection but is not yet consistently good. Although teachers have improved their teaching of basic number skills such as times tables, leaders have correctly identified that some of the most able pupils do not find their work hard enough while some less able pupils find their work too hard. Pupils spoken with said that they enjoy mathematics because they often do 'real-life' problems and this is interesting. However, evidence seen by inspectors in pupils' workbooks and on display around the school shows that not enough is done by teachers to capitalise on pupils' interest in mathematics.
- Teaching assistants are increasingly effective. They are particularly well deployed to work with younger children and pupils each morning and are effective in raising standards in reading. In other lessons and around the school generally, teaching assistants have good relationships with pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. There are too many instances of very minor disruption in class. These are, in the main, due to pupils being bored because work set for them is either too hard or too easy or because teachers and teaching assistants do not follow the school's behaviour policy consistently well.
- A small number of pupils do not attend school often enough and this stops overall attendance being even higher.
- The behaviour of pupils around the school is a credit to them. Without exception, inspectors encountered pupils who were polite, well mannered and willing to talk at length about their school to visitors. A small number of pupils take on responsibilities, for example as monitors at lunchtime. Pupils spoken with felt that they would like more opportunities to organise and run activities, for example at lunchtime, and astutely pointed out that this would help to prepare them for secondary school.
- Behaviour records, verified by pupils and adults spoken with, demonstrate that behaviour incidents around the school are reducing. Logs are kept by leaders and used to analyse overall

patterns of behaviour; subsequently, initiatives, including behaviour management training for staff, have been put in place. Leaders do not use behaviour data in enough detail to measure the impact of changes made on the behaviour of specific groups of pupils.

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Effective systems are in place to ensure pupils remain safe when in school. Detailed risk assessments have been put in place, for example to allow pupils to make use of balconies on upper floor classrooms as a learning space, and are applied meticulously by leaders. Records show that bullying is rare and pupils spoken with feel they know whom to speak to if they have a concern. However, not all pupils spoken with were clear about what bullying is and some reported that they often heard older pupils using the term 'gay' as a derogatory word towards others.

The leadership and management require improvement

- Leadership and management of the school are not good because while school data show an improvement in the pace of progress this year, the change has not been rapid or significant enough since the previous inspection. Likewise, although leaders have increased the proportion of good teaching since the last inspection, they have not yet eradicated weaker teaching.
- Leaders have accurately identified key areas for improvement and set challenging targets to drive whole-school improvement. However, while leaders supported by the local authority along with a local leader of education frequently monitor progress, their checks do not have the precision to enable them to evaluate the impact of actions on specific groups of pupils. Consequently leaders are not always able to act swiftly, target resources and ensure consistently rapid progress.
- A rigorous system to improve the appraisal of teachers has been established by leaders. Demanding targets set for teachers are linked to pupils' progress. Teachers benefit from almost weekly feedback on their performance. Teachers' planning for lessons is scrutinised, pupils' workbooks are checked and learning is monitored through formal and informal observation of lessons by leaders. This is driving forward improvements in progress and has reduced the amount of teaching which is of a poor quality.
- Leaders have taken effective steps to build leadership capacity within the school. Three new, experienced teachers have been appointed as assistant headteachers, with effect from September 2014, to replace teachers who are leaving the school at the end of the year. Middle leaders have taken part in leadership training, provided through the 'Family of Schools' consortium and are now contributing successfully to raising achievement in their subjects. The middle leaders spoken with have a secure understanding of where improvements need to be made in their subject areas.
- Leaders have understandably ensured that the curriculum meets the needs of pupils currently at the school by concentrating on the core skills in numeracy and literacy. However, the curriculum remains broad and balanced and provides ample opportunity for pupils to develop wider spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills, for example through interesting and relevant topic work. Pupils benefit from additional music lessons and recently took part in an event at the Bridgewater Hall. Younger children experienced an activity day to raise funds for Sport Relief, effectively developing their awareness of social and moral issues. Good use of the primary school sport funding grant has effectively engaged the large majority of pupils in regular sporting activity during lessons, at lunchtime and at off-site inter-school events.
- The school has improved its work with parents since the last inspection. Of the small number who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, the significant majority of parents were pleased with the school and felt leaders would respond appropriately to their concerns. Without exception, those parents spoken with felt their children were making good progress in school and that the rate of progress had increased markedly this year.
- The local authority provides effective support and challenge to leaders and the school. The education officer carries out regular and frequent in-depth checks on progress and provides effective guidance to leaders and governors. The local authority has an accurate understanding of the needs of the school and has used this knowledge effectively to ensure the school benefits

from opportunities to share good and outstanding practice in other schools.

■ The school's arrangements for safeguarding and child protection meet statutory requirements.

■ **The governance of the school:**

– Governance of the school requires improvement. Since the last inspection, governors have re-evaluated their view of the school, especially with regards the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' progress. They are now clear where the school needs to improve. Governors, in a range of committees, hold leaders to account about what is being done to raise standards. Governors also have an accurate understanding of performance management, its impact on pay progression and how it should be used to hold teachers to account for the performance of their pupils. Governors oversee the school's finances with efficiency and receive detailed reports on how government grants, such as the primary schools sport funding and the pupil premium, are spent. However, governors are not yet skilled enough to raise challenging questions independently, for example about the impact of the pupil premium spending on specific groups of pupils, so that they can form their own view of progress. This hampers the governing body's capacity to evaluate actions taken by leaders.

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	135307
Local authority	Salford
Inspection number	432134

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	383
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Grahame Walker
Headteacher	Claire Harrison
Date of previous school inspection	7 November 2012
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