

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Canvey Island

Vaagen Road, Canvey Island, SS8 9DP

Inspection dates 18–19 June 2014

| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Good | 2 |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------|
| | This inspection: | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Quality of teaching | | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| 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

- Not enough pupils in Key Stage 2 make good progress in English or mathematics to achieve well and reach their full potential.
- The most able pupils and those of middle ability in Key Stage 2 are not sufficiently challenged to gain the higher levels in their work.
- Systems to track pupils' progress are not always used to identify and support quickly enough the pupils who need extra help.
- Teaching is not consistently good across all year groups. Teachers do not always match the work to pupils' ability, make sure pupils understand the work, use questioning effectively or use marking to help pupils improve their work.
- The school development plan is not addressing the key areas for improvement.
- Subject leaders are not fully effective in checking and improving the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement in their subjects.
- There are insufficient opportunities for teachers to share good practice.
- The performance targets for individual teachers are not specific enough to improve identified weaknesses in their teaching.
- Leaders and governors have not yet ensured enough improvement in the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils start well in the school and make good progress in the Reception and Key Stage 1 classes.
- Pupils behave well. They feel very safe, are polite and attend school regularly.
- The range of experiences at school contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils benefit from a wide range of outside visits and out-of-school activities.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed seven lessons.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body, two additional governors, a representative from the local authority, senior leaders, staff and groups of pupils.
- The inspectors took account of the 45 responses to the Parent View online questionnaire, the 164 responses from the school parent questionnaire (October 2013) and the 16 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspectors examined a range of evidence, including the school's analysis of its own performance and resulting school development plan, the systems to track pupils' progress, and records relating to behaviour and attendance. They also looked at records of lesson observations by senior leaders, staff performance information, safeguarding documentation and a wide range of pupils' work in all classes.

Inspection team

Stephen Walker, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Stephen Johnson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average primary school, serving families living in Canvey Island and the surrounding area.
- The school is housed mainly in post-war buildings which have been refurbished and extended. It has extensive grounds and playing fields including an outside swimming pool.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds, with a small number from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- A below average proportion of pupils are supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. So, too, is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in the Reception class. There is one class for each year group in Years 1 to 6.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teaching is good or better by making sure that all teachers:
 - plan and adjust work in lessons so that it is at the right level of difficulty for all pupils
 - check carefully in lessons that all pupils are clear about their work
 - use questioning more effectively to engage pupils, confirm their understanding and develop their learning
 - use marking effectively to show pupils how to improve their work and gain the higher levels.
- Ensure that a greater proportion of pupils make good or better progress in Key Stage 2, particularly in English and mathematics by:
 - providing all pupils who are at the risk of underperforming with timely and effective support
 - ensuring that more pupils are making sufficient progress to achieve their challenging target grades
 - challenge and support the middle ability and more-able pupils to achieve the higher levels in their work.
- Strengthen the effectiveness of leaders and governors by ensuring that:
 - the actions in the school development plan are addressing the key issues in the school and are leading to sustained improvements in pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching
 - subject leaders are effective in checking and improving the progress of pupils and quality of teaching in their subject areas
 - there are more opportunities for coaching and sharing good practice within and beyond the school
 - the performance targets set for individual teachers include details of the areas for improvement in their teaching which have been identified by senior leaders.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Pupils' progress is not consistently good across the school and they have not attained as well as might be expected, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. Although there are clear signs of better progress this year, they are not yet making sustained good progress.
- The majority of pupils make the progress expected nationally during their time in the school, but too few exceed expected progress and reach the levels they are capable of in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6. Pupils make a good start in the Reception class and Years 1 and 2 but progress slows down in Key Stage 2 and pupils leave school with broadly average standards.
- Pupils have targets set for their attainment but these targets have not been sufficiently challenging in the past to help them aim for good progress. More demanding targets have been set this year for all pupils, although it is too early to assess the full impact of this change on pupils' progress.
- The work in books and school data indicate that the teachers are not pushing the pupils enough to make better progress. Consequently, those who start Key Stage 2 with average and higher attainment levels make slower progress than the other pupils. Too few pupils gain Level 5 or 6 by the end of Year 6 to demonstrate good progress.
- Children make good progress in the Reception class because of well-planned and purposeful activities, led by the teacher and teaching assistant. Improved use of the inside and outside resources is having a positive impact on children's personal development, as well as encouraging the development of their number and language skills. Pupils' continued good progress in Years 1 and 2, results in many exceeding the standards expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school is making greater use of the systems for tracking pupils' progress and providing better support for underachieving pupils. However, some teachers still do not identify the small number of underachieving pupils quickly enough or give them fully effective additional support in their weaker skill areas. Similarly, not enough middle and higher attaining pupils in Key Stage 2 are being identified as having the potential to make good progress, or helped to do so.
- Reading is a key priority and pupils are encouraged to read at home and in school each day. Attainment in reading is broadly average by the end of Key Stage 2. The school is using a more structured approach to teaching phonics (the sounds represented by letters) across the school. The emphasis on speaking and listening, as well as providing greater guidance with written work, is supporting the improvement in both their language and writing skills.
- There is now a greater emphasis in mathematics on key skills and problem solving, which is leading to some improvements across the school. Pupils benefit from daily numeracy lessons and the opportunity to work in ability groups during the lessons. Extra staffing for part of the week in Years 3 to 6 has allowed more individual attention for pupils in smaller teaching groups.
- The small number of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make progress in line with the other pupils. More pupils are making better progress this year due to the effective work of adults to help them overcome barriers to learning.

- The school is using additional funding appropriately to support individual pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium. Money allocated for additional help in reading, writing and mathematics is supporting improvements in pupils' attainment and progress. In 2013, there were too few eligible pupils in Year 6 to comment on their attainment compared with that of others in the year group. Across the school, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals are making much the same progress as others.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching varies in quality and there is still too much that requires improvement. Although there are examples of good teaching, it is not yet consistently good enough across the school. School data, the work in pupils' books and observations of pupils' learning show that teaching is not yet strong enough in Key Stage 2 to lead to sustained good achievement.
- Teachers do not always check thoroughly in lessons that all pupils are clear about their work. As a result, some pupils are not clear enough about the tasks set for them and what they have to do to succeed. In some lessons, learning is slowed when pupils who are stuck wait for the teacher to help them with their work. Even so, all but a few pupils show consistently good attitudes to learning in lessons.
- Not all teachers use information about what pupils already know and can do to set work at the right level to promote good progress for different ability groups. On occasions, some pupils are not challenged enough because the work in lessons is sometimes too easy for them, while some are held back in their learning because the work is too hard and they need more guidance and support.
- Not enough teachers are using questioning well to engage all pupils in their learning and to check their understanding. The questions are sometimes targeted at a few pupils in the class who know the answers and do not challenge and extend the thinking of others. Some teachers give the pupils the answer too quickly and do not encourage them to think for themselves.
- The marking of work is inconsistent across the school and does not always provide enough guidance to pupils on how to improve their work and gain the higher levels. There is, nevertheless, some good marking which provides clear guidance to pupils on how to improve their work, and to which pupils respond well. Pupils across the school are keen to improve their work.
- Pupils made good progress when teaching fully engaged the pupils and challenged them in their learning. For example, Year 1 pupils make good progress when developing their number skills. The teacher asked questions skilfully to check their understanding and encouraged pupils to use and extend their knowledge further. The numeracy tasks provided the right level of difficulty for pupils of all abilities to make good progress.
- Some teachers have developed attractive displays of work in their classrooms which provide a stimulating environment for learning. Their display of pupils' work provides opportunities to celebrate good work, support learning during lessons and provide examples of expected levels of work.
- Teaching assistants are used appropriately in most classes to support pupils who are low attaining or who have special educational needs. As a result, these pupils progress at a similar rate to others in their classes.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Most pupils behave well in lessons and around the school, and this contributes to a calm and orderly atmosphere for learning. There are very clear expectations of behaviour and consistent systems to deal quickly with any misbehaviour.
- Pupils respond well to teachers' good use of praise and encouragement which promote high standards of behaviour. However, a few pupils lose concentration in some lessons when they do not understand the work.
- Pupils respond well to the strong tradition in the school of caring for one another. The regular assemblies greatly support the positive atmosphere in the school because they interest the pupils and help them to develop a sense of commitment to others. Pupils are considerate, polite and courteous to staff and each other, and this contributes well to their learning.
- Parents, carers and pupils confirm that bullying is very rare in the school. Pupils say that any unkind behaviour, such as name-calling and teasing, is dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils are aware of the different forms bullying can take, such as cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying related to sex, gender, race and disability.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The governors make sure that the arrangements for safeguarding fully meet current requirements and underpin the school's very caring approach. Pupils feel safe and display a good understanding of the issues relating to safety. They talk confidently about how they would keep themselves safe in a variety of situations, such as crossing the road, talking to strangers and using the internet. Older pupils confirm that the school provides them with helpful information on sex education and the dangers of smoking, alcohol and drugs.
- There is a good level of supervision at break and lunchtime which provides a clear framework for expected behaviour. Pupils are developing their skills in managing their own behaviour. Senior pupils are encouraged to take on responsibilities within the school, such as through the school council, acting as prefects and looking after the younger children.
- Pupils are proud of their school, adhere to the uniform regulations and ensure that there is no litter in the school grounds. Attendance has improved over the last two years and is presently above average, reflecting parental support for education and pupils' enjoyment of school.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Although there have been improvements in the attendance of pupils, leaders have not yet done enough to speed up pupils' progress and tackle teaching that requires improvement. They have not been active enough in addressing the decline in pupils' progress over the last two years that has resulted in too few pupils making more than expected progress.
- The school development plan has not clearly identified the need to address the decline in rates of pupils' progress in Key Stage 2 or the teaching which has led to this gradual fall in pupils' progress. The headteacher has modified some teaching responsibilities and appointed a number of new teachers but these changes have not yet had a marked impact on teaching or pupils' progress.

- The school is not ensuring enough sharing of good teaching practice from within and beyond the school. Although the headteacher carries out regular lesson observations, there is insufficient analysis of the areas where teachers require professional support so that coaching can be put in place.
- Subject leaders have taken on more responsibility within the school and are now becoming more involved in whole school improvement than in the past by providing guidance to teachers. However, they are not yet fully involved in checking and improving the progress of pupils in their subjects or providing support in all classrooms to improve the quality of teaching.
- The revised system for setting performance targets for teachers has become more demanding so that teachers are now held more accountable for the progress of their pupils. Nevertheless, the targets for individual teachers are not specific enough in seeking to tackle identified weaknesses already identified in their teaching.
- The curriculum has a significant focus on English and mathematics as well as an imaginative use of topics across the other subject areas. Pupils have regular swimming lessons and all Year 5 pupils learn to play the clarinet. A wide range of outside visits and out-of-school activities, increase pupils' enjoyment and experience of school. The range of experiences contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are regularly engaged in fund raising for charities and particularly support the Mzambazi Primary School in Malawi.
- Primary school sports funding has enabled the pupils to benefit from a range of additional sporting activities. The pupils have considerable success in inter-school competitions. There is a clear emphasis on developing more healthy lifestyles and better physical well-being for the pupils, but it is too early to evaluate the impact of the additional funding.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is led well and is improving rapidly. The new leader has revised the range of activities and developed the use of the outdoor area. The vast majority of children are now making good progress in the Reception class.
- The school has developed positive relationships with parents and carers. Leaders and staff show a strong commitment to welcoming pupils of all backgrounds and abilities, and giving them all an equal chance to succeed. The headteacher is well respected by parents and pupils for providing a calm and caring environment for learning.
- The school has positive contacts with the local authority. Teachers have attended local authority courses but there has been limited support in helping the school improve the rate of pupils' progress or the quality of teaching. The school has good links with neighbouring schools through the Canvey Schools Partnership and the local Catholic Deanery Schools. Good transition arrangements with local secondary schools ensure that pupils are well prepared for their new schools.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has a better awareness of the school's strengths and areas for improvement than at the previous inspection. Its members are more involved in monitoring progress and holding leaders and staff to account. They regularly visit the school to check progress and make recommendations for improvement. The headteacher is helping the governors gain a better understanding about the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement in relation to other similar schools. However, they do not have an accurate enough view of the quality of teaching in the school so that they can make confident decisions on pay rises and promotion. Governors have effectively overseen the use of the pupil premium funding and ensured that it is spent only on supporting eligible pupils. Governors are developing their roles

and are highly aware of the need to monitor more rigorously the effectiveness of key actions and initiatives to ensure they are quickly leading to improvements in teaching and achievement.

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

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| Unique reference number | 115152 |
| Local authority | Essex |
| Inspection number | 443964 |

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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| 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 | 210 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | David O' Halloran |
| Headteacher | Paul Collingwood |
| Date of previous school inspection | 24 February 2010 |
| Telephone number | 01268 683903 |
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